



Cheese Fondue

As I'm married to a Swiss, a traditional fondue is something I love to make in winter. It's easy, delicious and great for a casual get together. Start with a platter of cold cuts and cornichons (prosciutto and bresaola are closest to the rohschinken and bündnerfleisch you'd have in Switzerland - you can mail order them from Walma's in Melbourne www.walmas.com.au) and finish with coffee and Swiss chocolates. Although the Swiss love their chocolate, they don't traditionally melt it and dunk strawberries into it; in Switzerland, fondue is always made with cheese, though the types of cheese and alcohol vary from canton (state) to canton. This is the classic fondue from Franz's home canton of Berne. The Red Cow (www.theredcow.com.au) sell both fondue pots and Vacherin Fribourgeois online, but if you can't get your hands on Vacherin Fribourgeois, use Heidi Tilsit instead. There are a few rules to eating fondue: drink only white wine, schnapps (eau de vie) or tea (never water or red wine or you'll end up with indigestion), at the table stir the fondue clockwise, and anyone who drops their bread into the pot must buy a round of drinks or kiss the person to their left. A Swiss fendant would be the perfect match - it's not easy to find any Swiss wine in Australia, but the naturally-made Mythopia Jadis (a blend of traditional varietals fendant, reze and sylvaner) is imported by Enoteca Sydney. A Guete (that's bon appetite in Swiss).

Serves 4-6

METHOD

1. Rub the fondue pot (called a *caquelon*) with the garlic clove, then discard garlic. Place bread on the table alongside the stand for the pot. Fill the stand with methylated spirit, light it and adjust heat to low - once the fondue is ready everything else must be ready to go.
2. Dissolve the cornflour in the kirsch and set aside.
3. Add gruyère, vacherin and wine to the fondue pot, place over a low heat on the stove and stir until the cheese has melted.
4. Stir in pepper and nutmeg then add the kirsch mixture, increase heat to medium, and stir vigorously until well combined and smooth.
5. Place the *caquelon* on the stand, increase flame to high and ask diners to immediately spear a piece of bread on their forks and start stirring and eating; fondue needs to be stirred constantly by the diners so it doesn't burn on the bottom.
6. When all the cheese is eaten, the brown crust on the bottom of the pot is the most prized part.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 clove garlic, peeled and bruised
- 2 baguettes, cut into bite-sized cubes
- 3 teaspoons cornflour
- 150ml kirsch
- 300g Swiss Gruyère, grated
- 300g Vacherin Fribourgeois, grated
- 300ml dry white wine
- Freshly ground white pepper, to taste
- Freshly grated nutmeg, to taste