

Whole Roasted Romanesco with Herby Ranch & Fried Leeks

Serves 2-4 | 20 minutes prep + 45-60 minutes cook time

Served whole, romanesco's bright green fractals make this eye-catching dish perfect as a side or main course.

1 whole Romanesco cauliflower

1 leek

¼ cup parsley, roughly chopped

2 instant dashi packets

olive oil, for frying + more as needed

¼ cup sour cream

¼ cup Mayo (Duke's or Kewpie, both work great)

1-2 tablespoons of heavy cream

dried oregano, to taste

dried thyme, to taste

purple stripe garlic, to taste (at least 1 teaspoon, up to 1 tablespoon)

toasted onion powder, to taste (at least 1 teaspoon, up to 1 tablespoon)

salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

For the Romanesco

Step 1 Preheat your oven to 400°

Step 2 Using the paring knife, trim the bottom leaves and as much of the core of the romanesco as possible while keeping it intact

Step 3 Meanwhile, bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add 2 instant dashi packets and several tablespoons of kosher salt. The water should taste like the ocean.

Step 4 Oil a sheet pan. When the water is boiling, slowly add the whole romanesco to the pot and poach for 3-5 minutes. Remove the romanesco and place on the sheet pan.

Step 5 Roast romanesco in the oven at 400° for 30 minutes, and test with a knife; there should be little to no resistance.

Step 6 While the romanesco roasts, fry your chopped leeks:

For the leeks

Step 1 Trim leeks, split lengthwise, and soak in cool water for 10 minutes to remove dirt.

Step 2 Set a cast iron or other heavy-bottom skillet over high heat and add at least an inch of olive oil.

Step 3 Remove the leeks from the water, rinse, pat dry, and slice crosswise.

Step 4 Use a thermometer to check the temperature of the oil; when it reaches 375°, the leeks are ready to fry.

Step 5 Working in batches, fry the leeks until lightly but uniformly browned. Using a slotted spoon or spider strainer, transfer the leeks to a plate lined with a paper towel to drain.

For the herby ranch

To a large mixing bowl, add the mayo, sour cream, a healthy drizzle of olive oil, dried herbs, garlic powder, toasted onion powder, and freshly ground pepper. Mix well, adding the cream to loosen into a pourable consistency, and season to taste with salt.

To serve

Step 1 Place the romanesco on a serving dish, and score deeply crosswise through the middle. You want to make crevasses for the ranch dressing.

Step 2 Pour the dressing over the romanesco, top with crispy leeks and chopped parsley. Serve immediately.