

# LEEK AND POTATO SOUP WITH GORGONZOLA CROUTONS

SERVES 4

*The croutons are not a necessity – but are delicious! If you are vegetarian, you can make this with vegetable stock (I would use Swiss Marigold) but you need to make quite a strong stock – so add 1.5 times the stock powder recommended.*

## INGREDIENTS

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50g butter or 3 tbsp olive oil	1 tbsp finely chopped chives
1 medium onion	10 gm gorgonzola dolcelatte
350 gm leeks	1 tbsp olive oil
350 gm potatoes	50 g bread in small cubes
1 litre strong chicken stock	
2 tbsp mascarpone (or double cream)	

## INSTRUCTIONS

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Peel and chop the onion. Clean and cut the leeks (see *tip*). Melt the butter or warm the oil, and add the vegetables to the pan. Cook with the lid on for about 10 minutes whilst you peel the potatoes. The vegetables are just being sweated – and should not change colour. Peel the potatoes, and cut into 1 cm cubes. Add to the vegetables, toss in the oil or butter, and replace the lid and sweat for another 5 minutes.

Make some hot stock – stronger is better, so use a little more stock powder or cube than usual. Add to the pan and bring to the boil. Turn down to a simmer, and cook for about 5 minutes until the potatoes are soft. Meanwhile, you can prepare the croutons.

Heat the oven to 180°. Mash the gorgonzola into the oil, and then add the bread. You won't believe there is enough cheese and oil, but there is! Toss the cubes to coat them in the flavoured oil, then spread on a baking tray and put into the hot oven. They need about 10 minutes – but keep an eye on them. They should be browned and crispy.

When the potatoes are just cooked, use a hand blender (or pour into a liquidizer) to puree the soup. Return it to the pan, and adjust the seasoning. Add the mascarpone or double cream, and whisk in until completely dissolved.

Sprinkle with the chives and serve, adding the croutons to each plate.

**TIP:** The easiest way to clean a leek – trim the top of the leek and then hold upright on a work surface. Slice from top to bottom through the centre of the leek until about 2 cm from the base. Turn through 90 degrees, and slice again from top to bottom. The leek is held together by the base, but you can now spread the sections of the leek to wash thoroughly. When you are ready to chop, hold the leek back together and slice finely.