

Roasted Cauliflower Rosemary Gratin



Servings 4-6

Gratin. A word with many translations and dish of many variations. A French word, pronounced “Grawh-tAHn”, can be used as a verb, adjective, adverb, noun or snobby comment. Gratin, the noun, can be dishes placed near an oven’s top broiler coil to develop browned crusts which explains why gratin is slang for an elite or “upper crust” event or person in France. Au Gratin indicates the crust includes cheese or bread crumbs. All these semantics can be ignored after tossing some simple, flavorful ingredients together (usually with a béchamel or mornay sauce) and baking them.

Ingredients

- 1 large head cauliflower (around 2 pounds) outer leaves removed, cut into 1 ½-2” pieces or florets
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup rosemary béchamel (*see separate recipe or a brief description version below*)
- 1 cup shredded gruyere, divided (*or semi-hard/soft cheese of choice*)

Steps

1. Heat oven to 450°F. Place a rack at the lowest level and one 3-4 inches from the oven ceiling or top broiler coil.
2. Place the florets on a rimmed baking sheet, drizzle with oil and sprinkle with salt. To maximize browning, rub florets in oil and place cut sides of florets against the pan.
3. Bake on the second lowest rack for 10 minutes or until you see browning on the underside of the florets. Move the sheet to the higher rack to develop some flavorful browning on top (about 6-8 minutes) or until it is tender.
4. While the cauliflower cooks, make the béchamel or warm a pre-made béchamel. Add ⅓ cup of cheese to warm béchamel (making it a mornay sauce), stir until melted.
5. Transfer finished cauliflower to baking dish, pour the sauce evenly over the cauliflower. Sprinkle on the remaining ⅓ cup cheese. Place under the broiler for 2-4 minutes or until browned.

Simple béchamel instructions: Add 1 tablespoon unsalted butter and 1 ½ tablespoons flour (so 4 ½ teaspoons) to a pot over medium heat. When butter melts, stir with whisk and cook 2 minutes. Pour in 1 cup warm milk and whisk vigorously. Add ¼ teaspoon salt and cook until thickened, about 5-8 minutes. If scenting with rosemary, add 2 sprigs halfway through cooking and remove when cooled or before serving or storing.