Sweet Potato and Roasted Garlic Soup

Serves 4 – 6
This warming winter soup uses sweet potatoes that are now readily available, but you can of course substitute ordinary potatoes in the recipe if you wish.

- 2 whole garlic bulbs
- 1 – 1¼ litres stock (chicken or vegetable)
- 2 tbs oil
- 2 tbs thyme leaves – removed from stems
- 2 onions – coarsely chopped
- 6 tbs crème fraiche
- 1 kg sweet potatoes – peeled and coarsely chopped
- chopped french parsley to garnish

Heat the oven to 350F, Gas mark 4 or 180C. Separate the garlic into individual cloves and put onto a small baking tray – unpeeled. Drizzle with 1 tbs of the oil and roast for about 15 minutes until soft. Set aside to cool.

Heat the remaining oil in a large pan and gently cook the onions until very soft and only just coloured. Add the sweet potato pieces and the thyme leaves. Cover with a lid and leave to sweat for a further 5 minutes.

Add 1 litre of the stock and simmer the pan gently uncovered for 30 minutes or until the vegetables are very tender. Squeeze the roasted garlic out of its papery peel into a small bowl. Stir this garlic pulp into the soup and simmer for a further 5 minutes.

Blend the soup to a smooth puree adding the remaining stock if it is too thick, stir in the crème fraiche and add seasoning to taste.