

cauliflower + hazelnut soup with fried sage

Ingredients

2.5lb cauliflower head (about 8 cups), chopped

(set aside a few florets if you want to top the soup with some caramelized cauliflower)

1 small leek, chopped

1 large garlic clove, minced

a couple of tablespoons of olive oil

salt + pepper

8 cups of vegetable broth or bone broth (homemade is preferred)

½ cup of toasted hazelnuts (plus 1-2 tablespoons additional for topping)

1-2 tablespoons of lemon juice OR white wine vinegar

6-8 sage leaves

1-2 tablespoons of sunflower oil (or another high-heat oil, for lightly frying)

optional toppings: extra chopped toasted hazelnuts, roasted cauliflower pieces, fresh black pepper, chives or green onion, micro greens

Method

Toast the hazelnuts:

- Pre-heat the oven to 350°.

- Place the hazelnuts on a baking sheet and bake for 15-20 minutes, until the skins start to peel away, and they are a light brown. Be careful not to overcook / burn because the flavor of the nuts will change dramatically.
- When they are done, allow them to cool slightly and then roll the nuts between your hands to release the skins. Discard the skins and set the peeled hazelnuts aside while you prepare the soup.

Prepare the soup

- Place the leeks and garlic in a heavy bottom pot over medium heat with some olive oil. Sauté for about two minutes, until everything is soft. Add in the cauliflower and season generously with salt and pepper. Cook for about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally until the cauliflower starts to brown.
- Add in the vegetable broth and bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer, place a cover loosely over the top and cook for about 20-30 minutes.
- Carefully transfer the soup to a blender. Add in 1/2 cup of hazelnuts and 1 tablespoon of the lemon juice or vinegar. Blend until you have a smooth puree. Taste and adjust any seasoning as necessary. You will probably want to add a little more salt and maybe another tablespoon of lemon juice or vinegar. Keep in the blender while you prepare the sage.

Fry the sage:

- In a small cast iron/frying pan, heat the oil over medium heat. Fry the sage leaves for about 2 minutes on each side until they become nice and crispy. Remove and place on a paper towel.

Assemble the soup:

- Pour the warm soup into individual bowls. Top with the extra chopped hazelnuts, fresh cracked pepper, chives, and/or micro greens. Also, if you like, you can sauté a couple of florets of cauliflower to add on top.
- This is best served warm, right away. It also makes great leftovers. It will keep for several days in an air-tight container in the fridge.