

Leeks au gratin

Henri recipe

2 large leeks
Panko breadcrumbs
1 Tablespoon butter
1 tablespoon white flour
1/4 cup cheddar cheese, shredded
1/8 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1/2 cup water from the leeks
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper



Photography Henri T. de Hahn

1. Preheat oven to 400F.
2. Thinly slice white part and the beginning of the green part of the leeks crossways. Rinse well in a colander under cold water to remove all grit. Parboil in salted boiling water till barely al dente.
3. Immediately remove from water (no need to rinse in cold water). Keep 3/4 cup water for later use.
4. Butter a broiler proof dish (may use spray butter), and lightly sprinkle with Panko breadcrumbs. Distribute the leeks evenly in the dish.
5. Meanwhile on the oven, in a small saucepan melt butter and fold in flour. Cook till both are fully integrated and form a roux. Into this mixture fold in 1/4 cup of reserved leek cooking water and mix well until smooth. Add another 1/4 cup and mix again well.
6. In same pan, add over low heat cheddar and Parmesan cheese. Once melted adjust to desired consistency (a medium thickness is well. You may add water a Tbs at a time to achieve consistency). Salt and pepper according to taste.
7. Pour mixture over leeks and sprinkle with Panko breadcrumbs. Cook in oven for 5 minutes then broil 2-3 minutes until top is nicely browned.
8. Serve immediately.

NOTE: This dish is very delicate and goes well with crab cakes and a corn salad with cherry tomatoes, celery, apples and cardamom seeds (see picture above).