

When the days are short, and cabin fever is at its peak, a walk in the woods does wonders for the soul. The brilliant green of the hanging moss, the leaves from last fall finally composting away, and the mosses creeping over stones and fallen logs are great reminders that we live in a rainforest. Sometimes the sun will cut through a slit in the clouds, highlighting a group of trees, or a small tree growing out of a mother log. As the trail wanders back to home, one feels renewed and ready for a quiet time by the woodstove, enjoying a bowl of soup.

Fireside Mushroom Soup

Makes about 8 cups

Ingredients

⅓ c butter
2 fist-sized onions, chopped fairly small
1½ # mushrooms, I've used Cremini
1 c red wine
1 t salt
1 t dried thyme
½ t pepper
3 cups vegetable or chicken stock
1 c cream – table or heavy – both work well

Directions

Slice and chop the mushrooms.

Heat the butter in a large pot or deep skillet, over medium-high heat.

When it's all melted and foaming, add in the onions. Cook, stirring occasionally for 3 minutes.

Add in the chopped mushrooms; continue to cook, stirring occasionally for about 10 minutes. They should weep and then the heat of the pan should dry them somewhat, turning everything a rich brown. Reduce the heat if this is happening too quickly.

Add in the red wine; continue cooking until the liquid looks to have been reduced by about a half.

Stir in the salt, pepper and thyme.

Slowly pour in the stock and bring back to a gentle boil. Cook for about 10 minutes.

Slowly add in the cream, stirring constantly.

Remove ½ the soup to a bowl, to cool for ½ hour before puréeing.

The remainder should be left covered, and off the heat.

Using an immersion blender, a processor or a blender, purée the cooled portion.

Add the puréed soup back into the soup in the pot.

Stir thoroughly and bring back to a gentle boil.

Serve.