

## Cauliflower Cheese with Crisp Parsley Breadcrumbs

Carolyn T's  
Main Cookbook

Servings: 4

Author: Chef Rick Stein, interviewed on Radio New Zealand, 2004



**1 large cauliflower**  
**salt and freshly ground black pepper**  
**CREAMY CHEESE SAUCE:**  
**1 small onion, halved**  
**4 cloves garlic**  
**2 cups milk (450 ml)**  
**1 whole bay leaf**  
**5 whole peppercorns**  
**2 tablespoons butter**  
**2 tablespoons all-purpose flour**  
**6 ounces sharp cheddar cheese, or hard farmhouse cheese, crumbled**  
**1 tsp English mustard**  
**PARSLEY BREADCRUMBS:**  
**1 tablespoon unsalted butter**  
**1/2 cup bread crumbs, white bread**  
**2 tablespoons chopped parsley**

Categories: Vegies/Sides

**Blog: Carolyn T's Blog:**  
<http://tastingspoons.com>

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*Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 413 Calories; 28g Fat (59.9% calories from fat); 18g Protein; 24g Carbohydrate; 2g Dietary Fiber; 84mg Cholesterol; 525mg Sodium. Exchanges: 1 Grain(Starch); 1 1/2 Lean Meat; 1 Vegetable; 1/2 Non-Fat Milk; 4 1/2 Fat; 0 Other Carbohydrates.*

*Notes: To make this at the last minute requires deft handling - make the sauce first, steam the cauliflower and while it's steaming for the 3-4 minutes, make the breadcrumbs. The cheese doesn't get added into the sauce until the last minute, so it can sit on the stove for a few minutes without heat. Drain the cauliflower, add the cheese to the sauce, stir, pour over the top and sprinkle the cheese and breadcrumbs on top just as the rest of the meal is served. Don't try to be making anything else while you're making the veg.*

*Description: You'll get raves for this one.*

1. SAUCE: into a 2-quart saucepan add the milk, then the onion halves, garlic, bay leaf and peppercorns. Bring to the boil then remove from the heat and set aside for 20 minutes to infuse.
2. Strain the milk through a sieve and discard the flavoring ingredients. Melt the butter in a non-stick saucepan, add the flour and cook over a medium heat for one minute. Gradually beat in the milk and bring to the boil, stirring. Simmer very gently for 10 minutes, giving it an occasional stir. It will thicken some.
3. CAULIFLOWER: Meanwhile, cut the cone-shaped core from the centre of the cauliflower with a small sharp knife and cut the cauliflower into florets. Put 1/2 cup of water and 1/2 teaspoon of salt into a saucepan large enough to hold the cauliflower and bring to the boil. Add the cauliflower, cover and steam for five minutes only.
4. BREADCRUMBS: Meanwhile, for the parsley breadcrumbs, melt the butter in a frying pan, add the crumbs and stir over a medium heat for 3-4 minutes until crisp and golden. Stir in some salt and pepper. Turn the heat to very low and have everything else ready to serve.
5. Remove the sauce from the heat and stir in all but a small handful of the cheese together with the cream, mustard and some seasoning to taste. Drain the cauliflower and place in a warmed shallow oval dish, then pour over the sauce and scatter with the remaining cheese. Stir the parsley into the crisp breadcrumbs, sprinkle over the top and serve.