



LE SOUPER FIN

Recipe by Daniel de La Falaise

Photograph by Philippe Lacombe

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● In the realm of food and the senses, ingredients are measured by vitality. Think of a fruit: its beauty, scent, texture, flavor and taste. First, it seduces the eye and then, when you bite in—if it's perfectly ripe—it will taste just as it smells. The French peasant term for any meal is *la soupe*. You don't dine, you soup! Bread garnishes a bowl, and a ladle of soup from an ever-simmering cauldron is poured on it. This timeless action is embodied in the word that soup is derived from, the Latin *suppare*, to soak. As in: broth poured onto bread, providing a nutritious and sustaining meal. *Au château*, precisely the same action occurs. *Le souper fin* is perhaps even prepared by the very same hand, and so changes little more than in name. The vitality of food is qualified first by the integrity of the land. Little matter who owns it, soil is an incubator for life. Land seamlessly forms a timeless bond between aristocrat and peasant—despite the plutocrat having grabbed the keys, seeking to exact a rent for what has been since time immemorial a birthright: seed, stock and water. Sun, water and moon enable seed sown to germinate. Young roots drop into the fragile skin of the earth, draw upon soluble minerals and nutrients, garner strength and crest eager-stemmed crowns toward sunlight. Soil has identity: *terroir*. *Marquis* and *paysan*, who share the same land, both pour a splash of wine upon a crust of bread to clean their soup plate. "Pour guérir faisons chabrot!"

SERVES 6

SIMMER TIME: 40 MINUTES

Ingredients:

- The flesh of a butternut squash coarsely chopped
- A skinned chicken thigh
- A bouquet of sage, parsley and bay leaf
- An onion or two, peeled, halved and quartered
- A muslin bundle containing the bruised butternut seeds
- Olive oil, fleur de sel and abundant parsley for garnish

To "make garbure, façon souper fin":

Place all the ingredients into a cast iron cauldron and cover with an index finger's depth of mineral water. Bring to a gentle simmer over fire and let cook until done to taste. Season for salt, garnish with roughly chopped parsley and a slick of extra virgin olive oil. Bring the pot straight to the table with a ladle and serve.

To "faire chabrot":

- A last spoonful of garbure
- A crust of bread
- A glass of *Château Lafitte*

Break bread into your last spoonful of soup, pour wine on it and drink up—*faire chabrot!*

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