

ONION SOUP

Onions, the simplest of pantry staples, mingle with butter, broth, and herbs to become luxuriously smooth and delicious. Add "homemade" croutons and a blend of cheeses to make a complete and satisfying meal.

by Corporate Chef Kurt Kwiatkowski

Featured Food: Onions

Yield: makes 8 servings

Ingredients

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| 4 T. butter | 2 bay leaves |
| 3 T. olive oil | 2 fresh thyme sprigs |
| 3 large yellow onions, sliced | 1 fresh rosemary sprig |
| 1 large red onion, sliced | Kosher salt, to taste |
| 2 cloves garlic, chopped | Freshly ground black pepper, to taste |
| 2 T. tomato paste | 8 slices baguette |
| ½ c. red wine | 2 t. olive oil |
| ½ c. sherry | 1 clove garlic, cut in half |
| 2 c. chicken broth | 8 oz. gruyere cheese, shredded |
| 4 c. beef broth | 2 T. grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese |

Preparation

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.