Gratin of Celery Root and Yukon Gold Potatoes

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We adapted this recipe from David Rosengarten's "Dean & DeLuca Cookbook." Rosengarten is the Eric Clapton of the kitchen. His wine reviews are pretty damned good, too. Our version of this dish is a bit richer than the original, as if that were needed. The Raclette gives this a neat funky quality that matches better with wine.

2 lbs celery root, peeled and cubed
2 lbs Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and cubed
1 c cream
1/2 c butter
1 tsp saffron
2 cloves garlic, minced
1-1/2 c Gruyere, grated
1 c Raclette, grated
Salt and pepper
1/2 c Italian parsley, chopped

Boil the celery root and potatoes separately in salted water until each is soft. Strain and set aside.

Heat the cream until it boils, then stir in the butter, saffron, and garlic. Reduce the heat, then simmer for 5 minutes until the saffron is extracted and the mixture slightly thickened. Set aside.

Puree the celery root (Rosengarten suggests a food processor; I prefer a hand-held Braun puree thingamabob), while gradually adding the cream sauce. Mash the potatoes coarsely, or use a ricer if you want a smoother texture. Combine the potato, celery root, and one cup of the Gruyere; season to taste with salt and pepper.

Spread the mixture in a greased oven-proof dish, top with the remaining cheese and the parsley, then bake in a preheated 400 degree oven until the top is browned.

Our favorite wine match is a non-oaked sauvignon blanc like a good sancerre, though a gruner veltliner would also be terrific. Acidity and a herbal/vegetal character is a plus.

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