

CAULIFLOWER GRATIN BY DOROTHY ZEHNDER

A ZEHNDER FAMILY FAVORITE

Bread Crumb Topping:

4 slices bread with crust – tear each slice into quarters
2 Tablespoons butter or margarine, softened
¼ teaspoon salt
⅛ teaspoon black pepper

Filling:

1 Tablespoon salt
1 large head cauliflower (about 3 pounds) cleaned & trimmed into ¾-inch florets
3 Tablespoons butter or margarine
1 medium shallot, minced or onion, minced (about 2 Tablespoons)
1 garlic clove, minced
1 Tablespoon celery, minced
1 Tablespoon green pepper, finely chopped
3 Tablespoons all-purpose flour
1½ cups heavy cream, half & half, or 2 cups milk
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg (slightly rounded ¼ teaspoon)
½ teaspoon *Bavarian Inn All-Purpose Seasoning*
½ teaspoon *Bavarian Inn Supreme Pasta & Salad Seasoning*
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon dry thyme or 1 teaspoon minced fresh thyme leaves
½ cup plus 2 Tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese, divided

Topping: 1) Pulse bread, butter, salt and pepper in food processor until mixture resembles coarse crumbs – about ten 1-second pulses. Set aside.

Filling: 2) Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 450°F. Bring 4 quarts cold water, 1 Tablespoon salt and the cauliflower to a boil in Dutch oven or stockpot over high heat. After it boils, cook for just 2 minutes until outsides are tender, but insides are still slightly crunchy. Remove from heat and drain in colander. Leave in colander to drain.

3) Heat butter in large skillet over medium heat; when foam subsides, add shallot or onion, celery and green pepper; cook till soft, about 2 minutes. Add garlic and cook just 30 seconds. Stir in flour until combined, about 1 minute. Whisk in cream or your choice and bring to a boil. Stir in seasonings, thyme and ½ cup Parmesan cheese; mix well. Remove from heat and gently stir in cauliflower until evenly mixed.

Transfer mixture to 2-quart baking dish 11x7-inch. Sprinkle remaining 2 Tablespoons Parmesan cheese evenly over top, and then evenly sprinkle the bread crumb topping on top.

Bake in preheated 450°F oven until golden brown and sauce is bubbling around edges for 10-12 minutes. Serve immediately. Yield: 6 servings