

Be Inspired BY *Roberta!*

FOOD ~ WINE ~ TRAVEL



Caldo Verde

Most Portuguese meals, especially dinner, start with soup; many are thick and hearty, using whatever produce is on hand. Caldo verde, meaning literally green broth, is one of the most popular. It's made traditionally with a local dark green cabbage called galega, closely related to kale which is a good substitute. When it's in season, I make it with cime di rapa (turnip tops) another member of the cabbage family. Whatever greens you use, it's important to slice them as finely as possible then just blanch them in the soup, taking care not to overcook them – it's said they should look like grass. Although caldo verde is traditionally served with a few slices of chouriço in the bowl, a vegetarian version (pictured) is just as delicious. Portuguese chouriço is spiced with garlic and paprika, so flavour a little olive oil with these spices to pour over the soup.

Serves 4 as a starter

INGREDIENTS

- 400g floury potatoes, peeled and diced
- 3 cups water
- Salt flakes, to taste
- ½ bunch cime di rapa or kale
- Cornbread, for serving
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
- 1 smoked chorizo, thinly sliced



METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 180°C.
2. Peel and dice potatoes, and place in a saucepan with the water and 2 teaspoons of salt.
3. Bring to the boil, reduce heat, cover and simmer for 15 minutes or so, until tender.
4. Meanwhile, cut the leaves off the cime di rapa stems, discarding the stems or reserving them for another dish.
5. In several batches, roll the largest leaves around some of the others to form a tight bundle then slice very finely (this is called a chiffonade); set aside.
6. Place cornbread in the oven to warm through.
7. Remove saucepan from the heat and use a stick blender to blend potato and cooking liquid until just smooth; don't over blend it, better to have a few small pieces of potato left.
8. Stir in the cime di rapa leaves, return to the boil, cover, remove from heat and set aside.
9. Heat a frying pan over medium-high heat, add oil then chouriço and cook for a minute or 2 each side until well coloured.
10. Divide chouriço between warmed soup bowls.
11. Taste the soup and add more salt if necessary.
12. Ladle soup into the bowls, drizzle with oil from the frying pan, and a little extra olive oil, and serve with cornbread.