

MANCHEGO AND POBLANO SOUP

(adapted from Marcela Valladolid's Fresh Mexico)

7 poblano chiles, stemmed and seeded
2 medium shallots, halved
1/4 cup water
4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) unsalted butter
1 + 1/2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
3 cups whole milk
1/2 cup grated Manchego cheese (or Monterey Jack cheese)
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
diced Manchego cheese for serving, to taste
Tajin seasoning (optional)

Bring a medium-size heavy saucepan of salted water to a boil. Add the poblanos and shallots cook for 20 minutes, or until tender. Drain them and transfer to a blender. Add 1/4 cup water. Blend until smooth. Set aside.

Melt the butter in a large heavy pot over medium-high heat. Whisk in the flour and cook for a couple of minutes, whisking constantly, but not allowing it to brown. Reduce the heat to medium and whisk in the chile mixture. Cook, whisking, for a few minutes until slightly thickened. Whisk in the milk. Bring the soup to a simmer and cook, whisking every minute or so to prevent scorching, for about 5 minutes, or until slightly thickened.

Whisk in the grated Manchego cheese. Adjust seasoning with salt and pepper. Ladle into bowls, and top with the diced cheese, plus a sprinkle of Tajin seasoning, if using.