

Gratin of White Asparagus

Servings : 4

Amount	Measure	Ingredient - Preparation Method
4 1/2	tablespoons	unsalted butter - melted
15		white asparagus spears
		lemon thyme (leaves)
3/4	cup	creme fraiche
1	tablespoon	dijon mustard
		sea salt and pepper
1	cup	fresh white breadcrumbs
3 1/2	ounces	parmesan cheese - grated
2	tablespoons	parsley - minced

Preheat oven to 450. Brush a copper or ceramic gratin dish with a little of the melted butter.

Trim the asparagus roughly halfway up the stalks. Slice in half lengthwise and lay them in the buttered gratin dish. Sprinkle with most of the lemon thyme leaves, saving a few for garnish.

Put creme fraiche and mustard in a sauce pan and place over medium heat. Stir to combine and bring to a simmer, then turn down heat slightly and let bubble to reduce by about a quarter. Season the reduced mixture with salt and pepper.

Put bread crumbs in a bowl, add the Parmesan, parsley and some pepper, and toss.

Pour the mustard-creme over the asparagus, then scatter the crumb mixture on top, distributing evenly. Drizzle over the rest of the melted butter. Bake until top is crisp and golden and the cream bubbles up around the sides of the dish, 15 to 20 minutes. Sprinkle with remaining thyme leaves and serve.