

ONION SOUP

Makes 4-6 servings

INGREDIENTS

3 lbs onions (about 6 large onions)
4 tablespoons olive oil or other neutral oil
2 tablespoons butter
Salt, to taste
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 cup of dry vermouth or dry white wine (or any leftover wine)
8 cups of stock (vegetable stock, beef, chicken, or mushroom all work; beef is traditional)
2 bay leaves
5 sprigs fresh thyme or 1 teaspoon dried thyme
Slices of French bread (optional)
Grated Swiss Gruyere cheese (optional)

DIRECTIONS

1. Prepare onions. Remove brown outer layer of onion and any brown or green spots. Thinly slice onions from root to stem; you should end up with crescent shapes.
2. Caramelize onions. In a large, heavy-bottomed pot or dutch oven, heat olive oil on medium heat. Add onions and cook, stirring often, until they have softened and become transparent, about 20 minutes.
3. Increase heat to medium high and add butter. Cook, stirring often, until the onions start to brown, about an additional 15 minutes. Add a pinch of salt, the minced garlic, and cook for a minute more.
4. Deglaze the pot with vermouth or wine, and scrape any browned bits on the bottom and side of the pot.
5. Pour in stock, bay leaves, and thyme and bring to a simmer. Adjust heat to a low simmer and cover. Cook for 30 minutes. Taste, add more salt and pepper to taste (if it is too salty, add half a peeled, uncooked potato).
6. Allow soup to simmer, covered, for an additional 30 minutes to an hour. Stir occasionally, adjusting salt and pepper to taste.
7. (Optional) If serving with bread, heat oven to 450° Fahrenheit and arrange a rack in the upper third of the oven. Brush both sides of bread lightly with butter or olive oil. Toast in oven until lightly browned, about 5 to 7 minutes.
8. (Optional) If serving with cheese, flip over toasts, sprinkle with cheese, and return to oven and bake until the cheese is bubbly and lightly browned.
9. To serve, ladle soup into bowls and, if using, add a cheesy toast to each bowl.

