



## Chicory gratin with bacon

**1** Preheat the oven to 180°C (~355°F) and prepare the gratin dish or baking form with a little butter or olive oil.

**2** Remove any outer, limp leaves of the chicory heads, slice lengthways in two halves (wash if necessary), cut out the bitter core and arrange in the dish, cut side up. Dust with sugar to balance the bitterness, decorate with stripes of bacon and small pieces of butter and bake in the oven for about 10 to 15 minutes (the tips of the chicory may turn light brown and the bacon will have become a little crisp).

**3** Remove from the oven and turn the heat up to 200°C (~390 °F). Spoon some of the melted butter over the chicory halves and season with coarse sea salt and freshly ground black pepper. Mix breadcrumbs and freshly grated Parmesan cheese, then graciously cover the chicory with them. In case you have a few older bread rolls sitting around, cut them up in smaller pieces and let your blender do the rest until you're happy with the size of crumbs. Fresh thyme leaves and some more butter pieces are optional.

**4** Bake in the oven for a few more minutes (5-10), until the crust takes on a nice, golden brown color and the chicory has become almost translucent and soft. I usually turn the oven fan on as well as the grill, but be alert, this will accelerate the process a lot - keep an eye on it.

**5** Release from the oven, serve as an appetizer or together with boiled potatoes as a main dish and find out, that chicory despite its well manifested bitter rep, can be your best friend ;)



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*own creation*

Prep time: 10min., baking: 20-25min.

### Ingredients (serves 2):

- \* for the baking form: a little butter or olive oil
- \* 3 to 4 heads chicory, cleaned and halved
- \* 2-3 tbsp sugar
- \* ~50 g butter
- \* 4-5 thin slices of bacon or Pancetta, cut in smaller stripes
- \* coarse sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- \* ~5 tbsp breadcrumbs
- \* ~5 tbsp freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- \* optional: a few fresh thyme leaves