
Menu 30

Speedy croutons
for soup or salad

Jerusalem
artichoke soup

Cheese and herb bread
in terracotta pots

Roasted winter
vegetables with
rosemary and garlic

Golden syrup dumplings

Speedy croutons for soup or salad

Butter thick slices of bread on both sides. Place a non-stick frying pan over a medium-to-high heat and fry the bread slices until golden on the underside (about 3 minutes). Flip the bread with an egg lifter and brown the other side.

Transfer the fried bread to a chopping board and, using a serrated knife, cut the fried bread into 1 cm cubes. Place on a baking tray and keep warm in an oven preheated to 120°C until ready to serve. (For a change, rub the fried bread lightly with a peeled and sliced clove of garlic before cutting the bread into cubes.)



Jerusalem artichoke soup

Serves 6 at home or 12 tastes in the classroom

Fresh from the garden lemons, Jerusalem artichokes, potatoes, onions, garlic, celery, chives

Despite their name, Jerusalem artichokes do not come from Jerusalem, nor are they related to globe artichokes. They are a root vegetable related to sunflowers.

Equipment

bowls – 1 medium, 1 large	metric measuring cups
lemon juicer	and jug
chopping board	skewer
large knife	ladle
peeler	food processor or blender
colander	coarse strainer
2 tea towels	spatula
large saucepan	6–12 soup bowls
wooden spoon	

Ingredients

1 lemon	1.5 litres Chicken Stock
750 g Jerusalem artichokes	(page 79)
2 medium potatoes	salt
1 large onion	freshly ground black pepper
2 cloves garlic	15 chives
2 sticks celery	1/3 cup cream or sour cream
80 g butter	croutons to serve (page 226)

What to do

* Fill the large bowl with water. Juice the lemon and add the lemon juice to the water. Set out the chopping board and knife. Peel the Jerusalem artichokes, cut into walnut-sized chunks, then drop into the bowl of acidulated (lemon) water. Peel the potatoes, cut into chunks, then drop into the bowl of acidulated water.

* Peel the onion and cut it in half lengthways, then place the flat sides on the chopping board and slice into rings. Peel and slice the

garlic. Slice the celery. Place the onion, garlic and celery in the medium bowl.

* Set the colander in the sink. Tip the artichoke and potato into the colander. Wipe out the large bowl and set aside. Place a tea towel on the workbench. Shake the colander to remove excess water, then tip the vegetables onto the tea towel and dry well.

* Weigh the butter, then melt in the large saucepan over a high heat. When the butter foams, tip in the onion, garlic and celery. Stir with the wooden spoon to coat the vegetables in melted butter. Add the drained artichoke and potato and stir for 1–2 minutes.

* Pour the chicken stock into the saucepan and bring to a simmer. Reduce the heat to low and simmer for about 10 minutes or until all the vegetables are tender when pierced with a fine skewer.



* **Working in batches, ladle the soup into the bowl of a food processor or the jug of a blender – don't add too much at once.**

Process to a smooth purée. Set the coarse strainer over the now-clean large bowl, then tip the soup through the strainer into the bowl. Use the spatula or the wooden spoon to help push the soup through the strainer and to break up any lumps. Repeat this process with the remaining soup. Rinse out the saucepan and put the soup back in.

* Reheat the soup over a low-to-medium heat until it reaches a simmering point, stirring in a little water or stock if the soup is too thick. Season to taste with salt and pepper. While the soup is heating, rinse the chives, dry by rolling in a tea towel, then chop finely.

* Ladle the soup into bowls, sprinkle each bowl with chives, then top with a dollop of cream or sour cream and croutons.

BOTTOM DRAWER

Interesting terms/techniques • acidulated water • testing with a skewer • working in batches • pushing through a sieve

Safety tip When puréeing hot soup you need to work very carefully. The steam can force the lid to come off the blender, spraying hot soup everywhere. This will make a mess, but, more importantly, the hot liquid could burn you quite badly. Only blend small quantities and place a thick cloth over the blender lid to protect your hand (ask for help the first time you do it).