

Leek Cannelloni with Provolone Piccante

(based on a recipe from Rick Steins' *Food Heroes*)

- 50g unsalted butter
- 1kg leeks, cleaned and thinly sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves
- 2 tablespoons water
- 250g fresh ricotta
- 250g fresh lasagne sheets
- 750ml homemade or bottled tomato passata
- salt and pepper to season

Cheese Sauce

- 1 small onion, peeled and halved
- 3 cloves
- 450ml full cream milk
- 1 bay leaf
- ½ teaspoon black peppercorns
- 30g unsalted butter
- 30g plain flour
- 2 tablespoons heavy cream
- 150g provolone piccante, grated
- 1 egg yolk

1. For the cheese sauce, stud the onion with the cloves and add to a pan with the milk, bay leaf and peppercorns. Bring the milk just to a boil and then set it aside for 20 minutes to infuse.
2. For the filling, melt the butter in a large pan and add the leeks, garlic, thyme and water and cook gently, uncovered, for 15 minutes or until the leeks are tender and the excess liquid has evaporated. Transfer to a bowl to cool, then beat in the ricotta and season with salt and pepper.
3. Bring a large pot of water to boil and add the sheets of lasagne, one at a time, then take the pan off the heat and allow to soak for 5 minutes. Drain well and leave to cool.
4. Pour the tomato passata into a large ovenproof dish. Spoon the filling into the lasagne sheets and roll them up snugly. Place the rolls seamside down on top of the passata. Preheat the oven to 200C.
5. Finish the cheese sauce: strain the milk into a bowl. Melt the butter in a small saucepan, add the flour and cook over a medium heat for one minute. Gradually beat in the milk, then bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Simmer the pan very gently, stirring occasionally, until the sauce is thick (about 10 minutes), then remove from the heat and stir in the cream, 75g grated provolone, the egg yolk and season to taste.
6. Pour the sauce over the cannelloni, scatter over the remaining cheese, and bake in the oven for 30 minutes or until golden brown.

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