White Bean Veloute

"This is my favourite winter warmer. At the restaurant we use the very scarce Heereboontjie but you can substitute the heereboon for any dried white bean." Chef Eric Bulpitt

Ingredients

- 500 g white beans (salted overnight)
- 2 L water
- 1 carrot (whole)
- 1 onion (whole)
- 1 stick celery
- 2 bay leaves
- 10 peppercorns
- 2 sprigs of thyme

- 500 g cream
- 500 g milk
- 20 g Grana Padano/parmesan cheese
- 100 g butter
- 1 lemon, juiced

Topping:
- 2 pears
- 2 Tbs hazelnuts
- 2 Tbs butter

Method

Place the soaked beans in a large sauce pot and fill with water. Bring to the boil and skim off any foam forming on the top. Add all the vegetables whole to the beans and cook until soft. Keep the beans and liquid and dispose of the vegetables. Add cream and milk and place back into the pot and bring back to summer. Remove from heat and blend until smooth and creamy, adding the cooking liquid to adjust to the desired consistency. Season to taste and then add butter and lemon juice while blending. In a saucepan, caramelize the pears and reserve for the garnish. Brown the butter and add crushed hazelnuts for garnish.

Wine pairing: Avondale Anima Chenin Blanc