

Steve's recipe collection 2022

Section 3 **SOUPS**

STEVES RECIPES

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Roast cherry tomato soup

1kg cherry tomatoes
3-4 cloves garlic
1.2 litres strong vegetable stock
1teasp heaped muscovado sugar
Salt and black pepper to taste

- heat the oven to 180°C, gas mark 4
- put the whole tomatoes in a roasting tin
- top and tail the garlic cloves, leaving the remaining skin, and add to the roasting tin
- cook in the oven for 1 hour
- let it cool, skin those tomatoes which have browned, peel the garlic and bin the skins
- slit the skins of the remaining tomatoes (i.e. those that haven't browned or burst) with a knife
- blend the tomatoes and garlic together with 2-3 ladles of hot stock until smooth
- press the liquid through a sieve to get rid of the remaining pieces of skin and tomato seeds
- reheat the liquid in a pan with the remainder of the stock
- add the sugar, salt and pepper
- serve.

Sopa de ajo (garlic soup)

6 tablespoons olive oil

8-10 cloves of garlic, crushed, to taste

6 thick slices of bread (eg French stick, Spanish *barra*), crusts removed, cut into cubes (about 150-200g) – stale bread works well

1 teasp paprika (or spicy smoked *pimentón*)

1 litre boiling water or vegetable stock

salt to taste

2 eggs, beaten

Chopped parsley

Quantities can be varied to taste

- heat the oil in a soup pot / large saucepan and add the crushed garlic and bread cubes.
- fry gently until lightly golden (do not burn), then stir in the paprika
- immediately add the water / stock and salt. More salt will be necessary if using water, less or none if using vegetable stock.
- Bring to the boil, then turn down the heat, cover the pot and simmer slowly for about 20 minutes. The bread should dissolve in the broth and the soup will be fairly smooth. If it is still lumpy a quick blitz with a stick blender will help at this stage.
- Add the beaten eggs slowly to the pot, stirring in a figure of eight pattern, until the eggs have set, thickening the soup.
- stir in plenty of parsley and cook gently for a further 2 minutes, stirring,
- adjust the seasoning if necessary
- serve, with more parsley to garnish

Variations

- There are infinite variations by, for example adding finely chopped onion, spring onion, tomato or peppers, or grated cheese, for the last few minutes cooking time, or as a garnish

Courgette soup

1-2 tablesp sunflower oil
1 small onion, finely chopped
500g courgettes, finely sliced
500g tomatoes, finely chopped
1 heaped tablesp plain flour
800ml vegetable stock
¼ teasp turmeric
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
Grated parmesan cheese, to taste

- heat the oil in a saucepan over a low – medium heat, and add the onions and courgettes.
- cover and cook gently for 5 minutes, shaking the pan occasionally
- add the tomatoes, stir in the flour, and cook for a further 2 minutes
- stir in the stock and turmeric and a pinch of salt, and bring to the boil
- lower the heat, half-cover the pan, and simmer gently for 15-20 minutes
- puree the soup in a blender, then (optional – to give a smoother soup) work through a sieve, and return to the pan, and reheat
- add salt and pepper to taste
- serve, garnished with grated parmesan cheese

Note:

This is quite a mild soup. Make sure the courgettes and tomatoes are at their best and tastiest. Big watery tasteless courgettes will produce a tasteless soup. A pinch of sugar may help if the tomatoes are not at their sweetest.

Watercress and potato soup

2 tablesp sunflower oil
1 small onion, finely chopped
3 packets of watercress (240g), roughly chopped
250g potatoes, chopped into small dice
1 litre vegetable stock
Salt and black pepper
Watercress leaves to garnish

- heat the oil in a soup pan, add the onion, watercress and potatoes, cover and cook gently for a few minutes
- stir in the stock, bring to the boil and add salt and pepper
- lower the heat, cover and simmer for 20-25 minutes, stirring occasionally
- puree the soup with a blender, adjust seasoning and reheat
- garnish each serving with a few watercress leaves

Variations:

- use 0.5l milk and 0.5l stock for a creamier soup

Leek and potato soup

1-2 tablesps sunflower oil
1 onion (80-100g), finely chopped
2 large leeks, trimmed and sliced
400g potatoes, diced
1 litre vegetable stock
Salt and black pepper to taste

- heat the oil in a soup pan, add the onion, leeks and potatoes, cover and cook gently for a few minutes
- stir in the stock, bring to the boil and add salt and pepper
- lower the heat, cover and simmer for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally
- puree the soup in a blender (this is quite a thick soup)
- return to the pot, season to taste, reheat and serve

Variation:

- use ½ litre milk and ½ litre stock for a creamier soup

Leek and potato soup with cumin

As above except:

- add a pinch of ground cumin along with the stock, salt and pepper
- roughly grind a teasp of cumin seeds in a mortar and pestle and add to the soup after it has been blended

The idea for this variation came from The Puffer, Island of Easdale, Argyll

Cauliflower and blue cheese soup

500g cauliflower, cut into small florets

80g onion (or leek), chopped

1 small potato, peeled and chopped

900ml vegetable stock

Salt and black pepper to taste

140g Gorgonzola cheese, roughly chopped

- put the cauliflower, onion or leek and potato into a pan and add the stock, salt and pepper
- bring to the boil then reduce the heat
- cover and simmer gently for about 15 minutes until tender
- remove from the heat and blend with a hand blender until not quite smooth
- reheat the soup until boiling, then remove from the heat
- add the cheese and stir then ladle into bowls and serve

Serves 4

Note: Other blue cheeses such as Roquefort or Dolcelatte can be used.

Based on a recipe by Jan Cutler at www.allrecipes.co.uk

Carrot and coriander soup

1-2 tablesps sunflower oil
1 small onion, finely chopped
750g carrots, sliced
2 large bunches fresh coriander
1 litre vegetable stock
Salt and black pepper
Coriander leaves to garnish

- heat the oil in a soup pan, add the onion, carrot and coriander, cover and cook gently for a few minutes
- stir in the stock, bring to the boil and add salt and pepper
- lower the heat, cover and simmer for 20-30 minutes, stirring occasionally
- puree the soup in a blender, return to the pot, adjust seasoning, reheat if necessary and serve
- garnish each serving with a few coriander leaves

Carrot and Cardamom Soup

1-2 tablesps sunflower oil
1 medium onion, finely chopped
400g carrots
2 sticks of celery
2 bay leaves
6 black peppercorns
6 white cardamom pods
1 litre vegetable stock
Salt to taste

- heat the oil in a soup pan, add the onion, carrots and celery, cover and cook gently for a few minutes
- meanwhile crack open the cardamom pods, then grind the seeds in a mortar and pestle
- add the bay leaves, peppercorns and cardamom pods
- stir in the stock, bring to the boil and add salt to taste
- lower the heat, cover and simmer for 20-30 minutes, stirring occasionally
- remove the bay leaves, then puree the soup in a blender, return to the pot, adjust seasoning, reheat if necessary and serve

From a Nigel Slater recipe

Asparagus soup *added in 2021*

A very simple asparagus soup

2 tablesp olive oil

60g leek, finely chopped

250g asparagus spears, woodiest bits removed, finely sliced

100g potatoes, peeled and chopped into small dice

500ml water

salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

- heat the olive oil in a saucepan over a medium heat
- add the leek and fry for 3 minutes, until softened
- add the asparagus and potatoes and cook for a further three minutes
- add the water, salt and pepper and bring to the boil
- reduce the heat to a simmer, cover the pot and cook for 12-15 minutes, until the asparagus stalks are softened
- blend with a stick blender until fairly smooth
- Taste, adjust the seasoning as necessary and serve. Serves 2.

Asparagus and Crème Fraiche Soup

1-2 tablesps sunflower oil

1 small onion, finely chopped

400g asparagus, chopped (can be mostly stalks if the tips are needed elsewhere)

4 tablespoons crème fraiche.

1 litre vegetable stock

Salt and black pepper to taste

- heat the oil in a soup pan, add the onion and asparagus, cover and cook gently for a few minutes
- stir in the stock and the crème fraiche, bring to the boil and add salt and pepper
- lower the heat, cover and simmer for 20-30 minutes, stirring occasionally
- puree the soup in a blender, return to the pot, adjust seasoning, reheat if necessary and serve

Mixed peppers soup

2 tablesp sunflower oil
1 large onion, finely chopped
2 red peppers, stalks and seeds removed and roughly chopped
2 green peppers, stalks and seeds removed and roughly chopped
2 yellow peppers, stalks and seeds removed and roughly chopped
1 litre vegetable stock
1 400g tin chopped tomatoes
1 teasp paprika
2 teasp Dijon mustard
Salt and pepper to taste

- heat the oil in a large soup pan and fry the onions gently for about 5 minutes
- add the chopped mixed peppers and continue to fry gently for about 15 minutes, stirring occasionally
- add the vegetable stock, the chopped tomatoes and the paprika and stir well
- bring the soup to a boil, reduce down to a simmer, cover and simmer for 30 minutes
- puree the soup with a blender
- add the Dijon mustard and stir
- season to taste, reheat if necessary, and serve

Variation:

- Add a dollop of soured cream to each bowl of soup once served.

Borshch

2 tablesp sunflower oil
1 large red onion, peeled and sliced
1 large carrot, chopped
250g (2 or 3) large cooked peeled beetroots, sliced
250g red cabbage, chopped (about ½ a small cabbage)
1.2 litres vegetable stock (or beef stock)
1 tablesp tomato puree
1 tablesp malt vinegar
½ tablesp sugar
Salt and black pepper to taste
Fresh or dried dill (optional)
1 carton soured cream

- heat the oil in a large pan, add the onion, carrot, beetroots and cabbage and cook gently for about 5 minutes
- add the stock, stir in the tomato puree, vinegar, sugar, salt and pepper and bring to the boil
- lower the heat, cover and simmer gently for about 30 minutes
- remove from the heat and puree with an electric blender. The soup does not need to be completely smooth
- add a pinch of dill if using, adjust the seasoning and serve
- add a dollop of soured cream to each bowl.

Note: If uncooked beetroot are used they need to be boiled (including 2cm of stalk, and the root) for about an hour. Slice off the stalk and root and the skin should flake off.

Pea and parsley soup

30g butter

75g spring onions

300g parsley (2 large bunches)

1 medium potato, peeled and diced

200g frozen peas, defrosted or freshly shelled

2 cloves garlic, roughly chopped

1 litre vegetable stock

Salt and pepper to taste

- melt the butter in a large, heavy pan
- chop the spring onions and stir them into the butter and cook for 4 or 5 minutes at a moderate heat
- chop one of the bunches of parsley, including stalks, add to the spring onions and cook for a minute or two
- add the potato, peas and garlic and pour in the stock
- bring to the boil, lower the heat and simmer for 8-10minutes
- meanwhile discard the stalks from the remaining bunch of parsley and cover with boiling water in a separate bowl
- leave for 2 minutes, drain and stir the parsley leaves into the soup
- remove the soup from the heat and blend to a smooth, green purée
- taste and add salt and pepper to taste
- serve

Serves 4 to 6

Closely based on a Nigel Slater recipe.

Sopa de Guisantes (Spanish pea and ham soup)

4 tablesp olive oil
½ medium onion, finely chopped
1 medium carrot, finely chopped
2 bay leaves
2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
150g *jamon serrano* (cured ham), finely chopped
1 small bunch fresh mint, chopped
500g peas (frozen peas are fine)
1 litre chicken stock
Salt and pepper to taste

- Heat the oil in a saucepan, add the onion, and cook gently until golden
- add the carrot and bay leaves, and fry for a further five minutes, stirring occasionally
- add the garlic, 100g of the *jamon* and half of the mint, stir and fry for a further minute
- add the peas and cook for a further two minutes
- add the stock, turn up the heat and bring to a boil, then turn down the heat to a simmer
- simmer for about 4 minutes until the peas are tender, then remove from the heat
- remove the bay leaves, then blend the soup until smooth
- season with salt (may not be necessary – the stock and *jamon* will already contain salt) and pepper to taste, and the remaining mint, the stir well
- reheat if necessary then serve in bowls, with an extra drizzle of olive oil and the remainder of the *jamon* on top.

Serves 4.

Variation:

- It is easy to make a vegan version by leaving out the *jamon* and using vegetarian stock.

From Moro the Cookbook.

Saffron and leek soup with crispy leek rings

4 medium leeks
60g butter
1 tablesp olive oil
Pinch of saffron strands
3 tablesp plain flour
1 litre vegetable stock
Salt and pepper to taste
1 tablesp Sunflower oil
1 egg white, lightly beaten
Spring onions, chopped

- cut a short length of leek into slices, separate into rings and set aside
- chop the remaining leeks
- heat the butter and oil in a large pan and cook the leeks for 1 minute
- mix in the saffron and 2 tablesp of the flour, then gradually stir in the stock
- bring to the boil and simmer gently for 10 mins, until thickened, stirring regularly
- transfer the soup to a blender, blend until smooth, return to the pan, heat gently and season to taste
- meanwhile heat the sunflower oil in a small frying pan
- toss the leek rings in the remaining flour, dip in the egg white and fry over a medium heat until crisp and golden
- drain and serve the leek rings scattered over the soup along with the spring onions

Serves 4.

Notes and variations:

- if frying the leek rings seems like a faff (it is) they are optional, and the soup tastes perfectly good on its own
- they could be replaced by a few uncooked leek rings as a garnish, or by croutons
- to make a more substantial soup add some drained, tinned cannellini beans to the soup after blending, heat through and serve
- a non-veggie version of this soup could be made using fish stock plus a few squid rings in each plate.

Based on a recipe from BBC good Food magazine.

Tomato eggflower soup

1 litre vegetable stock
250g tomatoes, roughly chopped
2 eggs
½-1 teasp sesame oil, to taste
Salt to taste
2 teasp light soy sauce
3-4 spring onions, white part only, finely chopped

- heat the vegetable stock in a soup pot and bring to a simmer
- meanwhile lightly beat the eggs in a mug, add the sesame oil and mix well
- add the light soy sauce and salt to the stock and mix well
- add the chopped tomatoes and simmer for 5-6 minutes
- stir in the spring onions
- stir in the egg mixture in a slow thin stream, using a fork stirring in a figure of eight pattern, to pull the egg slowly into strands
- serve

Variations:

- finely chop the green spring onion tops and add to each plate as a garnish
- people may wish to add few drops of dark soy sauce to their plate

Non – vegetarian version

- use a good quality chicken stock and add a few small pieces of cooked chicken.

Closely based on a Ken Hom recipe

Ginger and turmeric udon noodle soup *added in 2021*

This is a ginger and vegetable stock , which is poured over cooked noodles

1 teasp coriander seeds
5 black peppercorns
1 large onion, peeled and halved
2 small carrots, halved
5-6 cloves garlic, peeled and halved
40g peeled weight of roughly sliced ginger
1 teasp ground turmeric
4 spring onions, chopped into 3 or 4 pieces each
1 dried red chilli
1 litre boiled water
Juice of half a lemon
Soy sauce or salt to taste, to season
60g udon noodles per person
A pinch of chilli flakes
Shredded spring onion to garnish

- in a large saucepan toast the coriander seeds and peppercorns over a medium heat for 2-3 minutes
- add the onion, carrots, garlic, ginger, turmeric, spring onions and chilli and stir
- add the water, bring to the boil then cover and simmer for 25 minutes, to allow the flavours to infuse
- add the lemon juice and the soy sauce or salt
- if you are using straight away strain the stock to remove the veg. It can also be strained and frozen for use at a later date
- if you are using later the same day, keep the vegetables in the stock then strain before reheating and serving
- when ready to serve, cook the noodles by adding to plenty of hot water and boil for six minutes (or according to the pack instructions)
- drain the noodles into a colander, rinse under cold water then place 60g in each individual soup bowl
- ladle the hot stock over the noodles
- garnish each bowl with a few chilli flakes and a little shredded spring onion

Serves 2 (large bowls) – 4 (small bowls)

Note: The stock should be delicately flavoured and fragrant. The ingredients and seasoning can be adjusted to taste and other vegetables can be added to the stock.

Closely based on a recipe by Anna Jones

Winter broth

This is the basic thick broth and I make a large pot of it most weeks during the colder months:

2 tablesp sunflower or olive oil
100g onions, chopped
200g celery, sliced
500g carrots, sliced
400g turnip (ie swede), chopped into small cubes
3 Knorr Vegetable stock pots
1.5 litres boiling water
140g soup mix (barley, dried peas, lentils)
60g red lentils
Up to 3 dried red chillies, to taste
2 bay leaves
Salt and pepper, to taste

- heat the oil in a large soup pot, add the onions and cook gently for 5 minutes
- add the celery, carrot and turnip, stir, and cook for a further few minutes
- meanwhile dissolve the stock pots in the water
- add the stock, soup mix, lentils, chillies and bay leaves
- add salt and pepper to taste
- bring to the boil, then reduce the heat, cover and simmer for about 2 hours.
- adjust the seasoning and serve. Makes 5-6 large helpings and up to 10 smaller bowls
- remove the chillies and bay leaves before serving, or leave in the pot if the remaining soup is being kept for another day

Notes and variations:

- the broth can be varied depending what vegetables are available. For example, I may add chopped leek and any leftover spinach leaves. Parsley can also be added towards the end of the cooking time, or as a garnish.
- this is meant to be a thick broth and a meal in itself. Unless there is no liquid left at all, avoid the temptation to add more water or stock. If some of the soup is being kept for another day, before reheating add a further 250ml water (and adjust the seasoning if necessary).
- of course, this can be made with home-made vegetable, chicken or beef stock.

Lentil and tomato soup

1-2 tablesp sunflower oil
1 small onion, finely chopped
1 litre vegetable stock
125g red lentils
1 tin peeled plum tomatoes, drained and roughly chopped
Salt and black pepper

- heat the oil in a soup pot and fry the onions gently until soft
- add the vegetable stock, lentils and tomatoes, and bring to the boil
- turn down the heat and simmer until the lentils are cooked (about 10-15 minutes)
- add more stock or water as necessary
- add salt and pepper to taste, and serve

Variations:

- quantities can be varied according to whether a thick or thinner soup is preferred
- similarly the lentils can be cooked until they reach the preferred consistency – softish or soft
- a crushed clove of garlic can be added to the onions
- 1-2 tablespoons tomato puree add to the stock will give a deeper colour
- some chopped fresh parsley can be added with the seasoning, and/or used as a garnish
- an even simpler version is to omit the oil and onions and simply mix lentils tomatoes stock, cook, season and serve.

Non – vegetarian version

As above, but:

- add 2-3 tablesp. Of small cubes of smoked bacon or chorizo
- add 1 teasp of smoked paprika and omit the black pepper.

Split pea soup

250g yellow split peas (channa dahl)
2 litres vegetable stock, hot
3 tablesp olive oil
2 medium onions (about 200g), roughly chopped
2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
2 bay leaves
2 teasp ground turmeric
2 teasp ground coriander
2 teasp mustard seeds (yellow, if possible)
1 400g tin chopped tomatoes
Salt to taste
Mint leaves to garnish

- put the split peas in a large saucepan, cover with 1.5 litres of stock and bring to the boil
- lower the heat and scrape off and discard any froth that may have accumulated on the surface
- partially cover with a lid and leave to simmer for about 30-40 minutes, until the split peas are becoming tender
- in the meantime, warm the oil in another large pan, add the onions, and cook for about 15 minutes, stirring from time to time, until they are pale gold and soft
- add the garlic, bay leaves, turmeric, coriander and mustard seeds and cook, stirring regularly, for a few minutes, until fragrant
- stir in the chopped tomatoes and cook for a further few minutes
- pour in the remaining 0.5 litre of stock and bring to the boil
- lower the heat and simmer for 10 minutes
- add the split peas and their stock to the tomato / onion mix, mix well and simmer for about 20 minutes, stirring from time to time
- taste, and add salt if necessary (the stock may be salty enough)
- turn off the heat and remove the bay leaves
- blend with a stick blender until smooth
- serve, with a few mint leaves in each bowl to garnish

Closely based on a Nigel Slater recipe.

Tomato and bean soups (i) Mexican tomato and bean soup

3 tablesp olive oil
2 red onions, finely chopped
4-5 cloves garlic, finely chopped
½ teasp ground cumin
600ml vegetable stock
200ml tomato passata
2 tablesp sliced green jalapeños (drained, if from a jar)
400g tomatoes, peeled and chopped
400g tin black eyed beans, drained and rinsed
75g sweetcorn
Handful of fresh oregano or basil leaves roughly chopped (or 1 teasp dried basil or oregano)
Pinch of sugar
Salt and pepper to taste
Juice of 1 lime
Handful of fresh coriander leaves, roughly chopped

- Heat the oil in a soup pan over a medium heat, add the onions and cook for about 5 minutes
- add the garlic and cumin and stir for a minute
- add the stock, passata, jalapeños, tomatoes, beans, sweetcorn, oregano/basil, sugar, salt and pepper, and bring to a boil
- simmer gently for 10 minutes
- remove from the heat, add the lime juice and coriander, adjust the seasoning to taste, stir and serve

Optional garnish:

- a little chopped red onion, more coriander, fresh pepper and/or dollops of soured cream.

Based on a Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall recipe

Tomato and bean soups (ii) Ribollita

Soup, similar to minestrone, but without pasta. Serves 6. Keeps for a few days, and best the day after cooking.

4 tablesp olive oil + extra for the bread
2 onions, 1-2 carrots and 1 celery stick, diced
1 leek, trimmed and finely sliced
2 cloves garlic, peeled and sliced
100ml red wine
400g tin tomatoes
400g tin cannellini beans
1 litre vegetable stock
1 small sprig rosemary and 2-3 small thyme sprigs, tied together
200g kale or Savoy cabbage, tough stocks removed, leaves shredded, Salt and pepper
6 slices French baton/Spanish barra white bread, slightly stale
1 garlic clove, halved
3-4 tablesp extra-virgin olive oil and parmesan (optional) to serve

- in a large saucepan warm the oil and sauté the onions over a lowish heat until softened (about 15 mins)
- add the carrots, celery and leek and cook for a further 5 minutes, stirring
- add the garlic and stir for another minute
- pour in the wine and simmer for 1 minute
- add the tomatoes, beans, stock, rosemary and thyme, season, and simmer gently, partially covered for about 1 hour
- add the greens and cook for 10 minutes more
- remove the herb bundle and adjust seasoning.
- Rub the bread with garlic, brush with oil, and toast till golden
- Put one slice in each bowl, ladle over the soup and trickle some more extra virgin oil on top
- shave some parmesan on top (optional).

Variations

- use garlic flavoured oil on the bread rather than rub it
- the herbs are optional and can be varied.

Hugh Fearnley-Whittonstall

Tomato & bean soups (iii) tomato and butter bean soup

2 tablesp olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped
1 red pepper, chopped
500g tomatoes, skinned and roughly chopped
1 litre vegetable stock
250 ml passata
A small handful of baby spinach leaves, roughly chopped
Salt to taste
A large pinch of smoked paprika (sweet or spicy, to taste)
A few chilli flakes (optional)
1 400g tin butter beans, drained
Soured cream (optional)
Chopped fresh basil leaves (optional)

- heat the oil in a soup pot, add the onion and red pepper and fry for a few minutes to soften
- add the tomatoes, stir, and cook for a further minute
- add the stock and passata and stir
- add the spinach, salt, smoked paprika and chilli flakes and stir
- bring to the boil, then turn down the heat and simmer, covered for 30 minutes
- allow to cool slightly then blend to a smooth liquid
- add the butter beans, reheat and simmer for a few minutes
- serve in bowls – if desired add a dollop of soured cream and/or some chopped basil leaves to each bowl

Chorizo and chickpea soup

A very easy soup which only takes a few minutes to prepare

- 150g cooking chorizo
- 1 400g tin of chopped tomatoes
- 500ml vegetable stock
- 150g baby spinach leaves
- a pinch of chilli flakes, to taste
- 1 400g tin of chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- crusty bread to serve

- peel and chop the chorizo into small bite sized pieces
- heat the soup pot, add the chorizo pieces and dry fry for a few minutes, until their oil has been released
- add the tin of tomatoes and the vegetable stock and mix well
- add the spinach, chilli flakes and chickpeas and stir well
- bring to the boil, cover, and simmer for about 3 minutes until the spinach has wilted
- stir well, then ladle into bowls and serve with crusty bread

Serves 4

Variations:

- The original recipe uses 150g of shredded savoy cabbage instead of spinach then simmers the soup for 6 minutes until the cabbage is just tender.
- You can use ready chopped chorizo pieces, but the best flavour is from cooking chorizo which comes in various varieties – simply choose your preferred one.

Based on a recipe at www.bbcgoodfood.com

Bacon and barley soup

2 tablesp olive or sunflower oil
150g onions, chopped
1 tin (400g) chopped tomatoes
1.5 litres boiling water
500g cooking bacon, in large pieces
100g red lentils
100g pearl barley
Black pepper, to taste
50g chopped baby spinach leaves

- fry the onions in the oil until soft
- add the tomatoes, mix well then add the water
- add the bacon, lentils, barley and pepper
- bring to the boil, turn down the heat and simmer for two hours
- 15 minutes before the end add the spinach and continue to simmer
- serve

Notes:

- the bacon can either be chopped and added to the soup or removed after cooking and used in other meals or sandwiches. The bacon can be unsmoked or smoked, to taste
- do not add salt. There will be enough in the bacon.

Serves 6

Cullen Skink

1 tablesp butter

1 medium onion, chopped

250g potatoes, peeled and cut into small (1cm) cubes

350ml water

300g smoked haddock

350ml whole milk

Salt and pepper to taste

2 tablesp finely chopped parsley

- melt the butter in a saucepan, add the onion, and fry gently until transparent. Do not brown
- add the potatoes and water, bring to the boil, and simmer for 15 minutes
- meanwhile, in a second pan, cover the haddock with the milk, and cook gently for a few minutes until just tender
- remove the haddock from the milk, allow to cool slightly, and flake the fish into pieces, taking care to remove any skin or bones
- add the milk and the flaked haddock to the first saucepan, and cook gently for a few minutes. Season with salt and pepper
- add 1 tablesp of chopped parsley for the last 2 minutes and mix well
- serve, using the other tablesp of chopped parsley as a garnish. Serve with bread.

serves 4

Option:

- add some finely chopped carrot along with the potatoes

closely based on a recipe by Philip Allan on the BBC Good Food website.

Cock-a-leekie soup

2 tablesp sunflower oil

100g onions, chopped

400g leeks, cleaned and chopped

1 carrot (about 100g), sliced

a 1.5kg chicken (ideally a boiling fowl, with giblets, if you can get hold of one)

2 bay leaves

2 litres water

Salt and black pepper to taste

60g long grain rice

A generous handful of chopped parsley

- heat the oil in a large soup pot and gently cook the onions, leeks and carrot for a few minutes.
- Add the chicken, bay leaves, water, salt and pepper, and bring to the boil
- Reduce the heat to a simmer, cover the pot and simmer for 1 hour
- Remove the chicken, and when cool enough to handle strip the skin and most meat from the chicken and set aside to use in other meals.
- Return the carcass to the pot, add the rice, and simmer for another hour
- A couple of minutes before serving, adjust the seasoning if necessary and add the chopped parsley
- Carefully remove the carcass and the bay leaves and serve

Notes and variations:

- If you can get hold of a boiling fowl with giblets add the giblets to the pot, leave in throughout the cooking and serve one in each plate of soup.
- Take care that the carcass does not disintegrate – it can be tricky to remove all the small bones and gristle from the soup. Remove it if it looks like splitting into pieces.
- Some of the chicken meat can be added to the soup if desired. Add a few minutes before the end of the cooking time to ensure that they are heated through.
- this can be made with thighs and drumsticks (skin on). Remove after an hour and return the large bones to the pot, removing before serving.

Gazpacho

1kg very ripe tomatoes, chopped
1 small onion, finely chopped
3-4 garlic cloves, crushed
½ cucumber (or 1 *pepino*), peeled and chopped
75ml olive oil
2 tablesp sherry vinegar
Salt and pepper to taste

- blend together the tomato, onions, garlic and cucumber
- add the olive oil, sherry vinegar, salt and pepper and blend until smooth
- if you wish it even more smooth, pass the mixture through a fine sieve, to get rid of any remaining tomato pulp
- chill and serve cold, in a glass, or in a soup bowl with garnish.

Serves 6

Optional garnish:

Use any combination of the following:

Finely chopped onion, spring onion, red and/or green pepper, hard-boiled egg, and/or croutons.

Variations:

3 finely chopped spring onions or ½ a green pepper, chopped, can be used instead of the onion

Salmorejo

6 ripe tomatoes, chopped
1 medium baguette or small barra
a splash of sherry vinegar
a pinch of salt
1-3 cloves garlic to taste, crushed
150ml extra virgin olive oil
1 hard boiled egg (garnish)

- blend the tomatoes in a bowl
- add the insides of the baguette (ie not the crusts) and soak in the blended tomatoes for 5 minutes
- blend the tomato and bread mixture
- add the sherry vinegar, salt and garlic and blend once more
- add the olive oil gradually and blend at a medium speed (if the blender has a hole in the lid use that, if you are using a stick blender add the oil about 50 ml at a time and blend) until the mixture is smooth
- taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary
- chill
- finely chop the hard boiled eggs
- serve chilled in glasses or small bowls with a little chopped egg as garnish

Variation:

- finely chopped ham can be used as a garnish in addition to the egg.