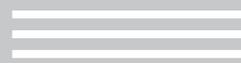




# RECIPE for health

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featured food:  
**ONIONS**

By Peggy Crum, MA, RD, Health4U Nutritionist

Onions and their closest cousins—shallots, scallions, leeks and chives—are superstars in the kitchen. Unfortunately, chopping them is a painful task for most people. Sulfur compounds stored inside the onion are inactive until its tissues are damaged. Crushing or cutting produces tiny sulfur molecules that fly through the air with the greatest of ease and mount an attack on your eyes and nose.

Old wives' tales abound on how to minimize this problem. Here are two that actually help: wearing goggles to protect your eyes and mouth-breathing to keep sulfur compounds away from your nasal passages.

Most cooks have their go-to onion - usually white or yellow. Each type of storage onion has distinctive characteristics and may be preferable in certain dishes:

- **Yellow onions**, the best bargain, are very pungent when raw; they develop a balance of savory and sweet when cooked.
- **White onions**, milder than yellow onions, they cook up mellow and sweet.
- **Red or purple onions** are mildly pungent making them excellent for pickling and grilling. Cooking causes them to turn dark yet pleasantly sweet.
- **Spanish onions**, when raw, are too strong for most people's tastes. Cooked, they have a hearty onion flavor with only moderate sweetness.
- **Sweet onions** (Walla Walla, Maui and Vidalia) only keep for a week or two. Mild and sweet when raw, they are the best choice for salads and sandwiches.
- **Shallots** have a delicate onion flavor. Raw shallots add gentle heat to vinaigrette. Cooked, the flavor mellows and the texture becomes meltingly tender.

No matter which onions you choose, store them at room temperature away from potatoes. Slice or chop onions as you need them. Store extras in a closed container or plastic bag in the refrigerator and give them a quick rinse just before using.

## Onion Soup

*Recipe developed by Corporate Chef Kurt Kwiatkowski and featured in Residential Dining Services. Makes 8 servings.*

- 4 Tablespoons butter
- 3 Tablespoons olive oil
- 3 large yellow onions, sliced
- 1 large red onion, sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 Tablespoons tomato paste
- ½ cup red wine
- ½ cup sherry
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 4 cups beef broth
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 fresh thyme sprigs
- 1 fresh rosemary sprig
- Kosher salt, to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 8 slices baguette
- 2 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 clove garlic
- 8 ounces gruyere cheese, shredded
- 2 Tablespoons grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

Heat butter and oil in a soup pot over medium to medium high heat. Add onions to the pot in batches so as not to overcrowd; cook each batch for 15-20 minutes. Return all onions to the pot. Reduce heat to medium low and continue to cook until onions are very soft and deep golden brown, an additional 25 to 30 minutes. Stir in garlic and tomato paste; sauté for 3 minutes.

Deglaze by adding wine and sherry and scraping browned bits from the bottom and sides of the pot. Add broth, bay leaves, thyme and rosemary. Bring to a boil then reduce heat to simmer for 30 to 45 minutes. Taste; add salt and pepper as desired.

While soup is simmering, prepare croutons. Preheat oven to 300°F. Place baguette slices on baking sheet. Drizzle oil onto the baguette slices. Place in oven until bread is crisp but not browned, about 12-15 minutes. Remove from the oven. Set aside until cool then rub with cut side of garlic clove.

Preheat broiler. Ladle soup into eight oven-safe bowls or crocks. Place crouton on top of soup and sprinkle with cheese. Place under broiler until cheese is bubbly and brown.

Try **Onion Soup** for lunch at The Gallery at Snyder/Phillips, Brody Square and Riverwalk Market at Owen on November 13.