



Cold Avocado Soup

SLCC Student Jim Reed

Jim Reed is blazing a trail at the Culinary Institute as a blind person working to become a chef.

Navigating a busy, crowded, commercial kitchen, he challenges himself, his classmates and faculty to learn from and adapt to each other along the way. Born and raised in the Chicago area, Reed gradually lost his sight during college in Montana, due to a recessive gene that causes retinitis pigmentosa. He eventually

earned a master's degree in public administration. He learned to cook at the Louisiana Center for the Blind while he learned how to adjust to his new life. He now works for the State of Utah teaching blind people how to navigate and cook in a kitchen, among other things. "I'm not going to let much get in my way," Reed says about his goal to become a chef.



SLCC CULINARY ARTS



Cold Avocado Soup

Ingredients

2 medium poblano chiles
2 small white onions, sliced into
1/4 inch-thick rings
5 cups low-salt chicken broth; more
as needed
4 medium firm-to-ripe avocados
(6 to 7 oz. each), pitted, peeled and cut
into large chunks
1 cup chopped fresh cilantro
1/4 cup chopped, fresh, flat-leaf parsley
4 tsp. chopped, fresh marjoram or oregano
(optional)
1/2 cup fresh lime juice
(from 4 medium limes)
2 tsp. ground cumin
1 tsp. ground coriander
kosher salt
1 cup plain, whole-milk yogurt
2 tsp. extra-virgin olive oil
1 cup pepitas (pumpkin seeds, sunflower
seeds or almonds)
1/4 tsp. pure, New Mexico chile powder;
more for serving directions

On a gas stove, turn a burner to high and set the poblano directly over the flame, turning it with tongs, until completely charred, 5 to 8 minutes. Or alternatively, in an electric oven, heat the broiler on high and char the poblano on all sides on a baking sheet placed directly under the broiler. Put the poblano in a bowl, cover and set aside to steam and let the skin loosen. When cool enough to handle, peel, seed and cut the poblano into 1/4 inch dice.

Heat an 11- to 12-inch cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat, add the onion and cook, turning a few times, until soft and browned in places, about 5 minutes.

Set aside 1 tbs. of the diced poblano. In a blender, purée the remainder of the poblano, onion, broth, avocado, cilantro, parsley, marjoram or oregano (if using), 2 tbs. of the lime juice, cumin, coriander and 1 tsp. salt. Blend in the yogurt. Season to taste with more salt. Chill well.

Heat the oil in a 10-inch skillet over medium heat. Add the pepitas and cook until they begin to pop and color a bit, about 3 minutes. Add the remaining 2 tbs. lime juice, the chile powder, and 1/8 tsp. salt. Stir until the juice has evaporated, leaving a film on the pan.

Season the soup to taste with salt and thin with broth if necessary. Divide among 6 cups or small bowls and garnish with the pepitas, the remaining poblano and a few pinches of chile powder.

