

Vegetable Soups Offer Endless Possibilities



Right now, greenmarkets, and even local groceries, are overflowing with a mouth-watering array of colorful fall produce. Easy-to-make soups are a delicious way to show off their distinctive flavors.

Among the simplest to make are pureed soups that rely on not much more than coarsely chopped vegetables — either just one type, such as carrots or squash, or a mix of several different vegetables — simmered in either broth or water until soft and then pureed and seasoned with salt, fresh pepper and an herb or spice of your choice. Depending on the proportion of vegetable to broth, the resulting soup can be either thick and creamy — practically a meal in a bowl — or thin, smooth and elegant enough to serve as a first course at a company dinner. There are many wonderful recipes available for pureed soups. Indeed, we include three below from Temple members to whet your appetite. But if you are inspired by what you find at the greenmarket, and feeling adventurous, try creating your own original pureed soup. Here's a good general formula to get you started:



Heat a couple of tablespoons of butter or olive oil in a heavy-bottomed stockpot. Add 1 coarsely chopped onion and sauté until translucent, about 5 minutes. Add 10 cups coarsely chopped vegetables and sauté for a few minutes. Turn heat to high, add 6 to 8 cups of liquid (water, chicken or vegetable broth) to the pot (the higher the quantity of liquid, the thinner the resulting puree) and bring to a boil. Lower heat and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are soft, about 20 to 30 minutes. Let the soup cool slightly and then puree. Season to taste with salt and freshly ground pepper. Although a little heavy cream stirred into the pureed soup is unnecessary, it does add an elegant touch and rich, creamy flavor. Serves 6 to 8.

Butternut squash, alone or with a couple of chopped apples, broccoli, carrots, potatoes or cauliflower are all good choices with which to start. As for a liquid, in addition to water or broth, you might want to include some apple or orange juice (perhaps to a carrot soup) and maybe $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of white wine. The combinations are limited only by your imagination and taste buds!



(continued)

Congregant Isabel Braun learned to make this soup in a diet workshop years ago. "It tastes rich and creamy, but the beauty of it is that there's no cream in it," she says. And while the basic soup is delicious as is, it takes nicely to a variety of flavorings. For starters, try sprinkling the onions with thyme or curry powder while sautéing, or add some chopped fresh dill to the soup just before serving. Other herbs and spices add their own subtle touch.

"Creamy" Zucchini Soup

Serves 6 to 8

- 1-2 tablespoons olive oil
 - 2 large onions, roughly chopped
 - 6 medium zucchini, peeled and cut into half-inch rounds
 - 4 cups broth
 - 1 cup buttermilk or Greek-style nonfat yogurt, or to taste
 - Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste
1. Heat oil in a large saucepan over a medium flame. When the oil is hot, add the onions, lower the flame and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onions are translucent.
 2. Add zucchini and cook briefly. Raise heat, add broth and bring to a boil, then lower heat to achieve a steady simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, until zucchini has softened, about 20 to 30 minutes. Remove pot from flame.
 3. If you have an immersion blender, then purée the soup immediately in the pot. If you are using a traditional blender, let the soup cool somewhat and then purée in batches.
 4. Add buttermilk to taste; season with salt and freshly ground pepper to taste. Serve hot, room temperature or chilled.
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Temple member **Sharon Oberman** tells us that she makes lots of soups, but this potato soup is the one everyone likes best, and because it is so rich tasting, it has become a Thanksgiving tradition in her home. Inspired by the use of cinnamon and potatoes in a recipe for a chunky-style broth that she found years ago in a book called *Soup Wisdom* by Frieda Arkin and the editors of *Consumer Reports*, Oberman kept experimenting until she came up with this creamy version that won over family and friends.

Holiday Potato Soup

Serves 8 to 10

- 4 tablespoons butter, or more as needed, divided
- 1 large onion, diced
- 1 cup chopped celery (include as much of the celery heart and leaves as possible)
- 5 to 7 large white potatoes, peeled and rough chopped

- 1 teaspoon coarse Kosher-style salt
 - 2 tablespoons flour
 - 1½ teaspoons cinnamon
 - 4 cups full-flavored chicken or vegetable stock
 - Chopped parsley, for garnish
1. Heat 3 tablespoons of the butter in a heavy bottomed stockpot. When the butter is melted, add the onion and celery. Cook over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables soften and the onions become translucent.
 2. Add another 1 to 2 tablespoons of butter, the potatoes and salt. Lower heat to medium and cook uncovered, stirring often and scraping the bottom of the pot to incorporate any browned bits into the mixture. Add another tablespoon of butter if necessary.
 3. When the potatoes start to brown slightly, sprinkle them with flour and cook, stirring continually. When the flour begins to brown, add the cinnamon and mix well.
 4. In a separate saucepan, heat the stock. Add the heated stock to the stockpot, 1 cup at a time, stirring after each addition until the stock is integrated before adding the next cup. After all the stock has been added, raise the heat to bring the soup to a boil, then immediately lower the heat to medium low and cook, covered, for about 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.
 5. Let soup cool somewhat. Spoon out the solids and purée them in the container of blender. Pour the purée back into the stock pot and mix into the broth.
 6. To serve, heat soup; spoon into bowls; and garnish with chopped parsley.
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Temple member **Rita Wolfson** calls her carrot soup recipe “comfort food for a sore mouth.” She says she devised the puréed soup when one of her daughters had her wisdom teeth extracted and found it too painful to chew. “Ever since, we have made it after every dental appointment.” But don’t wait for an under-the-weather occasion to try it. It’s too delicious! So do as the Wolfsons do and enjoy it on any warm day throughout the year. And although the family prefers the soup cold, Wolfson says that it’s good warm, too.

Cold Carrot Soup

Serves 4 to 6

- 3 tablespoons canola oil
- 1 pound carrots, peeled and sliced
- 1 teaspoon sugar, optional
- 1 large onion, peeled and chopped
- 2/3 cup rice
- 6 cups water, chicken or vegetable bouillon

- 1 cup sour cream, regular, light or fat free
 - Salt and pepper, to taste
 - 1 tablespoon flat-leaf parsley or chives, minced
1. Heat the oil in a Dutch oven or large stockpot. Add the carrots, sugar if using, onion and rice. Sauté over low to medium heat until the onion and rice are translucent, about 5 minutes. Add the water or bouillon, bring to a boil, lower heat, cover and simmer until the vegetables and rice are tender, about 20 minutes.
 2. Cool slightly, then purée in small batches in a food processor. Add a dollop of sour cream to each batch before processing, and pour puréed soup into a large bowl as each batch is finished. Stir well; add salt and pepper to taste.
 3. Cover and chill at least 1 hour or until ready to serve. Serve in cups or bowls, topped with some minced parsley or chives.

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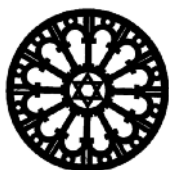
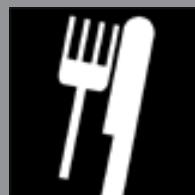
Food always has been an important part of Jewish life and culture, nourishing the soul as well as the body. In recognition of this and of the diversity that is the Emanu-El community today, work has begun on a cookbook that will pay tribute to the comforting foods of our varied past traditions and the excitement of modern Jewish cooking. We hope that as many of you as possible will volunteer to share favorite recipes, be recipe testers and contribute in other ways as this exciting project evolves. We will keep you apprised of developments in the monthly Bulletin and on the Temple website (www.emanuelnyc.org).

**Mail your favorite family and original recipes to:
Emanu-El Eats
c/o Temple Emanu-El
One East 65th Street
NY, NY 10065**

Or submit them by e-mail to emanueleats@emanuelnyc.org.

Please include your name, contact information, and a brief explanation of how you devised or came to the recipe and why it is special to you. If it is based on a recipe you found in a cookbook or magazine but you have tinkered with it to make it your own, then please include the original source of the recipe, and tell us how you've changed it.

We look forward to hearing from you!



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