

Cream Celery Soup

Growing up I loved Campbell's Cream of Celery Soup, but since my tastes have changed, I decided a modern, lightened version could still evoke those fond memories. The potato gives the soup the thickness it needs and the cayenne gives it just a bit more pizzazz. To serve this at a cocktail party, ladle it into shot classes, glass mugs or demitasse cups.

Serves 8 dinner portions or 12 - 16 appetizer portions

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 4 cups sliced celery (about 8 stalks)
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 2 cups peeled and diced potato (about 10 ounces)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 5 cups chicken stock
- 2 tablespoons cream
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 2 tablespoons chopped chives, for garnish

Procedure

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, melt the butter. Add celery and onions and cook until onions are translucent, and celery is slightly softened, about 5 minutes. Add potatoes and sprinkle all the vegetables with salt and pepper. Add chicken stock and bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, until vegetables are tender, about 25 minutes. Put the mixture in a blender or use a hand-held blender to puree the soup. Stir in the cream and cayenne pepper and adjust seasoning, adding more salt and pepper, if necessary. Ladle into bowls and swirl in a little more cream, if desired.

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