

LEEK AND POTATO SOUP

1 LB OF NEW POTATOES
2 MEDIUM LEEKS
1 MEDIUM BROWN ONION
6 CUPS OF GOOD CHICKEN STOCK
1 SPRIG OF THYME
FRESH CHIVES
CRÈME FRAICHE
HEAVY CREAM

TRIM ROOT ENDS AND DARK GREEN LEAVES FROM LEEKS. SPLIT LENGTHWISE AND RINSE UNDER WARM RUNNING WATER TO REMOVE GRIT. CHOP ROUGHLY INTO 2-INCH PIECES.

PEEL ONION AND CHOP ROUGHLY.

MELT 2 TBSPS OF BUTTER AND 2 TBSPS OF OLIVE OIL IN A HEAVY SAUCEPAN OR DUTCH OVEN.

ADD ONIONS AND LEEKS. COVER AND SWEAT ON A LOW FLAME FOR ABOUT 5 MINUTES OR UNTIL THE ONIONS ARE TRANSLUCENT BUT NOT BROWNEED.

MEANWHILE, PEEL AND CUT POTATOES INTO 2-INCH PIECES. ADD TO THE POT AND COOK FOR FIVE MINUTES, STIRRING FREQUENTLY.

ADD CHICKEN STOCK, THYME LEAVES, SALT AND WHITE PEPPER. BRING TO A BOIL, REDUCE TO A SIMMER. COOK, PARTIALLY COVERED FOR ABOUT 15 MINUTES OR UNTIL THE POTATOES ARE COOKED.

ALLOW TO COOL. PUREE WITH AN IMMERSION BLENDER OR IN FOOD PROCESSOR.

WITH A FORK WHIP TOGETHER 1/2 CUP OF CRÈME FRAICHE AND 2 TBSPS OF HEAVY CREAM. CHOP CHIVES AND STIR INTO MIXTURE.

POUR SOUP (HOT OR COLD) INTO BOWLS AND GARNISH WITH A DOLLOP OF CRÈME FRAICHE AND CHIVES.

SERVES 6

VARIATIONS:

CAULIFLOWER, POTATO AND LEEK SOUP

ADD TWO CUPS OF CAULIFLOWER FLORETS ALONG WITH THE POTATOES, LEEKS AND ONIONS.

SPINACH SOUP

DUMP ONE BUNCH OF SPINACH IN A SINK FULL OF COLD WATER. TRIM OFF STEMS. LIFT THE SPINACH FROM THE WATER AND PUT INTO A POT WITH A LID. ADD 2 TBSPS OF SALT, COVER AND COOK ON MEDIUM HEAT TILL THE SPINACH COLLAPSES. DRAIN IN A COLANDER AND DUMP INTO A SINK FULL OF COLD WATER. SQUEEZE OUT AS MUCH MOISTURE AS YOU CAN.

ADD SPINACH TO THE SOUP WHEN THE POTATOES ARE DONE AND PUREE ALONG WITH THEM.

GARLIC SOUP

TRIM AND PEEL THE CLOVES FROM ONE WHOLE HEAD OF GARLIC. ADD TO THE SOUP ALONG WITH POTATOES.