

HERBED GOAT CHEESE SOUFFLE

(from The Wimpy Vegetarian)

1/2 teaspoon dried lavender
zest from 1/2 medium lemon
3 tablespoons finely grated Parmesan cheese
pinch of salt
freshly ground black pepper
3 ounces fresh soft goat cheese
1 ounce ricotta cheese
1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves
1 tablespoon honey
3 eggs, separated
1/4 cup low-fat milk
2 teaspoons all-purpose flour (I used 4)
butter for the ramekins

Heat the oven to 375 degrees F. Prep the ramekins by smearing them with butter and sprinkling grated Parmesan cheese on the bottoms and around the sides. Set aside.

Rub the dried lavender between your fingers to reduce as much as half of the buds to a powder. Combine this with the lemon zest, 1 tablespoon of Parmesan, salt and pepper in a small bowl. Set aside.

In a medium bowl, combine the goat cheese, ricotta, 2 tablespoons of Parmesan cheese, thyme, honey, egg yolks, milk and flour together. Stir well to completely combine. Add to the reserved lavender mixture.

In a small bowl, whip the egg whites just to a firm peak. Be careful not to get them too firm, or they'll be difficult to fold into the cheese-yolk mixture. Fold the beaten egg whites into the cheese-yolk mixture in thirds using a large spatula. It's fine to have lumps of egg whites in the mixture – it will not be smooth. Place the ramekins in a baking dish and fill the dish with hot water one-half the way up the sides of the ramekins. Carefully spoon the cheese-egg mixture into the ramekins, filling them 2/3 full.

Bake for 20 minutes, or until browned on top and springy – firm to the touch. Remove and allow to cool in the ramekins for 15 minutes. The souffles will collapse and start to pull away from the sides of the ramekins. Run a knife around their edges and turn the ramekin upside down. The souffle should slide right out.