

ARTICHOKE SOUP WITH CHORIZO AND ROASTED PISTACHIO NUTS

This is a version of a Renaissance soup which Greg learned in Mantova, Italy. The Italian version uses cocks' combs instead of sausage, and the soup is garnished with jewel-like pomegranate seeds.

6 large artichokes
juice of 4 lemons mixed with 1 quart
water
2 medium onions
2 cloves garlic
2 medium leeks
½ cup olive oil
2 quarts chicken stock
3 semidried chorizo sausages, grilled
and sliced into ½ inch diagonal pieces
2 egg yolks

⅔ cup thickened cream
salt and pepper
juice of 2 lemons

GARNISH

½ teaspoon allspice (freshly milled,
if possible)
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
¾ cup unsalted pistachio nuts,
dry-roasted and coarsely crushed

TO PREPARE THE ARTICHOKEs, remove the outer hard leaves as well as the choke and immediately place the heart into acidulated water.

Slice the onions, garlic, and leeks finely. Heat the olive oil in a heavy-based pot.

Drain the artichokes and very quickly slice into thin (⅛-inch) slices. Sauté them in the hot oil with the onions, garlic, and leeks, then cover and simmer for 5–8 minutes. Do not allow the artichokes to color.

Add the chicken stock. Bring to the boil and gently simmer for half an hour. Taste and season with salt and pepper.

When ready to serve, bring the soup back to the boil and then add the grilled chorizo pieces. Mix the egg yolks with the cream and then add to the soup. Slowly return the soup to just below boiling, stirring constantly. Remove from the heat and adjust seasoning with salt, pepper, and lemon juice.

As you serve, finish each bowl with a sprinkling of crushed nuts and freshly milled allspice, and a drizzle of extra-virgin olive oil.

SERVES EIGHT.

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