

Dad's Soups

Equipment

6-8 quart pot, preferably all-metal because you don't want little pieces of teflon flaking into your soup, and tall so you don't splatter the kitchen when pureeing.

Hand-held electric pureeing device. Sure you can pour hot soup into a blender in batches instead, but why would you want to?

Sieve or colander to rinse pre-soaked beans.

Basics

All these soups start the same - **chopped onions** are sauteed in olive oil for 5 minutes at medium heat, then spices are added, then whatever **main ingredient** and water; cover, bring to a boil then simmer for the right amount of time. Puree if called for, then salt and pepper at the end.

If you use **chicken stock** instead of water, you'll get added flavor. I prefer water but with **chopped leeks** at the start, along with the onions. The leeks give a special smoothness and flavor, almost as if you added cream. If you don't have leeks, use more onion.

You can add other chopped veggies at the start, like a carrot, stalk of celery, half a red bell pepper, a small hot pepper, or chopped garlic, it's up to you. The **garlic** in these recipes can be minced, chopped, crushed, mashed, makes no difference.

Soups taste best if you let them sit for a while so the flavors can blend, lentil and bean soups are best the next day. I keep left-over soup in the fridge for 2-3 days, after which the flavor fades. Tomato or potato soup tastes great cold. I warm soups in a cup in the microwave.

Dry lentils, peas, navy beans, black beans, in 1 pound bags at the grocery store, need to be **pre-soaked** before adding to the soup. Put

them in a 2 quart pot, add the hottest water you can get from the tap, almost to the top, stir, and let them sit at least an hour. Drain in a sieve or colander and rinse with water before using.

Soups often need to be slightly over-salted to bring out the flavor.

These recipes produce slightly thin soups, which I think have the best flavor; you can make them thicker by using 1 or 2 cups less water.

Parsnip Soup

Olive oil

1 large chopped onion

1 large chopped leek, white and light green parts only

1 medium chopped carrot

2 pounds parsnips, peeled and chopped

1 lemon, squeezed

Heat 3 tablespoons olive oil in large pot over medium heat, add onions, leeks and carrot, sautee for **5 minutes**, stirring a few times. If onions start to burn at edges, reduce heat or add some oil.

Add parsnips and 8 cups water, cover and bring to boil, reduce to simmer.

Cook **15 minutes**. Cool a while, then puree to desired consistency.

Add lemon juice. Salt and pepper to taste.

Option: at the beginning, add a peeled, cored and chopped apple to the onions.

Potato Soup

Olive oil

1 large chopped onion

1 large chopped leek, white and light green parts only

3 large potatoes, white or yellow are best, peeled and cubed

1 teaspoon minced garlic
1 tablespoon curry powder

Heat 3 tablespoons olive oil in large pot over medium heat, add onions, leeks, sautee for **5 minutes**, stirring a few times. If onions start to burn at edges, reduce heat or add some oil.

Add curry powder and garlic, stir 30 seconds

Add potatoes and 8 cups water, cover and bring to boil, reduce to simmer.

Cook **20 minutes**. Cool a while, then puree to desired consistency. If you puree too much it turns into paste.

Salt and pepper to taste.

Option: add butter or parmesan or sprinkle with parsley when serving.

Curried Butternut Squash Soup

Olive oil
1 large chopped onion
1 large chopped leek, white and light green parts only
1 small hot pepper, chopped
2 pounds butternut squash, peeled and cubed
1 tablespoon curry powder

Heat 3 tablespoons olive oil in large pot over medium heat, add onions, leeks and hot pepper, sautee for **5 minutes**, stirring a few times. If onions start to burn at edges, reduce heat or add some oil.

Add curry powder, stir 30 seconds

Add squash and 5 cups water, cover and bring to boil, reduce to simmer.

Cook **30 minutes**. Cool a while, then puree to desired consistency.

Salt and pepper to taste.

Option: serve with dollop of yoghurt.

Tomato Soup

Olive oil

1 large chopped onion

1 large chopped leek, white and light green parts only

1 teaspoon minced garlic

2 28 oz cans of crushed tomatoes

Heat 3 tablespoons olive oil in large pot over medium heat, add onions and leeks, sautee for **5 minutes**, stirring a few times. If onions start to burn at edges, reduce heat or add some oil.

Add garlic, tomatoes and 4 cups of water, cover and bring to boil, reduce to simmer.

Cook **30 minutes**. Cool a while, then puree to desired consistency. Add 1 or 2 cups water if necessary.

Salt and pepper to taste.

Option: after pureeing, add chopped red onion, bell pepper, cucumber, 1 tablespoon chopped basil. Or sprinkle with parmesan cheese.

Cannellini - Parmesan Soup

Olive oil

1 large chopped onion

1 large chopped leek, white and light green parts only

1 medium carrot, chopped

3 15 oz cans cannellini, drained

2 tablespoons chopped fresh sage, or 1 tablespoon dried sage

2 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese

Heat 3 tablespoons olive oil in large pot over medium heat, add onions, leeks and carrots, sautee for **5 minutes**, stirring a few times. If onions start to burn at edges, reduce heat or add some oil.

Add sage, stir 30 seconds, add **2 cans** cannellini and 8 cups water, cover and bring to boil, reduce to simmer.

Cook **20 minutes**. Cool a while, then puree to desired consistency.

Add **1 can** of cannellini.

Simmer **20 minutes more**.

Turn off heat, add parmesan. Salt and pepper to taste.

Option: add 3 oz thinly sliced and chopped prosciutto along with parmesan at the end.

Lentil Soup

Olive oil

1 large chopped onion

1 large chopped leek, white and light green parts only

1 red bell pepper

1 tablespoon curry powder

1 tablespoon paprika

1 tablespoon herbs de provence or oregano

1 teaspoon minced garlic

1 pound dried lentils, **pre-soaked (see above)**, drained and rinsed

1/2 14 oz can diced tomatoes

1/2 cup red wine

2 tablespoons tomato paste

1 pound lite kielbasi sausage, cut into 1/4 inch thick rounds, cook over medium-low heat in frying pan for 10-20 minutes, stirring a few times, until lightly browned.

Heat 3 tablespoons olive oil in large pot over medium heat, add onions, leeks and pepper, sautee for **5 minutes**, stirring a few times. If onions start to burn at edges, reduce heat or add some oil.

Add curry, paprika, herbs and garlic, stir 30 seconds

Add lentils, diced tomatoes, wine and tomato paste and 8 cups water, cover and bring to boil, reduce to simmer.

Cook 30 minutes.

Add kielbasi. Cook **15 minutes more**.

Salt and pepper to taste.

Split Pea Soup

Olive oil

1 large chopped onion

1 large chopped leek, white and light green parts only

1 medium chopped carrot

1/2 red bell pepper, chopped

1 small hot pepper, chopped

1 pound dried split peas (green or yellow), **pre-soaked (see above)**, drained and rinsed

1 hamhock, or soup bone, or cut a sausage into chunks and cook over medium-low heat in frying pan for 10-20 minutes, stirring a few times, until browned

Heat 3 tablespoons olive oil in large pot over medium heat, add onions, leeks, carrot and peppers, sautee for **5 minutes**, stirring a few times. If onions start to burn at edges, reduce heat or add some oil.

Add peas and hamhock or soup bone and 8 cups water, cover and bring to boil, reduce to simmer. If using sausage chunks instead, add half of them now.

Cook **60 minutes**. Remove hamhock or soup bone. Cool a while, then puree to desired consistency.

If using sausage chunks, add the other half now.

Salt and pepper to taste.

Navy Bean Soup

Olive oil

1 large chopped onion

1 large chopped leek, white and light green parts only

1 medium chopped carrot

1 pound dried navy beans, **pre-soaked (see above)**, drained and rinsed

1 hamhock, or soup bone, or cut a sausage into chunks and cook over medium-low heat in frying pan for 10-20 minutes, stirring a few times, until browned

Heat 3 tablespoons olive oil in large pot over medium heat, add onions and leeks, sautee for **5 minutes**, stirring a few times. If onions start to burn at edges, reduce heat or add some oil.

Add navy beans and 8 cups water, cover and bring to boil, reduce to simmer.

Cook 90 minutes.

Add carrot, hamhock or soup bone, or sausage chunks. Cook **60 minutes more**. A long cooking time, start early in the afternoon.

Remove hamhock or soup bone. Cool a while, then puree to desired consistency.

Salt and pepper to taste.

If you add the carrot and hamhock or bone right at the start, the flavor will have cooked out by the end.

Black Bean Soup

Olive oil

1 large chopped onion

1 large chopped leek, white and light green parts only

1 chopped red ball pepper (half for later)

1 chopped green ball pepper (half for later)

1 chopped yellow ball pepper (half for later)

1 tablespoon minced garlic

1 pound dried black beans, **pre-soaked (see above)**, drained and rinsed

Spices

1 teaspoon salt

1 1/2 teaspoon chili powder

1 1/2 teaspoon cumin

Heat 3 tablespoons olive oil in large pot over medium heat, add chopped onion, leek, garlic, and **half** the peppers (the other half is for garnish), sautee for **5 minutes**, stirring a few times. If onions start to burn at edges, reduce heat or add some oil.

Add black beans and 5 cups water, cover and bring to boil, reduce to simmer.

Cook **90 minutes**.

Add spices. Cook **30-60 minutes more**, depending how thick you want it (longer is thicker). It's a long cooking time, start early in the afternoon.

Salt and pepper to taste.

Add the other half of the chopped peppers.

Options: When serving, add a dollop of sour cream or Greek yoghurt, some avocado, a wedge of lime.