

double recipe

Lithuanian Carrot Baba

Serves 6

This is the Lithuanian vegetable *baba* (as in yeast *baba* cake). It is a rather elegant way of preparing almost any kind of root vegetable. The recipe originates in Lithuania, but I had it prepared by Isak Katzen in Maryland in the United States on my last trip there. The original had smoked fish added.

85g (3oz) butter

2 tbsp olive oil

3 shallots, peeled and finely chopped

800g (1lb 12oz) carrots, peeled and grated

2 apples, peeled, cored and grated

50g (1³/₄oz) golden sultanas

150ml (5fl oz) sour cream

1 large egg yolk, beaten

1 tsp clear honey

1/4 tsp ground coriander

1/4 tsp ground cumin

salt and pepper

150g (5¹/₂oz) brioche breadcrumbs

Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4.

In a large non-stick pan, melt 20g of the butter and the olive oil and cook the shallots until soft. Add the carrot, apple and sultanas, and continue cooking for another 5-7 minutes, stirring all the time. Remove from the heat. Butter a medium baking tray and pour in the carrot mixture.

In a small, heavy based saucepan, melt 50g butter. Remove from the heat and allow to cool a little.

In a mixing bowl, mix the sour cream, melted butter, egg yolk, honey, coriander and cumin together. Season with salt and pepper. Pour this beaten mixture over the carrot mixture in the baking tray.

In a separate small frying pan, brown the brioche breadcrumbs in a little more butter for about 2 minutes. Sprinkle on top of the carrot and sour cream mixture and bake for 25-30 minutes, until golden brown.

