

Home Cooking Made Simple

200+
*Interesting
Soup Ideas*



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I LOVE soup and have it almost daily through the year ... YES, even in summer!

The purpose of this section is to acquaint you with the initial details of making appetizing and nutritious soups that are both economic and healthy!

VALUE OF SOUP IN THE MEAL

Soup contains the very essence of all that is nourishing and sustaining in the foods of which it is made. The importance of soup is to consider the purposes it serves in a meal. When its variety and the ingredients of which it is composed are thought of, soup serves two purposes: first, as an appetizer taken at the beginning of a meal to stimulate the appetite and aid in the flow of digestive juices in the stomach; and secondly, as an actual part of the meal, when it must contain sufficient nutritive material to permit it to be considered as a part of the meal instead of merely an addition.

Care should be taken to make this food attractive enough to appeal to the appetite rather than discourage it. Soup should not be greasy nor insipid in flavor, neither should it be served in large quantities nor without proper accompaniment. A small quantity of well-flavored, attractively served soup cannot fail to meet the approval of any family member when it is served as the first course of the meal.

GENERAL CLASSES OF SOUP

The two purposes for which soup is used have led to the placing of the numerous kinds into two general classes. In the first class are grouped those which serve as appetizers, such as bouillon, consomme, and some other broths and clear soups. In the second class are included those eaten for their nutritive effect, such as cream soups, purees, and bisques. From these two classes of soup, the one that will correspond with the rest of the meal and make it balance properly is the one to choose. For instance, a light soup that is merely an appetizer should be served with a heavy dinner, whereas a heavy, highly nutritious soup should be used with a luncheon or a light meal.

The two general classes of soup already mentioned permit use of numerous methods of classification. For instance, soups are sometimes named from the principal ingredient or an imitation of it, as the names potato soup, beef soup, macaroni soup, mock-turtle soup testify. Again, both stimulating and nutritious soups may be divided into thin and thick soups, thin soups usually being clear, and thick soups, because of their nature, cloudy. When the quality of soups is considered, they are placed in still different classes and are called broth, bisque, consomme, puree, and so on. Another important classification of soups results from the nationality of the people who use them.

CLASSES OF SOUP DENOTING CONSISTENCY

As has already been pointed out, soups are of only two kinds when their consistency is thought of, namely, clear soups and thick soups.

CLEAR SOUPS are those made from carefully cleared stock, or soup foundation, and flavored or garnished with a material from which the soup usually takes its name. There are not many soups of this kind, bouillon and consomme being the two leading varieties, but in order to be palatable, they require considerable care in making.

THICK SOUPS are also made from stock, but milk or cream and any mixture of these may also be used as a basis and to it may be added for thickening meat, fish, vegetables, eggs, or grain or some other starchy material. Soups of this kind are often made too thick and as such soups are not appetizing, care must be taken to have them just right in consistency.

CLASSES OF SOUPS DENOTING QUALITY

When attention is given to the quality of soup, the food divides itself into several varieties, namely, broth, cream soup, bisque, chowder and puree.

BROTHS have a clear stock for their foundation . They are sometimes a thin soup, but other times they are made quite thick with vegetables, rice or barley when they are served as a substantial part of a meal.

CREAM SOUPS are highly nutritious and are of great variety. For their foundation they generally have a thin cream sauce, but to this are always added vegetables, meat, fish or grains.

BISQUES are thick, rich soups made from game fish or shell fish, particularly crabs, shrimp etc. and occasionally, vegetables are used in soups of this kind.

CHOWDERS are soups that have sea food for their base. Vegetables and crackers are generally added for thickening and to impart flavor.

PUREES are thick soups made by the addition of some material obtained by boiling an article of food and then straining it to form a pulp. When vegetables containing starch such as beans, peas, lentils or potatoes are used for this purpose, it is unnecessary to thicken the soup with any additional starch; but when meat, fish or watery vegetables are used, other thickening is required. To be right, a puree should be nearly as smooth as thick cream and of the same consistency.

STOCK FOR SOUP AND ITS USES

In order that the soup-making processes may be readily grasped, one should be thoroughly familiar with what is meant by stock (which forms the foundation of many soups). A stock means a reserve supply of that which is stored away for future use. When applied to soup, stock is refers to a material stored or prepared in such a way that it may be kept for use in the making of certain kinds of soup. In a more definite sense, soup-stock may be regarded as a liquid containing the juices and soluble parts of meat, bone or vegetables which have been extracted by long, slow cooking.

Soups in which stock is utilized include all the varieties made from beef, veal, mutton and poultry. If clear stock is desired for the making of soup, only fresh meat and bones should be used and all material that will discolor the liquid in any way carefully avoided. For ordinary, unclarified soups, the trimmings and bones of roast, steak or chops and the carcass of fowl can generally be utilized. However, very strongly flavored meat such as mutton or the fat from mutton should be used sparingly.

VARIETIES OF STOCK

Several kinds of stock are utilized in the making of soup, and the kind to employ depends on the soup desired. The following classification will be a guide in determining the kind of stock required for the foundation of a soup.

FIRST STOCK is made from meat and bones and then clarified and used for well-flavored, clear soups.

SECOND STOCK is made from the meat and the bones that remain after the first stock is strained off. More water is added to the remaining material and this is then cooked with vegetables, which supply the needed flavor. Such stock serves very well for adding flavor to a nutritious soup made from vegetables or cereal foods.

WHITE STOCK is used in the preparation of white soups and is made by boiling six pounds of a knuckle of veal cut up in small pieces and poultry trimmings. Proceed according to directions given in STOCK.

HOUSEHOLD STOCK is made by cooking meat and bones, either fresh or cooked, with vegetables or other material that will impart flavor and add nutritive value. Stock of this kind is used for ordinary soups.

BONE STOCK is made from meat bones to which vegetables are added for flavor and it is used for making any of the ordinary soups.

VEGETABLE STOCK is made from either dried or fresh vegetables or both. Such stock is employed in making vegetable soups.

GAME STOCK is made from the bones and trimmings of game to which vegetables are added for flavor. This kind of stock is used for making game soups.

FISH STOCK is made from fish or fish trimmings to which vegetables are added for flavor. Shell fish make especially good stock of this kind. Fish stock is employed for making chowders and fish soups.

ADDITIONAL USES OF STOCK

As has already been shown, stock is used principally as a foundation for certain varieties of soup. This material, however, may be utilized in many other ways, being especially valuable in the use of leftover foods. Any bits of meat or fowl that are left over can be made into an appetizing dish by adding thickened stock to them and serving the combination over toast or rice. In fact, a large variety of dishes can be devised if there is stock on hand to add for flavor. The convenience of a supply of stock will be apparent when it is realized that gravy or sauce for almost any purpose can be made from the contents of the stockpot.



SOUP EXTRACTS

If there is no time to go through the various processes involved in making soup, there are a number of concentrated meat and vegetable extracts on the market for making soups quickly. The meat extracts are made of the same flavoring material as that which is drawn from meat in the making of stock. Almost all the liquid is evaporated and the result is a thick, dark substance that must be diluted greatly with water to obtain the basis for a soup or a broth. Some of the vegetable extracts such as Japanese soy and English marmite are so similar in appearance and taste to the meat extracts as to make it quite difficult to detect any difference. Both varieties of these extracts may be used for sauces and gravies, as well as for soups, but it should be remembered that they are not highly nutritious and are valuable merely for flavoring.