

Seasonal Eating



Asparagus Soufflés

- 1 bunch asparagus spears, trimmed
- 1 1/2 cups milk
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 1/2 + 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- Pinch ground nutmeg
- 4 large egg yolk
- 8 large egg whites
- 1 cup grated Manchego or Gruyère cheese

Fill a large skillet with 1" of water and bring to a boil with a pinch of salt. Add asparagus and simmer until tender-crisp, about 3 minutes. Drain, rinse with cold water and pat dry. Cut into 1/2" slices.

Beat egg whites with an electric mixer just until peaks hold their shape.

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, melt the butter. Add flour and cook for a couple of minutes. Add milk and whisk over heat until thickened. Add salt, pepper and nutmeg. Whisk a little of the hot mixture into the egg yolks to temper and then add back to pan and whisk to blend well. Transfer to a large bowl and stir in asparagus and cheese. Stir in 1/3rd of the beaten egg whites to lighten the mixture. Fold in the remaining 2/3rds.

Pour into 8 (10 oz.) ramekins coated with nonstick cooking spray and set on a rimmed baking sheet, filling almost to the top. Bake at 375 degrees on the lowest rack for 20-25 minutes, until center reaches 145 degrees F. and they are browned and puffy. Serve immediately (they will fall in the first few minutes, but this is normal).