

SENSIBLE SOUP STOPS SHIVERING

BY a "sensible" soup, I mean one which does not take too much time to make, or too much fuel to cook; and which contains plenty of little solid pieces—such as vegetables, meat, fish, rabbit, barley, macaroni, haricot beans, or dumplings. Cream Soups, which have milk added to the pureed vegetable pulp, are extra sensible.

Canned Soups

Of course, there are good canned soups to be bought—and modern canning methods conserve the vitamins in the ingredients used. But for a hungry family of any size, canned soups are expensive, unless used just as a hot stimulating little start for a solid meal. Canned soups are specially good with half as much milk heated with them, and a little cornflour thickening if liked; and when a meal has to be prepared hurriedly, they are really an excellent stand-by.

Packet Soups

Then there are the Packet Soups—consisting of dehydrated fresh vegetables and nicely flavoured with different herbs. These are also very good, and are ready to serve in a few minutes. They can be made with saved vegetable water, instead of just plain water, and a good proportion of milk. A little chopped onion and carrot fried and added to them, makes them extra tasty; and does not take much time; or a little chopped bacon or ham, and sippets of fried bread, or even diced stale bread dried crisp and brown in the oven.

Real Soup

But the housewife with a family likes to serve real soup—substantial and plenty of it. Often it can be the main dish, especially for children, to be followed by a favourite pudding and some raw fruit.

Oxtail Soup

Cut the tail into joints, flour them, and put them into a large saucepan with a little dripping, and fry a light brown. Remove the pieces and fry one or two sliced onions. Put back the ox-tail, add one or two sliced carrots, a turnip if liked, a cut-up leek with most of its green part, some cut-up celery, a few peppercorns and a half a dozen cloves, and just cover with cold water. Bring to the boil, stirring often, and cook over a good heat for about 10 minutes. Then add more water, about a quart, salt to taste (about a dessertspoon), bring back to the boil, and simmer very gently for as long as possible—or until the tail is tender. This can be done in the oven, on the lowest heat, like a casserole dish; or over just a peep of gas on the smallest burner on top of the stove. At dinner time, take out the tail pieces, strain the soup, thicken it with flour, put back as much of the vegetables as desired, and also pieces of the meat cut from the joints. Re-heat and serve.

Mulligatawny Soup

This is an old English recipe. You need a rabbit and a few soup-bones from the butcher (small bones, or chopped up). Boil the cut-up rabbit and the bones, in 3 pints of water till the rabbit is very tender. Then cut off all the

meat and save it in a basin. Put the bones back into the saucepan, with plenty of cut-up onion, a carrot or two and a turnip. Boil up till the vegetables are cooked, then strain through a sieve. Put the soup back into the saucepan, add salt, thicken with flour and curry powder to taste, mixed to a paste with a little water. Let it boil about 10 minutes to get the curry flavour thoroughly; then add the best pieces of the rabbit, re-heat and serve. In Bedford, they added a little port wine before serving!

Potato Soup

Cut up an onion small, and 4 or 5 potatoes. Cover with water and cook. Mash in the same water. Add milk, pepper and salt, a lump of butter, and thicken a little. Serve with chopped parsley sprinkled in; or you may sprinkle in some finely grated cheese.

Pumpkin Soup (Special)

One pound of haricot beans; 2lbs. of pumpkin; 1½lbs. of onions; ¼lb. rice when obtainable; cloves, and a very little garlic. Soak the beans overnight, and put them on the fire with 6 pints of water, slightly salted. When the beans are tender, add the pumpkin, onions, rice, etc., and simmer very slowly until quite cooked. Press through a sieve, and add a lump of butter. Serve with sippets. The ironbark pumpkin is best for this.

Kidney Soup

This is an original recipe from a listener. Mince half a beef kidney, and put into a smallish basin (or a double boiler) with a knob of butter, cover with butter paper, and steam for an hour. Slice up a fair-sized leek, and a big potato, and cook them in about a quart of water (or water saved from cooking vegetables). Then mix all together, beating smooth with an egg beater, and season with pepper and salt. Thicken with cornflour and milk, add a sprinkling of chopped parsley, and serve.

Fish Soup

Buy cheaply from the fishmonger some fish heads and bones. Cover well with water, and boil for about half an hour. Strain through a fine sieve into a clean saucepan (to make sure there are no scales). Add an equal quantity of milk; a little grated onion and carrot, to taste; chopped parsley; pepper and salt, and cook for a few minutes. Thicken to the required consistency with cornflour mixed with a little milk; just before serving add a good knob of butter, which makes a smoother soup. Pick out any good bits of fish from among the bones, and put back into the soup.

FROM THE MAILBAG

Sweetening Rancid Butter

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I have had some farm butter sent me, and it is unfortunately a bit rancid. I wonder if you or any of our Daisy Chain could tell me what to do to sweeten it a bit. I was so thrilled to get it, and I don't want to use it only for cooking, but would like it to help my butter ration a bit on the table.

"Birkenhead."

Here is a method which has been sent in by someone who found it worked well. Cut up a pound of butter into

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