

# Why not make a pot of soup?

By SHEILA PECK

With bitter cold temperatures and howling winds, what is more inviting than a big bowl of steaming hearty soup?

Without a doubt the freezing winter months are warmed by such recipes and are able to stand on their own as meals in themselves.

Super supper soups are inexpensive to make, most nutritious and can help ease the pain of the holiday season when the mailman brings in the bills.

Soup is a great stand-by in our household and is relished by all the members of our home.

Our eldest son delights in French onion soup with its oozing cheesy topping; another son favors chicken soup with fluffy clouds of dumplings; another prefers cream soups made with broccoli, spinach or lettuce and the diet-conscious, the clear soups filled with julienne vegetables.

## SOUP A CURE-ALL

Childhood memories bring the taste of soups made by my mother, aunt or friend. My mother was a great soup maker and insists, even to this day, that soup is the cure-all for measles, mumps or any nature of illness. Did it not "warm the cockles of your heart" — comforting, soothing and nourishing?

And then an aunt of mine made a soup called Hodge-Podge. Absolutely no one could make this soup like she did. The stock had the fullest of flavor. A fresh chicken was used for the base, fresh vegetables swam to the brim and as you spooned to the bottom you knew the meaning of sheer ambrosia. How could one resist seconds?

At the supermarket this week I looked at cabbage on sale and remembered the taste of a cabbage soup made by a Polish friend. It too, made many memorable feasts.

Fish soups and chowders are particularly appealing and delicious during these months. Bouillabaisse makes one of the most delightful luncheon or supper dishes I know.

And many soups can be meatless (corn-chowder, vegetable, cheese or peanut). Actually, you need little meat for soups and can supplement the protein needed in the diet by using beans.

They say, and I am a firm believer in the saying, that one can judge the quality of a restaurant by the soup it serves.

Although soup can be ladled from the soup pot into the soup bowl in the kitchen, soup can be served with style. Serve your soup from your prettiest soup tureen at the table. Do make sure that your soup bowls have been warmed or heated first. There is absolute magic watching the soup being ladled into the bowls, and even more as you eat.

## GREAT WITH BREAD

And soups taste extra good when they are served with crunchy breads. Spread softened butter on both sides of French bread and broil until golden. For an even more delightful flavor treat slice the French bread into chunks almost to the bottom and spread a mixture of butter and Parmesan cheese on each side of the slices. Bake in a 350 degree oven for about 15 minutes.

Many working people say it is impossible to make soups during the week. But weekends are a great time to make soups — and soups really do taste better if they are made the day before and reheated.

Too, they will keep well in the refrigerator for three or four days. Otherwise, if you wish to keep them longer, they should be chilled and frozen. Frozen soups will keep up to three months.

Soup is an excellent way of using leftover vegetables but it must be remembered that the stock makes the soup. It should be full-bodied and impart its taste and flavor to the soup as well as the other ingredients used.

If you have frozen the turkey carcass from Christmas, now would be an excellent time to make turkey soup. Or perhaps the bones from a roast are still at large. These should be covered with cold water and the stock flavored with a carrot or two, celery tops, onion studded with two or three cloves, a bouquet garni and simmered for at least four hours. An hour just isn't long enough, so do plan on more time. Also try to include a veal knuckle or two when making the stock.

When cooking time is completed remove the vegetables and bones, strain and chill the stock. The fat will congeal on the top of the stock and can easily be removed at this time. Then proceed to make your soups using this stock.

## CHILL STOCK

There is nothing worse than eating soup with about a half-inch of fat swimming on top. If you don't have the time to chill the stock, then spoon as much fat as you can off by hand and then gently lay a few layers of paper towelling on top to absorb the fat.

When I am making creamed soups, I heat the milk separately and add a few celery tops, a chopped carrot, slice of onion and a few parsley sprigs and then strain before adding to the flour and butter.

And even when I use canned bouillon or consommé or the cubes, I always include a bouquet garni during the cooking or simmering for more flavor.

A bouquet garni is most simple to make. Wash and cut a stick of celery in half. On one half place a few parsley sprigs, a sprinkling of whole thyme and a bay leaf. Place the other half of celery on top and tie with a string. If you leave the string long enough, tie it to the handle of the pot and when finished it can easily be removed. Or you might like to tie the bouquet garni in a piece of cheesecloth and place it in the stock, removing when the soup is finished cooking.

Often I include the zest of a lemon or orange, — for a fresh flavor taste.

## IMAGINATION

What really appeals to me about making soups is that you can use your imagination. I don't believe I have ever made a pot of soup the same as another.

You can use rice, or you can use pastas, you can add fresh or frozen vegetables or dried, peas, beans, red kidney beans, lentils, tomatoes or mushrooms or okra all create excitement and taste.

I mentioned dumplings as a topping earlier, but another favorite is pate a chou morsels that melt in the mouth and are particularly delicious with chicken soups.

Bite-size meatballs browned and cooked in a vegetable soup will make hearty fare too.

Another point of interest to remember when making soups too is to slice your vegetables in julienne strips instead of dicing or chunking them.

Why not make a pot of soup to-day?

## FRENCH CANADIAN PEA SOUP

- 1 cup split peas
- 3 cups cold water
- 2 pounds smoked ham shank or ham bone
- 1 onion, thinly sliced
- Celery leaves
- 3 quarts boiling water
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 2 carrots, shredded

**Bouquet garni**  
Soak peas in cold water over night. Drain. Combine peas, ham, onion, celery leaves and boiling water. Add bouquet garni. Cover. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat and simmer two - three hours, stirring frequently. During the last hour of cooking, add salt, pepper and shredded carrots. Serves 10 to 12.

The Region of York will no longer flush toilets for prospective home purchasers.

Regional Councillor Michael McDonald of Georgina said that the region was causing a hardship for residents by no longer testing wells and septic tanks on request.

Certificates as to well

water quality and the proper functioning of septic tanks are often required by home buyers because it is a requirement of mortgage companies.

But regional solicitor Ted Oakes said that the region was being sued for certifying that a septic tank worked that apparently did not.

"All our inspectors did

was to flush the toilet and if it worked, they issued a certificate. They had no idea if the septic tank was working or not without digging it up," he said. As for the water testing, it was actually done by a provincial laboratory on Eglinton Avenue. "All we were doing was providing free taxi service."

The Region of York had been charging \$25 for each certificate and about 300 were issued in a year.

Mr. Oakes said residents would not be covered by insurance because there did not seem to be any authority to make the

inspections in the first place. But there are other people who provide the service, he maintained. The Region has not been as cautious as some homebuyers in York. Last year, it purchased a

house on Kennedy Road at market value for a future road widening.

It was only after the purchase that the regional staff found water was not supplied from a well, but from a tank in the basement.

# York won't flush for you anymore

## Cabaret Night

An evening of fun and entertainment has been planned by the Jewish Community for their 2nd annual Cabaret Night to be held at The Richvale Community Centre on January 20 at 8:30 p.m.

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A Court of Revision will be held to review the frontage charge of properties known as:

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