

While we have had some tantalising hints that spring is on the way, there are still some chilled days that send me reaching for a nice comforting bowl of soup. So that is what I'm offering you this time, a lovely bowl of satisfying soup making the most of leeks and celeriac.

Celeriac, although much maligned by some (my husband included), is one of my absolute favourite vegetables! I love it cubed and roasted with lots of other veg, raw in slaws and salads, blended in soups, turned into a lovely light mash, or even coated in herbs and spices and roasted whole, it is incredibly versatile. It can be used as a lighter, lower-carbohydrate, nightshade-free, potato alternative, and boasts good levels of vitamins B6, C and K, potassium, and manganese.

Leeks are considered a prebiotic food, that is to say they contain fibres (in this case inulin) that feed the good bacteria in our guts, helping them to thrive. Other members of the allium family, including garlic and onions also contain this beneficial fibre. Leeks are also good sources of vitamins B, C, A, and K, folic acid, manganese, and iron.

This soup is mild but flavoursome and makes a lovely lunch or starter.

### **Celeriac and Leek Soup**

(serves 6)

1 celeriac (peeled and cut into cubes)

1 leek (trimmed and roughly sliced)

1 onion (diced)

1 tin of white beans (e.g. cannellini or haricot)

2 garlic cloves (chopped)

leaves from a small bunch of thyme

2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

4 cups of stock

pinch of pepper

Optional extras: crispy onions and chopped parsley to top

Pop a large saucepan on a medium-high heat, add the olive oil and onions and sweat until softened. Add the celeriac, leeks, garlic, and thyme and continue to sweat for a further 5 minutes.

Add the beans, pepper and stock, and simmer for around 20 minutes until the vegetables are tender.

Blend until smooth and serve with a swirl of crème fraiche.

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