

Asparagus Soup with Dippy Egg



Serves 4

Prep 30 mins

Cooking 30 mins

Easy

Ingredients

700g asparagus, woody ends discarded
25g unsalted butter
4 spring onions, finely sliced
1 tbsp plain flour
900 ml vegetable stock

1/4 lemon, pips removed
2 tbsp parsley, chopped
75 ml double cream
4 medium eggs
olive oil, to drizzle, optional

1. Trim the asparagus tips from the stalks & chop into 2.5 cm lengths, reserve all.
2. In a large pan, melt the butter and fry the asparagus tips for about 3 mins until softened. Remove with a slotted spoon and reserve to garnish the soup.
3. Put the pan back on the heat, add the onions and fry for 3-5 mins until softened. Add the asparagus stalks and fry for 2 mins. Stir in the flour and cook for 1 min, Gradually add the stock, then add the lemon quarters and chopped parsley to the pan. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 10 mins, until the asparagus is tender. Discard the lemon halves.
4. Use a stick blender and purée until smooth. Return the soup to the pan and stir in the cream. Season and keep warm over a low heat while you poach the eggs.
5. Poach the eggs in a pan of gently simmering water for 3-4 mins, until the whites are set and the yolk remains soft. Lift an egg out with a slotted spoon and transfer to a shallow dish of warm water. Repeat with the remaining egg.
6. Ladle the soup into bowls and top each with a poached egg. Divide the reserved asparagus tips among the bowls and season with black pepper.
7. Tip: poach the eggs up to a day ahead: poach for 2 mins only, until just set, then plunge directly into a sealable container filled with cold water. Cover & chill until needed. When ready, gently lift the eggs out of the cold water & add to a large pan of boiling water. Warm through for 2 mins for soft, 4 mins for a firmer set.
8. Get ahead: Make the soup up to the end of step 4 up to a day ahead, cool, then cover and chill. Reheat gently, then complete recipe to serve.