

Soup people always win

Easy to make, endlessly versatile, and perfect for sharing

There are two types of people in this world: soup people and non-soup people. Soup people will share their favourite recipes, ideas and tips. Non-soup people will give you their portion. Either way, soup people win.

In what I refuse to believe is a coincidence, there are also two types of soup. Clear soups and puréed soups. And no, I will not give you my portion.

- Clear soups are little more than broth studded with bite-sized ingredients. They can be light and refreshing, like classic Chicken Noodle, or rich and hearty like French Onion. They go from pot to bowl with nothing more than a ladle.

- Puréed soups take an extra step or two, thanks to a blender, cream, or both. You can purée the soup to a uniform smoothness or leave some ingredients unblended for added texture — think Black Bean or Cream of Mushroom.

No matter which style you prefer, soup is easy to make, endlessly versatile, and perfect for sharing with other soup people.

SOUP BASICS

Most soups taste better the next day, so if possible, make a double batch and freeze



Charmian Christie

of choice is added, bring the soup to a boil, then reduce to a simmer and cook uncovered. Add uncooked items like noodles, rice, dried beans, or raw or frozen vegetables at this stage.

Due to the extended cooking time, soups made with dried beans cook more evenly and lose less liquid if the pot is partially covered.

Adjust the seasoning: Most soups can benefit from a bit of salt or acid, such as vinegar or lemon juice. For added flavour, try soy sauce, fish sauce, miso or Worcestershire sauce.

Add the latecomers: To avoid overcooking, add precooked meat, tender vegetables such as spinach, and fresh herbs at the very end, cooking only long enough to heat through. Dairy should be added at the last minute for chowders or after puréeing for smooth soups.

Finish with garnish: This can be as simple as a grinding of black pepper or as elaborate as gremolata. Pick a garnish that suits the flavour of the soup.

Go beyond croutons. Try bacon, cheese, fresh herbs, guacamole, sour cream, plain yogurt, pesto, toasted nuts or spiced pumpkin seeds.

the leftovers. Regardless of how much soup you plan to make, start with a large saucepan. Go big. A wide pan will simmer more quickly, while the larger surface area allows some of the stock to evaporate, concentrating flavours.

Create a base: Sauté your aromatics in oil, or oil and butter. These include onions, garlic, shallots, carrots and celery. If you're cooking meat for the soup, brown the meat first, remove it, then cook the aromatics in the residual fat.

Bring on the broth: Most soups use chicken, beef or vegetable broth, but don't limit yourself. Include the juice of tinned tomatoes, a bottle of beer or even plain old water.

Wine or juice add brightness, but use sparingly or they will overwhelm the other flavours.

Slowly simmer: Once your liquid





BLENDER BASICS

For convenience, purée the soup right in the pot with an immersion blender. This reduces cleanup and the possibility of splashing. While it won't produce a silky finish, it will create a rustically puréed soup perfect for most occasions.

For a velvety soup, you'll need a standard counter-top blender, not a food processor. To avoid getting scalded, work in batches, filling the blender only half full. After securing the lid, remove the plug to release the steam, cover with a tea towel and blend, starting on the lowest setting and slowly increasing the speed.

For a restaurant-quality finish, strain the soup through a sieve. If adding cream or milk, gently reheat the soup, being careful not to boil since the dairy could curdle.

SOUP FIXES

If the soup is too thin, simmer longer to reduce the stock. Alternatively, add some soaked dried beans, uncooked noodles, rice or raw potato pieces to absorb some of the excess liquid.

Alternatively, if the soup is too thick, thin it with any liquid that will suit the soup — cream, milk or evaporated milk for cream soups, and stock or water for clear soups.

TO FREEZE OR NOT TO FREEZE

Most soups freeze beautifully. However, dairy- and potato-based soups, as well as those thickened with cornstarch or eggs should not be frozen. Their textures can change, or the soup can separate when reheated.

For best results, don't add pasta or fresh herbs before freezing. The pasta will be mushy, and the herbs will not retain their bright flavour. Instead, add them when reheating the frozen soup.

For fast defrosting and reheating, freeze soup in single-serving portions, about 1½ to 2 cups per person.

ENJOY A FAMILY FEAST WITH FINEST



VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR
PRODUCT INFORMATION
AND RECIPES!

WITH FINEST SAUSAGE & MEAT,
FAMILY GATHERINGS HAVE NEVER BEEN EASIER...*or tastier!*

FACTORY OUTLET: 268 Trillium Drive, Kitchener

ST. JACOBS MARKET: 1386 King Street North, St. Jacobs • KITCHENER MARKET: 300 King St E, Kitchener

  FINESTSAUSAGEANDMEAT.COM



TOMATO AND ROASTED RED PEPPER SOUP

(Makes 4 servings)

This easy-to-make soup is versatile. It can be made vegetarian with a simple switch of stock, served either hot or chilled, and can be puréed to be velvety smooth or slightly chunky.

1 tablespoon (15 ml) olive oil

1 onion, chopped

2 cloves garlic, chopped

¼ teaspoon (1.5 ml) red chilli flakes (more if you like it hot)

1 28-ounce (796 ml) can tomatoes

1½ cups (375 ml) roughly chopped roasted red peppers (about 4 large) *

2 cups (500 ml) chicken or vegetable stock

¼ cup (60 ml) chopped fresh basil

Salt & pepper to taste

Optional Garnish

Sour cream or plain Greek yogurt

Fresh basil

1. Heat a large saucepan over medium heat. Add oil and sauté onions until translucent and soft, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and chili flakes, and sauté another two minutes.

2. Break the tomatoes apart with your hands and add to the onions, along with the juice and the roasted red peppers. Simmer 10 minutes. Add the stock and basil, heating to a simmer. Taste, adjusting salt and pepper as needed.

3. Purée the soup directly in the pot using an immersion blender or in batches in a stand blender. The blender will produce a smoother soup. Serve immediately with preferred garnish. For cold soup, cool to room temperature before chilling in the refrigerator for at least two hours. The soup will stay cold longer if served in chilled bowls.

***Roasted Red Peppers:** Jarred roasted peppers save a lot of time. Just drain and use. However, you can roast peppers easily yourself. Just place whole peppers on a parchment-lined baking sheet and roast them under the broiler, turning every five minutes, until the skin is charred all over.

Remove from oven and place a bowl over the peppers for 10 to 15 minutes to steam the skins. Using a paring knife, peel off the

charred outer skin, slice open the pepper and remove the seeds. If possible, roast a full pan of peppers and freeze the leftovers for later.

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 25 minutes

BASIL CHEDDAR BUTTERMILK SCONES

(Makes 12 scones)

A rolling technique borrowed from French pastry makes these scones extra layered and flaky. Cheddar and basil pair nicely with the Tomato & Roasted Red Pepper Soup, but substitute different herbs and cheese to suit your favourite soup. Try fresh thyme or rosemary. Add a tablespoon of citrus zest. Use Pecorino or smoked Gouda if the mood fits, or just try them plain.

2 ¼ cups (560 ml) all-purpose flour

1 cup (250 ml) loosely packed, chopped basil

½ cup (125 ml) grated aged cheddar

¼ cup (60 ml) sugar

1 tablespoon (15 ml) baking powder

½ teaspoon (2.5 ml) baking soda

½ teaspoon (2.5 ml) fine sea salt

½ cup (125 ml) frozen butter

1 cup (250 ml) cold buttermilk

1 tablespoon melted butter

Preheat oven to 425°F

1. In a medium bowl, combine flour, basil, cheddar, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt.

2. Grate the frozen butter over the flour mixture. Toss to distribute butter. Pour the buttermilk over the flour mixture and stir until just combined.

3. Turn the scone mixture onto a lightly floured work surface. With floured hands, pat the dough into a rectangle.

4. Fold the dough in half. Flatten slightly. Turn the dough a quarter turn, then fold and flatten again. Do this about five or six times. Flatten to 3/4-inch thick. Cut into 12 squares. Place scones on a baking sheet. Brush the tops with the melted butter.

5. Bake 10 to 12 minutes or until golden and cooked all the way. Serve immediately.

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 12 minutes



Fresh From The Orchard



**Thursday &
Saturday**
all year long
7 am-3:30 pm