

Cocoa Croque Monsieur

Cocoa Caramelized Onions

- 2 onions, peeled and sliced
- 1 tbsp. butter
- 1 tsp. salt
- 2 really big cloves of garlic or 4 smaller ones, chopped
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 oz. dark chocolate, chopped

Heat a 2-quart saucepan over medium heat. Add the butter, then the onions and salt. Stir to coat the onions, then put a lid on it and turn the heat to low. Every five minutes or so, stir the onions. Keep at it until they are starting to brown and caramelize (about 45 minutes). When the onions are soft and starting to brown, add the balsamic vinegar and the chocolate. Stir to combine and melt the chocolate.

Remove from the heat and transfer to a jar. This will keep in the refrigerator for probably 2 weeks, but I have never had it around long enough to test it!

For the Sandwich

- the best sourdough or French bread you can get your hands on, sliced
- the best Gruyere type cheese you can get your hands on, sliced
- the best ham you can get your hands on, deli sliced
- the best butter you can get your hands on, softened

(As you can tell, this is another free-form recipe) Butter the outside of your bread. On the inside (Not the buttered side) of one slice of bread, place the sliced gruyere, then the ham. On the inside of the other slice, spread a generous amount of the cocoa caramelized onions. Flip this over on the other slice so the onions meet the ham.

Heat a heavy skillet over medium heat. Place the sandwich on the skillet and turn the heat to low. When the underside of the bread is toasty brown, flip the sandwich and brown the other side. Keep flipping as necessary until the cheese melts.

Remove to a cutting board, cut the way you like your sandwiches cut, and enjoy your little slice of heaven.

As an aside, this onion compote is also delicious as a bruschetta. Just slather it on a slice of toasted bread, top with Brie and melt in the oven. You could add rosemary or thyme to the onions, some sort of fruit to the Brie; the possibilities are endless. You could also use it as a sauce for a new-age pizza, a condiment for braised meats, on a burger.....