

Sweet Summer Corn Soup



The Chef:

Gavin Kaysen

His Restaurant:

Spoon and Stable
in Minneapolis

What he is known for:

Masterful Mediterranean-style cooking with Midwestern ingredients. Bringing world-class culinary chops to his hometown.

IT'S NO SMALL thing, walking away from a position like director of culinary operations for chef Daniel Boulud's ever-expanding culinary empire. But Gavin Kaysen had his reasons. "Leaving New York felt natural because my family is in Minnesota," said Mr. Kaysen. "The way I look at it is: If you cook good food, people are going to find you."

Mr. Kaysen built a restaurant, Spoon and Stable, in his hometown of Minneapolis, and, indeed, they came. "People are driving here from Chicago and all over," Mr. Kaysen said. "It's crazy." For those who haven't made it there yet, this corn soup, Mr. Kaysen's third Slow Food Fast contribution, does a pretty good job of distilling the pure, appealing flavors Spoon and Stable has become known for.

The soup is a celebration of sweet summer corn, at its peak right now. It tells a story, too. "I used to get corn from this farm stand with my dad growing up," Mr. Kaysen said. "We'd shuck it and just boil it. That's the memory I think of when making this."

Here the stripped cobs simmer along with their kernels in a bath of stock and cream so all their starchy sweetness seeps out into the soup's base. Then the cobs come out and the soup is puréed. The result—smooth, velvety, full of flavor—will delight anyone with happy recollections of simple summertime suppers, in the Midwest or elsewhere. "When we ask the question, 'Is it Midwestern?' " Mr. Kaysen said, "a lot of that has to do with, 'Is it accessible?' " —*Kitty Greenwald*

TOTAL TIME: 50 minutes SERVES: 4

¼ pound butter
1 cup thinly sliced leeks, whites only
½ cup thinly sliced yellow onions
2 cloves garlic, minced

4½ cups corn kernels (from 4-6 ears), cobs reserved
4 cups vegetable or chicken stock
½ cup heavy cream
Salt and freshly ground

black pepper
½ lime
4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
Chopped chives, for garnish

1. Melt butter in a medium stock pot over medium heat. Sauté leeks, onions and garlic until onions are translucent, about 6 minutes. Add 4 cups corn kernels, reserved cobs and just enough stock to cover corn. Increase heat to medium-high and simmer until stock absorbs flavors of other ingredients, about 35 minutes. Stir in cream and simmer until soup thickens, 10-15 minutes more. Remove cobs and discard.
2. Use a blender or food processor to purée soup until smooth. (For an even smoother soup, pass it through a

fine-mesh sieve.) Season soup with salt, pepper and lime juice to taste. Return soup to pan and keep warm over low heat.

3. Prepare garnishes: Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a small sauté pan over medium-high heat. Sauté remaining corn kernels until warmed through, about 2 minutes. Season with salt.
4. To serve: Ladle soup into bowls. Drizzle each serving with some of remaining olive oil and garnish with sautéed corn kernels and chives.



FOOD RESCUE Before you throw those cobs away, simmer them to extract every last bit of corny flavor.