



  
baird

simply soup

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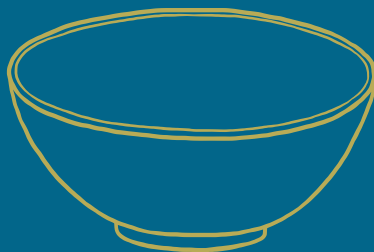
# simply soup



madge baird

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## zuppa toscana

This is a scrumptious way to enhance potato soup. Some people can take the heat, but if you can't, stick with mild Italian sausage. Medium is too spicy for some.

MAKES 8 TO 10 SERVINGS

1 large onion, diced	2 (14.5-ounce) cans chicken broth	1 pint whipping cream
1 ½ pounds mild Italian ground sausage*	4 cups water	1 bunch kale, tough stems removed and leaves chopped
6–7 large red potatoes, peeled, quartered, and thinly sliced	1–2 teaspoons red chile flakes	Chicken bouillon powder

In a large soup pot, brown the onion and sausage; drain fat. Add the potatoes, broth, water, and chile flakes. Cover pot and bring to a boil for about 20 minutes, until potatoes are tender.

Stir in the cream. Soup will thicken the longer you keep it warm and stirred. Mix kale into hot soup for about the last 5 minutes of cooking. Taste and adjust seasoning with small addition of bouillon if desired.

\*Italian ground turkey can be substituted.

# fresh tomato soup

This is the best! Don't be afraid to mix yellow tomatoes with reds, or sweet cherry tomatoes with slicers.

MAKES 6 TO 8 SERVINGS

2 pounds ripe tomatoes  
(any red, yellow, or  
orange varieties)  
1 tablespoon olive oil

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup chopped onion  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chicken broth  
Pinch of garlic powder

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon sugar  
Salt  
Freshly snipped chives, for  
garnish

Immerse washed tomatoes in a soup pot of boiling water for 1 to 1½ minutes. Transfer tomatoes to a colander and discard the hot water. Let tomatoes cool.

While tomatoes are cooling, rinse the pot thoroughly and return it to the stove. Add oil and heat on medium-high. Sauté the onion until it turns translucent. Remove pot from the heat.

Remove and discard the skins, tough cores, and as many seeds as possible from the tomatoes. Crush tomatoes with your hands over the soup pot and add them to the onion. Add broth, garlic powder, and sugar. Bring to a slow boil over medium heat, stirring frequently. Simmer soup for 5 to 8 minutes, and then adjust salt to taste. Remove from heat. Serve the soup as is, or purée it. Garnish with chives.

**VARIATIONS:** For a richer version, add  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup roughly chopped basil leaves and 6 ounces Boursin Garlic & Fine Herbs cheese before puréeing; omit the chives. For Cream of Tomato Soup, purée the tomatoes and stir in 1 cup whipping cream while reheating.





# red tomato gazpacho

An ultra-refreshing cold summer soup, this recipe is best when made with very ripe garden-grown or farmers market tomatoes.

MAKES 12 TO 15 SERVINGS

5 pounds tomatoes, peeled  
2 cucumbers, peeled and  
sliced  
1 large green bell pepper,  
seeded and sliced  
1 red onion, quartered

2 large cloves garlic,  
minced  
1 bunch cilantro, thick  
stems discarded  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup red wine vinegar  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup olive oil  
Juice of 1 lime

32 ounces tomato juice  
Salt and freshly ground  
black pepper  
Grated Parmesan cheese,  
for garnish  
Croutons, for garnish

Using a food processor, process the tomatoes, cucumbers, bell pepper, onion, and garlic in batches to desired consistency. Pour into a large bowl and stir in the cilantro, vinegar, olive oil, lime juice, and tomato juice; season with salt and pepper. Ladle into cups or bowls and garnish with cheese and croutons.

# creamy corn and roasted poblano soup

Poblano chiles have a wonderful, deep pepper flavor but hardly any heat if you remove the seeds and ribs after roasting the chiles. Try roasting them in the oven until the skins bubble up; then let the chiles cool a bit before scraping the skins off using a spoon.

MAKES 4 SERVINGS

2 poblano chiles	1 (12-ounce) package frozen corn, or 1 (14.5-ounce) can corn, with liquid	½ cup chopped fresh cilantro
1 tablespoon vegetable oil	1 (14.5-ounce) can chicken broth	Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 tablespoon butter	4 ounces cream cheese	1 scallion, green parts only, chopped, for garnish
1 small onion, diced	1 cup half & half	
½ red bell pepper, chopped		
1 clove garlic, minced		

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F.

Place the poblanos on a baking sheet and roast in the oven until the skins blister or separate from the flesh. Remove from oven and seal in a plastic bag to continue steaming. When cool, remove seeds and ribs. Scrape skin from the chiles using a spoon. Cut into strips, remove seeds, and dice.

Heat the oil and butter in a medium-size saucepan. Sauté the onion, bell pepper, and garlic over medium heat for 5 to 7 minutes, until onion turns translucent. Add the corn, chiles, and broth and bring to a boil. Remove from heat and purée one-third to one-half of the soup, reserving the rest. Add the purée back into the soup along with the cream cheese, half & half, and cilantro. Heat through. When hot, taste and adjust seasonings with salt and pepper. Serve with a garnish of scallion.





## mom's beef stew

Everybody has a few favorite dishes their mom made, and this is one of mine. Mom would make stew on cold winter days, and it would be ready for supper when we got home from school. The recipe is very basic; the long cooking develops flavor while the potatoes thicken the liquid a little. I always stirred a little ketchup into mine.

— MAKES ABOUT 4 QUARTS —

1 ½ pounds beef stew meat, cubed	5 ribs celery, sliced 8–10 carrots, sliced	Salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 tablespoons vegetable oil	3–4 large baking potatoes, peeled, quartered, and sliced	Ketchup (optional)
2 onions, sliced		Fresh thyme leaves, for garnish
3 quarts water, divided		

In a large soup pot, brown the beef in hot oil. Add the onion and brown for 2 to 3 minutes longer. Pour in 1 quart water and stir to remove brown bits from the bottom of the pan. Cover pot and bring to a boil; reduce heat and let simmer for 1 ½ to 2 hours.

Add rest of vegetables and 2 quarts water to the pot. Cover, bring to a boil, and then reduce heat and let simmer for 1 more hour, until beef is tender. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Pass ketchup at the table as an optional stir-in condiment, and garnish with thyme.