

VEGAN SOUPS
AND HEARTY
STEWES FOR ALL
SEASONS

NAVA ATLAS

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Vegan Express

The Vegetarian Family Cookbook

The Vegetarian 5-ingredient Gourmet

Pasta East to West

Great American Vegetarian

Vegetarian Express

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Vegetarian Celebrations

VEGAN

SOUPS *and* HEARTY STEWS

for ALL SEASONS

Nava Atlas

Broadway Books
New York

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INTRODUCTION AND BASICS

Soups have always held a prominent spot in my culinary repertoire, being one of the easiest, yet most rewarding, of all preparations in the kitchen. One hardly needs to go beyond the most basic of ingredients and equipment to create a wonderfully diverse range of possibilities and results: A soup might be familiar and soothing, evoking memories of the warmth and comfort of a childhood home, or it might be a melange of sophisticated flavors that meld together in a pleasantly unexpected way. Or with a bit less liquid and a tad more chunkiness of texture, the result is stew—a savory and satisfying one-pot meal.

Soups and stews are welcome at any time of year, reflecting the harvest of each season. Good soups and stews can:

- brighten a humdrum winter day and give comfort when colds and viruses hit
- showcase the tender new produce of spring or the bounty of fall's harvest
- transform the lush diversity of summer's fruits and vegetables into refreshing elixirs

This new edition (this book's fourth) reflects the decision I made a few years ago to go vegan, following in the footsteps of my sons. My husband and I raised our sons as lacto-ovo vegetarians from birth; our youngest son, at age 10, decided to become a vegan for ethical reasons. Our older son, then not quite 13, followed suit shortly thereafter. Inspired by their conviction, it didn't take long for my husband and me to join them.

Being vegan in the 21st century is not much different from being a vegetarian. There are many substitutions for dairy products (including soy, rice, and nut-based milks, cheeses, and the like), and unless you crave omelets, it's surprisingly easy to dispense with eggs in the diet. I love to bake, and happily discovered that eggs are just not necessary to make good baked goods. This is reflected in the revised chapter of accompaniments, which includes quick breads, muffins, biscuits, and such.

Veganism is primarily about ethics—what we put on our plates reflects ideals about having compassion toward all living beings, saving the environment from the ravages of animal agriculture, and preventing diseases caused by the Western diet. But veganism is also about enjoyment of great food—vegans may have political palates, but they are also quite discerning. The many vegan restaurants that have sprung up everywhere over the last decade feature some of the most creative, delicious food anywhere, and the gourmet food industry aimed squarely at the vegan market has blossomed tremendously. This love for fantastic fare served with a clear conscience is most gratifying in one's own kitchen.

From one soup lover to another, here are scores of soups for any time of year. It almost goes without saying that you need not be a vegan—or even a vegetarian—to enjoy these recipes. Low in fat, high in fiber, and globally inspired, they are for everyone who appreciates fresh and flavorful seasonal produce, whole grains, healthful beans, legumes, and soyfoods, with the judicious use of herbs, spices, and other seasonings. Best of all is the sense of comfort and wonderful aromas imparted by a big pot of simmering soup or stew, whetting the appetite like nothing else can.

COOKING NOTES

Beans: canned vs. cooked from scratch

Beans of all sorts are one of the cornerstones of vegan and vegetarian soup making. They're not only a superb low-fat, high-fiber protein source, but also add great flavor and texture to soups. In instances where beans are the primary ingredient of a soup, such as in Black Bean Soup (page 38) or Spicy Chili Bean Stew (page 67), dried beans are called for, so that they become the base of the soup. In most cases where a smaller amount of cooked beans is needed, I specify canned beans. Busy cooks are loathe to take the time and trouble to cook a small amount of beans from scratch, unless, of course, the extra is saved for later use or for freezing. By all means, if you prefer to cook beans from scratch no matter what, I will not discourage you.

That said, I'd rather people use canned beans than forgo them altogether. There are several excellent organic brands to be found in natural food stores and well-stocked supermarkets. The advantage of these, aside from the obvious one (that they are organic), is that they are less salty than commercial brands. When using canned beans, I recommend draining and rinsing them of their salty liquid, which helps to mitigate the sodium factor. And of course, you can be more judicious when salting a soup that is made with canned beans.

Cooking equipment

The soups in this book are simple enough to require only the most basic of kitchen equipment. Aside from a large soup pot or Dutch oven, of course, the items needed are standard to most any kitchen: wooden spoons for stirring, a colander for washing leeks and leafy vegetables, a grater, measuring utensils, and good knives. For the devoted soup cook, I heartily recommend an immersion blender (see next page) or food processor for pureed soups; the food processor is also useful for making occasional grating easier and quicker.

Freezing soups

Some soups freeze well, but others lose much of their flavor and texture. Thick winter bean and grain soups do pretty well, as do simple broths and stocks. Freezing often changes the texture of a smooth puree, making it more watery. Avoid freezing soups that contain potatoes or lentils, both of which turn quite mushy. I don't recommend freezing soups containing raw ingredients, as in certain chilled soups. The soups in this book generally don't yield such enormous quantities to warrant long-term storage of leftovers. I prefer finishing most soups while they are fresh rather than after they have been frozen and thawed.

Immersion blender

This is a compact, inexpensive gadget featuring a small puree blade on the end of a wand. I love it and find it indispensable, not only for blending soups, but for making the fruit smoothies that we love in our household. Insert the blender into the pot of soup, press the button, and blend! It's also easy to clean and easy to store.

Oil and margarine

As you'll soon see, my oil of choice in most soups is olive oil. Unless extra-virgin is specified (in those instances when its more assertive flavor is desired), you can use any kind of lighter olive oil, such as pure. On occasion, I will call for no hydrogenated margarine. My favorite brand is Earth Balance. If you shop mostly in the supermarket, its equivalent is Smart Balance, which is made by the same company.

Organic ingredients

I like to use organic produce exclusively. I like to support organic growers, and I do not want my family to ingest pesticides. I'm well aware that the standards for organic produce have been watered down, and that "drift" is an issue; however, by using organic produce as much as possible, it's a matter of doing the best that one can. I encourage you to do so, too. In the warmer months, our family belongs to an organic community farm that is just a mile from our home. Using local produce as much as possible is also kind to the earth, and having access to produce that was picked the same day it is used is the ultimate culinary pleasure. If you can't use organic produce all the

time, use it as often as you can. I also recommend using organic grains as well as canned and frozen products. Canned tomatoes and beans, and frozen corn and peas are ingredients often used in soups, for instance, and organic versions of these and other products are excellent.

Seasonings for soups

The success of a meatless soup depends primarily on the flavor and freshness of its main ingredients, and next, on using a variety of seasonings, both dried and fresh. Dried seasonings are added early in the cooking process, of course, and fresh herbs at the end.

Quantities of seasonings given in soup recipes—in this book or others—should be tailored to individual tastes. As a perennial soup enthusiast, I have always loved to experiment with a pinch of this spice, a quarter teaspoon of this herb, and a half teaspoon of that. That's part of the fun and artistry of making soup.

After motherhood intervened, I enjoyed the practicality of making a big pot of soup that would last several days, but I began leaning toward recipes that could be made simply and quickly. The best time-saver I discovered was eliminating the need for measuring minute quantities of many herbs and spices and, instead, using purchased seasoning mixes whenever possible. Now that my sons are older and I can once again spend more time in the kitchen, I still enjoy the shortcuts afforded by spice blends, prepared broths, and broth starters like bouillon cubes and powders. There are many excellent natural brands—even organic options. They're readily available, they're tasty, and they're convenient. Why not use them?

There are many blends and brands around that are wonderfully suited to use in vegetarian and vegan soups, where small quantities of many seasonings add up to the zesty flavor needed to make any soup taste great. Feel free to experiment with the many varieties available. Here are the seasoning mixes I use most often in making soups:

Curry powder: Purchase this blend from a spice shop, natural food store, or Indian grocery, if possible. Use your sense of smell—curry powder should be fragrant and pungent. Different blends possess varying amounts of heat; how much is entirely up to your preference for hot vs. mild spiciness.

Italian herb seasoning: A blend of several herbs such as oregano, thyme, marjoram, and rosemary, this is commonly available at specialty outlets as well as supermarkets.

Salt-free seasoning: The savory blend of many different herbs and spices eliminates the need for excessive salting. This is an all-purpose way to add a complex flavor to soups. There are several good brands available in supermarkets and natural food stores. My favorites from the supermarket are salt-free Mrs. Dash Table Blend and McCormick Seasonings, which offers a few different all-purpose blends. From the natural food store, the aptly named Spike is a great product, as is Frontier All-Purpose Seasoning. There are other good brands; experiment with them and make good use of whichever you prefer.

Here are my favorite tips for seasoning soups and stews:

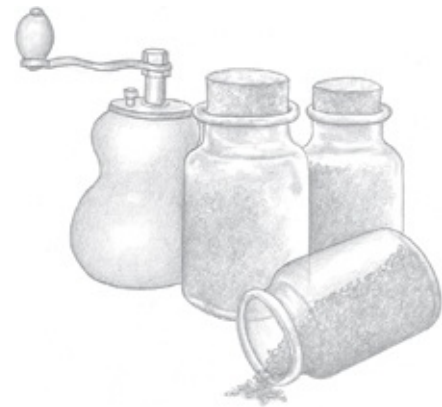
- Add salt toward the end of the cooking to give the other flavors a chance to develop and to avoid oversalting. Salt a little at a time, stir in thoroughly, and taste frequently.
- Those who need to limit their intake of salt might try adding lemon juice or more herbs and spices than called for.
- Where appropriate, a small amount of dry wine adds nice depth of flavor. I use wine in some of the soups, but you might like to experiment with it in other recipes.
- Add extra zest and heat to soups with minced fresh ginger. To my mind, even better than grating ginger from the root is to open a jar of minced ginger. As you know, fresh ginger can sometimes be dry and stringy. Ginger

People is my favorite brand. It's finely and evenly minced, moist, and fresh tasting—perfect for soup and so very convenient.

- Most important, use the amount of seasoning given here as a guide. Use more or less to suit your own taste and the palates of those to whom you will be serving soups and stews.

Textures and consistencies

Soup making, though essentially very simple, is an inexact science. For instance, what one cook considers a large potato might seem medium-sized to another, and so the amount of water or liquid called for in a recipe might not always yield precise results. The soup recipes here often remind the cook to adjust the consistency or thickness, and this, like salting, should be done according to preference. Some soups are meant to be very thick, and others to be thin and brothy, but most seem to fall somewhere in between, and thus should be tailored to your liking.



NOTES ON INGREDIENTS

Dairy alternatives

Rice milk: In the previous editions of this book, I called for low-fat milk or soymilk as options for milky soups. But now that this book has “gone vegan,” I totally prefer rice milk. Rice milk has a more neutral flavor, closer to the flavor and consistency of low-fat dairy milk. I think it just works better in soups than does soymilk, which has a somewhat sweet, “beany” undertone that is often too assertive, especially in delicately seasoned soups. Rice Dream Original Enriched is what I use. If, however, you have a preference for soymilk, that's your decision to make. Use plain soymilk wherever rice milk is specified.

Silk creamer: I call for this soy-based cream substitute in small amounts where a denser, creamy flavor is desired. Use the plain-flavored original, of course.

Nondairy cheeses and sour cream: For the few soups that previously called for cheese or soy cheese, I specify nondairy cheese in this edition. That's so readers can opt to use rice-or almond-based cheeses, as well as the more common soy cheese. Savvy vegans are well aware that many of these alternative cheeses contain a minute amount of casein, a milk protein that helps the cheese melt. Some vegans are comfortable with that, while others are not. My favorite brand is Vegan Gourmet, a meltable soy-based cheese made without casein. By the time this book sees print, it's possible that there will be other casein-free brands on the market.

Vegan sour cream: Most of the brands of nondairy sour cream are good for a start, but they are usually too clumpy coming out of their container. They need a little help to achieve a pleasant, sour cream-like texture. Please don't use the well-known national nondairy brand that starts with a “T” It occupies plenty of shelf space in many natural food

stores, but is almost pure junk food. Here's a simple recipe giving you the option of starting with a ready-made nondairy sour cream, or using silken tofu to create a delicious vegan sour cream for that perfect dollop atop a bowl of soup.

Vegan Sour Cream

Makes a little more than 1 cup, about 8 servings

1 cup crumbled firm or extra-firm silken tofu, or one 8-ounce container natural nondairy sour cream

2 to 3 tablespoons rice milk or Silk creamer, as needed

2 teaspoons lemon juice, or more to taste ¼ teaspoon salt, or to taste

Per serving:

Calories: 21 Total fat: 1 g Protein: 2 g Fiber: 0 g

Carbohydrate: 1 g Cholesterol: 0 mg Sodium: 88 mg

Combine all the ingredients in a food processor or the companion container to an immersion blender. Process until very smoothly pureed, then transfer to a container with an airtight lid. This keeps well for 3 to 4 days, refrigerated.

Of all the items on the menu, soup is that which exacts the most delicate perfection and the strictest attention.

—Auguste Escoffier (1846-1935)



EXPLANATION OF NUTRITIONAL ANALYSES

- All breakdowns are based on one serving. When a recipe gives a range in the number of servings, for example, 6 to 8 servings, the analysis is based on the average number of servings—in this example, 7 servings.
- When more than one ingredient is listed as an option, the first ingredient is used in the analysis. Usually, the optional ingredient will not change the analysis significantly.
- Ingredients listed as optional (for example, “chopped cashews for garnish, optional”) are not included in the analysis.
- When a recipe gives a range for an ingredient to use, e.g., ¼ to ½ cup rice milk, the analysis is based on the lesser amount.
- When salt is listed “to taste,” its sodium content is not included in the analysis.
- Canned tomato products are listed in 16- or 28-ounce quantities, though sometimes this may vary depending on brand. Imported tomato products often come in 14-ounce cans. The difference between using one or another in terms of the outcome of the analysis would be negligible, though please note that salt-free canned tomato products are specified. If you use a brand with sodium, that would definitely impact that portion of the analysis.
- In the recipes using canned beans, 16-ounce cans are called for, as that is what I figured would be most commonly used. I instruct the cook to drain and rinse the beans, which reduces the sodium content by about one-third. Please note that organic canned beans sometimes come in 15-ounce cans, and are almost always lower in sodium than commercial brands. If the latter is what you prefer to use, I would heartily recommend you continue to do so.
- The analyses provided in this book are sometimes based on using specific brands. When products are fairly generic, like salt-free diced tomatoes, it hardly matters what brand is used, in terms of the analyses. However, in a number of cases I had to make a decision to use a specific brand of a product for the analyses, since nutritional data varies somewhat from one to another. The outcome of any analysis won't be wildly different if you use a different brand of, let's say, soy cheese than I use, but I just want readers to know that there will be a slight difference in these cases.

STOCKS AND BROTHS

Contrary to culinary myth, the absence of a strong-flavored meat stock does not present a huge challenge to the creation of great soups and stews. Many ethnic cuisines produce classic soups that in their original form are completely vegetarian or vegan. True, almost any soup can benefit from a good stock to boost flavor, but I place fresh and flavorful ingredients and creative seasoning above stock in contributing to the success of a soup.

I would venture to say that most of the soup recipes in this book will work as well using water (with the help of a bouillon cube or two sometimes) as they will with a homemade or store-bought stock; still, it's useful to have stocks on hand when they're needed and to have a few basic recipes to refer to when you do have the inclination or a little extra time.

In the soup recipes in this book, I often list an amount of water needed plus a vegetable bouillon cube or two, as that

is the simplest method. With all the fresh ingredients and flavorings in the soups, this is generally sufficient for achieving a good, rich flavor. Once in a while, especially for brothy Asian soups, I suggest a 32-ounce carton of low-sodium vegetable broth as my first choice. There are many good natural and even organic brands of this kind of soup starter. Here are a few more options for creating a good soup base:

Basic vegetable stock: Okay, if you are a purist, you can make your stock from scratch. You need to allow an extra hour before making the actual soup to prepare and cook this stock. Truth be told, I no longer do this, and I don't expect you to, either. But there will be some people who prefer making their own stock, and for those individuals, I provide a good basic recipe on page 11.

Water with bouillon cubes or soup base: The easiest and most economical option. Look for a no-salt-added brand. My favorite is Rapunzel Vegan Vegetable Bouillon. It's packed with flavor, organic, and has no added sodium. Each cube is actually equivalent to two standard-sized cubes.

Vegetable broth powder: A tablespoon of this type of stock enhancer goes a long way in a pot of soup. However, I don't recommend it in the ingredients listings, as it's more difficult to find a low-sodium variety of this product than either bouillon cubes or prepared broths. However, if you come across a low-salt brand with all-natural ingredients, by all means give it a try.

Prepared vegetable broth: As mentioned earlier, I sometimes call for this product for brothy Asian soups. I like to use a 32-ounce aseptic carton (Pacific Organic and Health Valley are two brands to look for, among others) rather than canned broth. But it's your choice; canned vegetable broth can also be a good option, if it is all natural and low in sodium or salt-free.

Following are a handful of stocks and broths, the first two of which are suitable as soup bases. The remaining ones, in the Asian tradition, make good broths to be eaten on their own or lightly embellished.

Basic Vegetable Stock

Makes about 6 cups

This is a basic stock that may be used in place of water in most any vegetable soup to give added depth of flavor. It's also a good way to use up vegetables that are limp or less than perfectly fresh.

7 cups water

1 large onion, chopped

2 to 3 cloves garlic, minced

1 large carrot, sliced

2 large celery stalks, sliced

1 medium potato, scrubbed and diced

1 cup coarsely shredded green cabbage

2 teaspoons salt-free seasoning (see page 4 for brands)

Per cup:

Calories: 48 Total fat: 1 g Protein: 1 g Fiber: 2 g

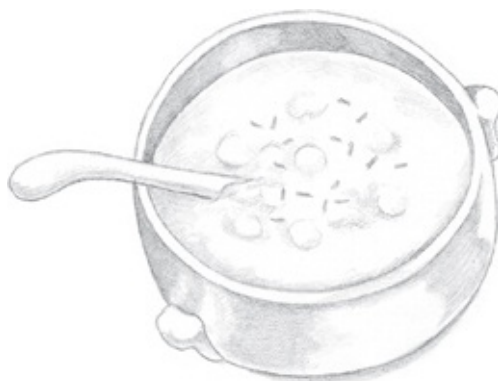
Carbohydrate: 11 g Cholesterol: 0 mg Sodium: 34 mg

Place all the ingredients in a large soup pot. Bring to a simmer, then cover and simmer gently over low heat for 40 to 45 minutes, or until the vegetables are quite tender. Strain the stock through a fine mesh strainer. Discard the solids or puree them and add to soup for a thicker consistency.

Soup breathes reassurance, it offers consolation; after a weary day it promotes sociability... There is nothing like a bowl of hot soup, its wisp of aromatic steam teasing the nostrils into quivering anticipation.

—Louis P. DeGouy

The Soup Book, 1949



Onion and Garlic Broth

Makes about 6 cups

This broth may be used as an extra-flavorful soup stock or as an alternative, with a little extra kick, to Basic Vegetable Stock. It's also a soothing remedy for the common cold!

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 large onion, chopped, or 2 medium leeks, white parts only, chopped and well rinsed

4 to 6 cloves garlic, minced

¼ cup dry red wine

6 cups water

Per cup:

Calories: 42 Total fat: 2 g Protein: 1 g Fiber: 1 g

Carbohydrate: 4 g Cholesterol: 0 mg Sodium: 9 mg

Onion: Humble kindred of the lily clan, rooted from obliuion by Alexander the Great and bestrewn by him, along with learning, to the ciuilised world, thus lending a touch of wisdom and sophistication to the whole.

—Delia Lutes

The Country Kitchen, 1938

Heat the oil in a 2-quart saucepan or small soup pot. Add the onion or leeks and saute over medium heat until golden.

Add the garlic and continue to saute until the onion or leeks brown lightly. Add the wine and water. Bring to a simmer, then cover and simmer gently over low heat for 30 to 40 minutes. You may leave the onions and garlic in if you wish, or strain the stock through a fine strainer. Discard the solids or puree them and add to soup for a thicker consistency.



Simple Miso Broth

Makes about 6 cups

Miso is a nutritious, high-protein product fermented from soybeans and salt (or a combination of soybeans, grains, and salt). Available at all natural food stores and Asian groceries (as is the sea vegetable kombu), pungent-tasting miso is most commonly used to make simple broths. Here is a basic recipe, which really should be considered a soup in itself rather than as a stock for making other soups. Note that once the miso is stirred into water, it should not be boiled. Otherwise, its beneficial enzymes will be destroyed.

1 recipe Basic Vegetable Stock (page 11), or one 32-ounce carton low-sodium vegetable broth plus 2 cups water

2 strips kombu (sea vegetable), each about 3 by 5 inches

2 to 4 tablespoons miso, any variety, to taste

Per cup:

Calories: 42 Total fat: 2 g Protein: 1 g Fiber: 1 g

Carbohydrate: 4 g Cholesterol: 0 mg Sodium: 9 mg

Combine the stock and kombu in a 2-quart saucepan or small soup pot. Bring to a simmer.

Dissolve the desired amount of miso in just enough warm water to make it pourable. Stir into the broth and remove from the heat. Let stand for 30 minutes or serve at once, removing and discarding the kombu just before serving.

VARIATIONS:

Embellish miso broth with any of the following:

- Diced tofu
- Cooked Asian noodles
- Finely chopped scallions
- Grated fresh daikon radish or white turnip
- Crisp cucumber, seeded and grated

Basic Dashi

Makes about 6 cups

Like miso broth, dashi is another traditional Japanese stock that may be embellished in a number of ways, or eaten as is. It also makes a good base/or certain Asian vegetable soups. Look for the sea vegetable kombu and dried shiitake mushrooms in Asian groceries or in natural food stores.

One 32-ounce carton low-sodium vegetable broth plus 2 cups water, or 6 cups water with 2 vegetable bouillon cubes
2 strips kombu (sea vegetable), each about 3 by 7 inches

6 to 8 dried shiitake mushrooms

Per cup:

Calories: 23 Total fat: 0 g Protein: 1 g Fiber: 1 g

Carbohydrate: 5 g Cholesterol: 0 mg Sodium: 248 mg

Combine the broth and kombu in a 2-quart saucepan or small soup pot. Bring to a simmer.

Add the mushrooms to the broth, remove from the heat, and let stand for 30 minutes.

Remove the kombu from the broth and discard. Remove the mushrooms with a slotted spoon. Trim them of their tough stems and save the caps for another use, or slice them and return to the broth.

VARIATIONS:

Dashi with noodles: Simply cook a quantity of Asian noodles (like soba) in the broth. Once they are *al dente*, remove the soup from the heat, season to taste with natural soy sauce, and serve immediately. Garnish each serving with some finely chopped scallion.

Dashi with miso and vegetables: Use the broth to simmer any quantity of thinly sliced vegetables, such as carrot, cabbage, daikon radish, turnip, etc. Once the vegetables are just done, add 2 to 4 tablespoons miso, to taste, dissolved in just enough warm water to make it pourable. Stir in the sliced shiitake mushrooms from the preparation of the broth. Remove from the heat and serve at once.

Asian Mushroom Broth

Makes about 6 cups

This strong broth is a great flavor booster for Asian-style vegetable soups, and is also pleasing eaten on its own. Vary it by using any of the embellishments suggested under Simple Miso Broth (page 13).

2 teaspoons olive oil

1 small onion, minced

1 clove garlic, minced

One 32-ounce carton low-sodium vegetable broth plus 2 cups water, or 6 cups water with 2 vegetable bouillon cubes

8 to 10 dried shiitake mushrooms

1 to 2 tablespoons reduced-sodium soy sauce, to taste

Per cup:

Calories: 45 Total fat: 2 g Protein: 1 g Fiber: 1 g

Carbohydrate: 7 g Cholesterol: 0 mg Sodium: 330 mg

Heat the oil in a 2-quart saucepan or small soup pot. Add the onion and garlic and saute over medium heat until golden.

Add the broth, mushrooms, and soy sauce. Bring to a simmer, then cover and simmer gently for 15 minutes.

Remove from the heat and let stand another 15 minutes. Strain through a sieve, reserving the mushrooms. Trim them of their tough stems. Save the caps for another use, or slice them and return to the broth.





FALL

Autumn is an inviting time to make soup. In early to midseason, the rich colors and lively flavors of the harvest can be shown off to great advantage in a warming pot of soup. Later in the season, a tasty bowl of soup is a heartwarming way to temper the effects of chilly weather.

Baked Onion Soup

Cream of White Vegetables

New England Clam-less Chowder

Yukon Gold Potato Soup

Potato, Cheese, and Green Chili Soup

Creamy Golden Potato-Squash Soup

Jerusalem Artichoke Puree

Hot Beet and Potato Borscht

Mellow Sweet Potato Soup

Curried Red Lentil Soup

Kale, Yellow Squash, and Sweet Potato Stew

Miso-Butternut Squash Soup

Orange-Butternut Squash Soup

Spaghetti Squash Stew

Pumpkin-Apple Soup

Moroccan-Style Vegetable Stew

Moroccan Lentil and Chickpea Soup

Chickpea and Tahini Soup

Southwestern Fresh Corn Stew

Autumn Harvest Stew

Long-Simmering Black Bean Soup

Almond-Brussels Sprouts Soup

Broccoli, Apple, and Peanut Soup

Swiss Chard Stew

Sweet-and-Sauerkraut Soup

Garlicky Cream of Celery Soup

Hot-and-Sour Asian Vegetable Soup

“Buddha's Delight” Stew

African-Inspired Quinoa-Peanut Soup

Baked Onion Soup

A vegan take on the French classic, with bread and melted cheese

6 servings

Ceramic crocks with handles are the ideal bowls for this soup, but any type of ovenproof bowl will do. You'll cry a river while cutting the onions, but you and your family or guests will weep tears of joy while eating this heavenly soup.

2 tablespoons olive oil

8 medium onions, quartered and thinly sliced

2 cloves garlic, minced 2 cups water One 32-ounce carton low-sodium vegetable broth, or other stock option (page 9)

¼ cup dry red wine

1 teaspoon dry mustard

Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Long narrow French or Italian bread, as needed

1½ cups grated mozzarella-style nondairy cheese

Per serving:

Calories: 307 Total fat: 15 g Protein: 7 g Fiber: 6 g

Carbohydrate: 37 g Cholesterol: 0 mg Sodium: 613 mg

Heat the oil in a soup pot. Add the onions and sauté over medium-low heat until golden. Add the garlic and continue to sauté slowly until the onions are lightly and evenly browned, stirring frequently, about 20 to 25 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.

Pour the water over the onions and give them a good stir. Then add the broth, wine, and mustard. Bring to a rapid simmer, then lower the heat. Cover and simmer gently for 10 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

Meanwhile, cut the bread into 1-inch-thick slices, allowing 1 or 2 slices per serving depending on the size of your soup bowls. Bake for 15 minutes, or until dry and crisp, turning the slices over once about halfway through the baking time.

To assemble the soup, place one layer of bread (1 or 2 slices) in each ovenproof bowl and ladle a serving of soup over it. Sprinkle about ¼ cup of the grated cheese over each. Place the bowls on 1 or 2 sturdy baking sheets to make them easier to handle. Bake for approximately 10 minutes, or until the cheese is melted. Serve at once.

Happy is said to be the family which can eat onions together. They are, for

the time being, separate from the world, and have a harmony of aspiration.

—Charles Dudley Warner

My Summer in a Garden, 1871

Cream of White Vegetables

Pureed potatoes, white onions, and turnips with a colorful vegetable garnish

8 servings

A super-smooth, pale puree with a colorful garnish, this soup exudes both comfort and elegance. you can, use the big, pure white onions that are abundant in the fall.

2 tablespoons olive oil

1½ pounds white onions (if unavailable, substitute yellow onions), chopped

1½ pounds white turnips, peeled and diced

3 large potatoes, peeled and diced

2 to 3 cloves garlic, minced

¼ to ½ cup rice milk, as needed

¼ cup Silk creamer

Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Garnish:

1 teaspoon olive oil

1 large red bell pepper, finely diced

½ cup frozen green peas, thawed

3 scallions, green parts only, sliced

¼ to ½ cup chopped fresh parsley

Per serving:

Calories: 170 Total fat: 5 g Protein: 4 g Fiber: 5 g

Carbohydrate: 29 g Cholesterol: 0 mg Sodium: 84 mg

Heat the oil in a soup pot. Add the onions and saute over medium heat, covered, stirring occasionally, about 15 minutes, or until golden.

Set aside 1 cup of the turnip dice. Add the remaining turnips to the soup pot, followed by the potatoes and garlic. Add enough water to cover all but about ½ inch of the vegetables. Bring to a rapid simmer, then lower the heat. Cover and simmer gently until the vegetables are tender, about 30 to 40 minutes.

Transfer the vegetables to a food processor or blender with a slotted spoon and puree in batches until very smooth, then transfer back to the soup pot. Or insert an immersion blender into the pot and process until very smooth.

Stir in enough rice milk to give the soup a thick but fluid consistency. Stir in the creamer then season with salt and pepper. Reheat very gently while preparing the garnish.

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