

Jerusalem Artichoke Soup

(serves 4)

Jerusalem artichokes look similar to root ginger and their knobbly exterior means they are often overlooked. They are renowned for being tricky to peel, but the patient cook is richly rewarded, as the flavour is exquisite.

The tubers are in fact not related to artichokes at all, but belong to the sunflower family, which may explain the peculiar name – the Italian word for sunflower is girasole.

Rich in inulin, a carbohydrate linked to healthy gut flora, Jerusalem artichokes are not only good for us but their sweet, nutty flavour lends itself well both to roasting and eating raw, thinly shaved, in winter salads..

If you seek out some local cider as well you will have created a truly seasonal and local meal marrying some of the region's best produce.

1. Melt the butter in a heavy saucepan and gently cook the onion until translucent but not browned – this will take a good 10 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, peel the artichokes and drop into a bowl of acidulated water in order for it not to discolour, which it otherwise does very quickly.
3. Cut into bite size chunks and add to the softened onion - give the artichokes a stir as they go into the pan, they do tend to stick.
4. When all the artichokes are in, season with salt and pepper, add the stock, cover the pan with a lid and cook on a gentle heat for about 20 minutes or until the artichokes are tender.
5. Liquidize in a blender – you may wish to do this in two batches depending on the size of your blender.
6. Give the pan a rinse, and return the blended soup to the pan.
7. Add the cream and check the seasoning – this soup

INGREDIENTS

- 30g/1 oz butter
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 500g/1 lb Jerusalem artichokes
- 1 litre/1 ¾ pint chicken or vegetable stock
- 142ml/5 fl oz single cream
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Maldon sea salt
- Smoked salmon, cut into strips (optional)

demands quite a bit of salt. Keep warm but don't let the soup boil again.

8. Serve in wide soup bowls and if you like, pile a little nest of thinly cut smoked salmon in the middle.

Recipe provided by www.cambridgecookeryschool.com