

MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 1997

TASTE

B

HOME SENSE



LOIS THIELEKE

Homemade soup, hot bread, tonic for winter blahs

Homemade soup and hot bread are pure medicine for the winter months. If you're not feeling well, or just want to warm up after winter out-door activities, a bowl of steaming homemade soup and a slice of hot bread may be what you need.

Soups can take the edge off your appetite or it can be the meal. Homemade soups can be made filling without adding lots of calories, fat or salt. Soup is also a great way to use leftovers.

The best and most tasty soup is made from homemade stock. Beef bones cooked slow will develop a deep, rich flavor and color, while chicken, turkey or fish stock have a more delicate flavor. To make good stock, start with cold water, this helps to draw out the juices and the nutrients from the meat and vegetables.

Keep the stock pot at a low steady heat, do not boil. Simmer four to six hours, then strain through several layers of cheese cloth. Cool the stock in the refrigerator or freezer to skim off the unwanted fat. Now you have stock, the base for soups or flavorful additions to a casserole. Stock is perishable, so don't keep in the refrigerator more than two days. Freeze for use later.

If you don't have the time to do a stockpot, start the soup with a canned broth, bouillon granules or cubes. Add browned onion or roasted garlic to give the canned broth a real flavor boost. Tomato skins also lend flavor and color to a soup. Select a single main ingredient or a combination of main ingredients, add liquid and complement with one or more seasonings. A main ingredient could be asparagus, cauliflower, potatoes, mushrooms, celery, cauliflower, green beans, spinach, peas, cabbage, rice, noodles, broccoli, tomatoes, fish beef or chicken. Add these to a liquid such as broth, bouillon, tomato juice, milk, or homemade stock. Seasonings are onions, garlic, parsley flakes, Tabasco sauce, soy sauce, Worcestershire sauce, pepper, herbs and spices.

There is an old saying that goes, "Use parsley lavishly, but dried herbs discretely in soups." Always add seasonings at the end of the cooking time for better flavor. If the soup is too spicy, simmer three to four medium potato slices in the soup for a short period of time, then discard the potatoes. However, this is not always guaranteed to work, you may have to start all over.

Thickening

Thicken soups with noodles, pasta, dumplings, oatmeal, barley, rice, raw potato, or dry crustless bread. If you are adding uncooked pasta, rice or cereal, make sure there is enough liquid for these to expand. Pasta and rice especially absorb lots of liquid as they cook.

The flavor of stock improves overnight, so make it one day and the next day it will make a real pick-me-up cup of broth. Another advantage to having homemade stock is that it can be used to dilute condensed soups. To make cream soup, the broth is thickened with cornstarch or flour and then adding cream, yogurt, milk, or half and half. Do not boil after adding the milk product or you'll ruin your soup. A cream soup contains more fat and calories so use skim milk to keep it lighter. Garnish the hot steamy cream soup with lemon or orange slices, float small slices of cheese or meat balls, pieces of fresh herbs sprinkled on the top, a sour cream dollop, grated egg, nuts or croutons. Just before serving add the garnish so it looks fresh and attractive. Put popped popcorn on the top of cream of tomato soup, the kids will enjoy it.

Better crust

The rest of the medical prescription is hot crusty bread served with the soup. Aromatic breads heat from the oven are easy and so inviting. Use a regular yeast bread recipe and make the crust just the way you like it, by choosing the right pan. Glass, dark tin, or dull aluminum will give you a thick, heavy, brown crust because the pans absorb and hold more heat, but the oven temperature has to be lowered by 25 degrees. Setting a pan of warm water on the bottom of the oven while baking the bread will help harden the crust. Brushing the tops when the bread is partially baked with salted water also makes a crusty crust.

If you don't want to make your own bread from "scratch," there are hot-roll mixes, bread loaves in a tube in the grocery refrigerator case, or frozen bread dough.

Lois M. Thieleke of Birmingham is an Extension Home Economist for the Michigan State University Extension — Oakland County. For answers to food questions, call the hot-line (810) 858-0904.

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

- Focus on Wine
- One pot classics

DIVING IN

sands

THE MEAT

BY PEGGY MARTINELLI-EVERTS • REGISTERED DIETITIAN

If you decide to try eating a vegetarian diet, plunge right in!

More and more people are taking meat out of their diet. This trend is particularly strong among teens and young adults. HDS Services, the company I work for, provides food service management for numerous private schools including Interlochen Academy for the Arts in northern Michigan. The call for vegetarian meals among these young, talented kids is overwhelming.

The reasons people give for omitting meat from their diet vary greatly. Some do it strictly for humanitarian reasons; others to reduce fat or cholesterol; still others, I suspect, do it because it is currently fashionable to shun meat. Regardless of why people become vegetarians, there are benefits.

It is healthful. People who eat vegetarian style have lower incidences of heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity and certain forms of cancer.

It is good for your pocketbook. Grains, legumes, vegetables and fruits are normally less expensive than meat and animal protein. (Plus, you may also save on medical bills because a healthier diet leads to a healthier you.)

It adds spice to your life. Without the "hunk-of-meat-in-the-middle-of-your-plate" constraints, vegetarians tend to become more creative in their food choices, trying interesting grains and exotic fruits and vegetables from around the world. Think of the exciting dinner conversation. Plus, you'll be in good company. Famous vegetarians include Benjamin Franklin, Mohandas Gandhi, Albert Einstein and Paul McCartney.

It is environmentally correct. Feed fruits, vegetables and grains to humans instead of feeding livestock to slaughter for food

takes one step out of the food chain and makes our food supply go much farther. Additionally, it's estimated that it takes 2,600 gallons of water to produce one pound of wheat. Plus, no more greasy broiler pans or animal carcasses around after dinner.

Truly, there is nothing mystical or difficult about vegetarian eating. Research now shows that by eating a variety of grains, legumes, seeds, nuts, fruits and vegetables, and by eating sufficient calories, vegetarians can get all of the required nutrients for good health.

If you decide to try eating a vegetarian diet, plunge right in! The only special considerations for nutrients may be for infants, children, pregnant women and lactating mothers. They need to get enough calories, iron and vitamin D and should be able to do this with small, frequent meals and snacks. For these people, or for those who must restrict their diet due to other medical reasons, I recommend consulting your doctor or a registered dietitian.

You can learn more about vegetarian cooking at Great Meals — Cooking and Nutrition School, 2-6 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 23, Metropolitan Adventist School Auditorium, 15585 Haggerty Road, (north of 6 Mile Road). Each participant will receive a vegetarian cookbook loaded with practical ideas and recipes. A delicious vegetarian buffet will be served. Suggested donation \$15 per person, \$25 for couples. To register, call (313) 531-2179 or (313) 495-0538.

Peggy Martinelli-Everts of Clarkston is a registered dietitian and director of clinical services for HDS Services, a Farmington Hills-based food service and hospitality management company.

See recipe inside

Type of Vegetarian Diet

"Vegetarian" means many things to many people. The generally accepted meaning of a vegetarian diet is a diet free of meat, fish or poultry.

Type of Diet—Foods Eaten

Lacto-ovo-vegetarian: Milk and milk products, eggs, fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, grain.

Lacto-vegetarian: Milk and milk products, fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, grain.

Ovo-vegetarian: Eggs, fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, grain.

Pollivo-vegetarian: Poultry, fruit, vegetables, nuts, seeds, grain.

Pescivorous: Fish, fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, grain.

Vegan: Fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, grain.

Vegetarian Menu Ideas

Breakfast

Pancakes • oatmeal and milk • French toast • scrambled eggs • yogurt • cereal and milk • oatmeal • cashew butter on toast • butter with molasses.

Lunch and dinner

Macaroni & cheese • spaghetti with marinara sauce • cheese pizza • Eggplant Parmesan • vegetable stew with blackout • bean tacos, burritos or enchiladas • grilled cheese sandwich • vegetable to meat • vegetable pot pie • cheese lasagna • peanut butter & jelly sandwich • cottage cheese & fruit salad • baked beans and brown bread • cheese ravioli • Fettuccini Alfredo • minestrone soup with oatmeal bread • pitas bread with garbanzo bean filling • tabbouleh with peas • red beans and rice • lentil and barley soup • tofu and broccoli • egg salad sandwich • spinach souffle • broccoli or spinach quiche • split pea soup with rye bread • pasta fagioli • bean chowder • baked zucchini Parmesan • macaroni stuffed peppers • Spanish rice • cheese, spinach casserole • lentils with rice • falafel.

Goulash sticks-to-your ribs not hips

BY LAURA L. SYRCS
SPECIAL WRITER

Goulash has always been known as a "stick to your ribs" type of meal. Unfortunately, it also will stick to your hips, backside and stomach. But, there is still hope for this recipe that has been a long standing favorite in many kitchens.

A newer product from Green Giant called "Harvest Burgers for Recipes" helps reduce the fat, cholesterol and sodium of this month's recipe while still maintaining flavor and protein. Harvest Burger is derived from soybeans. Green Giant Co. conveniently made this tofu product to look and taste similar to ground beef. It is usually located in the breakfast food freezer section of the grocery store.

The wonderful aspect of vegetable protein is that it takes on the flavor of anything added to it. For example, if you add beef bouillon, it will taste like beef. If you add chicken flavoring it will taste like chicken.

We begin reducing the fat in Goulash by sauteing onions in water in a nonstick skillet. This step completely eliminates the need for butter, and immediately reduces the amount of fat by 44 grams!

Next, substitute tofu for beef. I think everyone should at least try the Harvest Burger product. Two pounds of ground beef has 2,814.8 calories, 241.1 grams of fat and 772 milligrams of cholesterol. Tofu contributes only 727.3 calories, 0 grams of fat and no cholesterol.

But, if you are still not convinced about using tofu, substitute 100 percent ground turkey breast. The turkey will add only 960.9 calories, 12.0 grams of fat and 440 milligrams of cholesterol. Turkey meat is considerably lower in sodium than the tofu and beef but, higher in cholesterol than the tofu.

There are fat-free gravies on the market now that are wonderful. The only drawback is that

GOULASH Original Version Serves 12

- 1/4 cup butter
- 1 cup onions, chopped
- 2 pounds ground beef
- 21 1/2 ounces beef gravy
- 48 ounces canned tomatoes with juice
- 2 cups water
- 1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce
- 3 cups frozen mixed vegetables
- 8 ounces egg noodles
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper

Melt butter in a large skillet. Place beef and onions in skillet. Cook until meat is browned and onions are translucent. Drain off excess fat. Stir in gravy, tomatoes and their liquid, water and Worcestershire sauce. Bring to a boil.

Stir in vegetables and noodles. Bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes or until vegetables and noodles are cooked through. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Nutritional analysis per serving:
Calories: 420 k cal
Fat: 26.4 g
Cholesterol: 84 mg
Carbohydrate: 27.3 mg
Protein: 19.8 g
Sodium: 175 mg

GOULASH Low-Fat Version Serves 12

- 1 cup onions, chopped
- 5 1/3 cups Harvest Burger tofu
- 20 1/2 ounces fat-free beef gravy
- 56 ounces no salt added tomatoes with juice
- 2 cups water
- 1/8 cup Worcestershire sauce, low sodium
- 3 cups frozen mixed vegetables
- 8 ounces egg noodles, No Yolk brand
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper

Saute onions in 1/4 cup water in a nonstick skillet. Stir in gravy, tomatoes with their liquid, Worcestershire sauce and Harvest Burger. Bring to a boil.

Add frozen vegetables and noodles. Cover, reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes or until vegetables and noodles are cooked. Season with pepper.

Nutritional analysis per serving:
Calories: 233.1 kcal
Fat: 0.1 g
Cholesterol: 0 mg
Carbohydrate: 36.4 g
Protein: 18.8 g
Sodium: 541 mg

they tend to be high in sodium. So, if your sodium level is an issue you may need to consult your physician about finding alternatives to these products.

To reduce the sodium even more in the Goulash recipe, simply use "no salt added" tomatoes, decrease the amount of Worcestershire sauce and eliminate the 1/2 teaspoon of salt. These easy steps will almost reduce the sodium by one half!

Being open-minded to new products will provide

us with more menu choices. More importantly, being open-minded can lead to open arterial. Wishing everyone a safe, healthy and happy 1997! For more low-fat and fat-free recipes and kitchen hints from Laura's Fat-Free Kitchen, an 8-page monthly newsletter, send a \$24 check or money order for 12 issues to PS Publications, PO Box 7687, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302-7687. Look for Laura's column in Taste on the second Sunday of the month beginning in February.