INVITING IDEAS

Turn leftovers from barbecue into soup

RUTH MOSSOK JOHNSTON

In the midst of gorgeous weather, nothing tastes better than firing up your grill and cooking outdoors. When planning a guest list for a barbecue, I always buy enough groceries to feed at least six more, just in case we have "strays" stop by. This behavior invariably leaves me with an abundance of leftovers — leftover barbecued chicken, corn on the cob, sliced tomatoes ... sound familiar?

While normally I will have guests clamoring for an invitation to leftovers at my house, cold barbecued chicken, microwaved day-old corn on the cob, and soggy tomatoes, isn't their first choice. Let this food go to waste? Not a chance. When all else fails, **make soup!**

Faced with the aforementioned ingredients, I opened my fridge and visually scanned what was available: jalapeno peppers, red peppers, celery and a jar of cannellini beans; this is certainly workable. A quick look to my shaker seed box, enough onions and garlic? Perfect!

Serve "Ruth's Leftover Barbecue Soup" with some piping hot sourdough or cornbread, add a salad and you have a complete meal that certainly doesn't taste like leftovers!

With this recipe, feel free to experiment — add whatever you have leftover or what's in your fridge. If you have additional grilled vegetables left over, they would be a delicious addition. The next day, throw in some raw shrimp, cook until the shrimp is cooked, and create another meal!

RUTH'S LEFTOVER BARBECUE SOUP

Ingredients for stock:
- 3-5 pieces of leftover barbecue chicken (sauce, skin and bones included)
- 1 large onion, peeled
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled
- Water to cover

Ingredients for soup:
- 2 large red peppers
- 2 tablespoons light olive oil
- 3 large onions (approx. 4 cups), peeled and chopped
- 2 1/2 tablespoons chopped garlic
- 4 ounces (6-8) fresh red hot cherry peppers; remove stems, seeds, and chop
- 4 jalapenos; remove stems and seeds, and chop
- 3 cups chopped celery
- 12 cups liquid — 10 cups reserved stock (see above) plus 2 cups chicken broth (use more broth if necessary to have 12 cups of liquid in total)
- Fresh leftover tomatoes chopped or 1 can (28 ounces) season diced tomatoes, drained
- 2-6 ounce cans of tomato paste
- 2-3 ears of leftover corn on the cob; remove kernels (with a knife remove kernels by slicing downward while holding the cob vertically)
- 1-19 ounce can or jar of cannellini beans, drained.
- Salt to taste

In a large stock pot, place leftover chicken, onion and garlic — cover with water to cover.

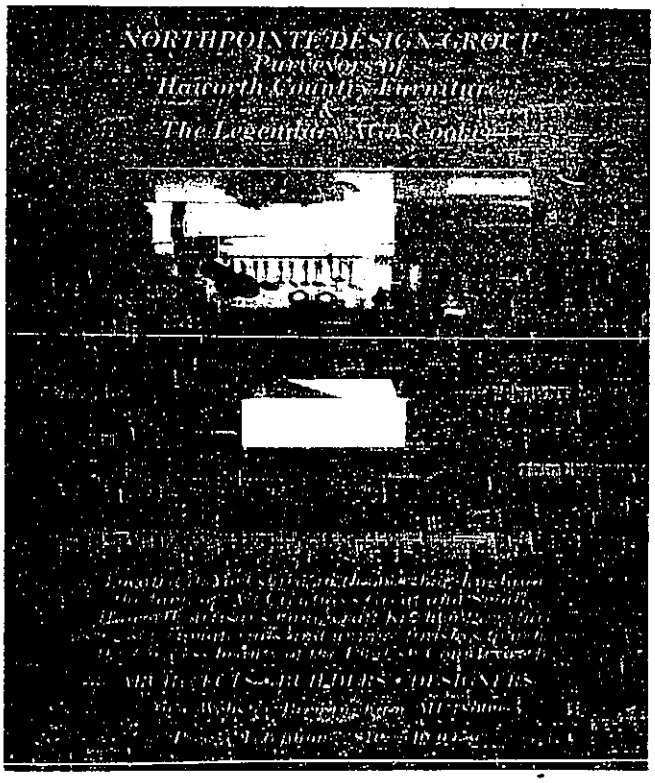
Cook stock over medium high heat removing foam as necessary. Cook until the meat of the chicken is falling off the bones. Let cool enough to handle — strain the broth and reserve the chicken meat. Place the meat in the filtered broth and reserve until later.

Roast 2 large red peppers (you can do it right on your gas open flame, broil, grill on a grill or torch with a small hand-propane torch) until blackened. Place the roasted peppers in a glass bowl and cover with plastic wrap to sweat. Once cool, cut off the stem, remove the seeds and devein. Remove the blackened skin by scrapping with a small knife — don't rinse, you want to keep all the flavor). When the skin is removed, cut into 1/4 inch dice.

In a clean large stock pot, add the oil and heat. Add the onions and garlic and saute until transparent. Add the diced hot peppers and saute for 3-4 minutes. Add the diced celery and saute for about 8 minutes. Add the roasted red peppers and all of your liquid (12 cups in total) and the chicken meat. Add the drained canned tomatoes and tomato paste — mix thoroughly.

Let cook for about 40 minutes over medium low heat — add the kernels of corn and the cannellini beans. Add salt to desired taste, and continue to cook until all vegetables are tender and flavors infused. The longer it cooks, the better — make sure to keep it cooking on low heat. Yield: 8-10 servings

I found an interesting bread mix at Sam's Club — SOURDOUGH Bread Machine Mix by KRUSTEAZ®. If you aren't a member of Sam's Club and would like to try this product, write or call Continental Mills at: Continental Mills, P.O. Box 88176, Seattle, Wash. 98138-2176, (800) 457-7744.



SPECIAL PURCHASE

1/2 Off Solid Oak

699

Quantities are limited

Classic Traditional Bed— Complete queen-size bed in solid oak, reg. $1420.

Solid oak set includes headboard, 7-drawer dresser, sculpted mirror and 6-drawer chest, reg. $3420.
Sale $1695
(matching nightstand also available)

- free immediate delivery
- free in home set-up
- convenient financing available
- free one year service

Scott Shaptine Fine Furniture Since 1927
The best just get better

OPEN DAILY 10-9 & SUNDAY 12-5:30
BLOOMFIELD HILLS - open til 6pm Wed., Thurs & Sat
TROY 977 E. FOURTEEN MILE ROAD, 585-3300
Just east of Oakland Mall
BLOOMFIELD HILLS 4110 TELEGRAPH, 642-0070
On the SW corner of Long Lake & Telegraph
NOVI 43606 W. OAK DRIVE, 349-0044
Across from Twelve Oaks Mall