

Cold soups are a lost art

Cucumber soup is a lovely way to start a summer meal. And what a great item to take on a summer picnic if you have a vessel you can put it in to keep it cool. That is the only problem, this dish is not so fabulous when it is warm—it really needs to be quite cold.

I think cold soups are a lost art. Rhubarb, cherry, strawberry, all make wonderful cool summer soups— as well as my all time favorite, gazpacho! But they really aren't spoken of much. I know back in our catering days, we would sometimes do a cold soup as a first course at a summer wedding. They seem somehow more elegant than their hot cousins.

Garnish your cool soup with any of these toppings: a drizzle of fresh cream, finely chopped fresh chives, edible flowers,

Lori Gysel & Gerry Kentner



lemon or lime zest, minced strawberry or pepper— depending on whether the soup is sweet or savoury. You can present the soup in a large tureen and then ladle it into the individual bowls at the table, or you could present the soup in something a little different— like maybe a martini glass with a bow tied around the stem, or at a cocktail party, try serving little shot glasses of the soup; that always gets people talking!

Have fun and keep cooking!

Email questions and comments to Lori and Gerry at whatscooking@theifp.ca

Chilled Cucumber Soup

Serves 6

Ingredients

- 3 English cucumbers, peeled, halved and seeded
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 cups chicken or vegetable stock
- 2 cups plain yogurt
- 2 tsp coarse salt
- 1 tsp ground pepper
- 1/2 to 1/2 cup fresh mint leaves (save 6 for garnish)
- 1 tsp fresh lemon juice

Method

Cut 2 1/2 cucumbers into 1 inch dice.

Cut the other half cucumber into one quarter inch dice for garnish.

Combine cucumbers and garlic in food processor for 1 minute. Add yogurt, stock, salt and pepper, mint and lemon. Process until smooth. If you would like this finer, strain through a sieve.

Chill for 3 hours at least. To serve, ladle soup into bowls or glasses, garnish with diced cucumbers and a sprig of fresh mint.



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