

## Easy, Creamy Potato Soup – Comfort du Jour

As far as I am concerned, the best thing about winter is the soup. What makes soup even better? An easy recipe that doesn't take all day, uses the simplest of ingredients (so I don't have to run to the store to make it), and can be customized with almost any extra flavors one could imagine. This creamy potato soup is ticking all those boxes for me, and though it is ultra-creamy and silky, it contains no heavy cream.

We dressed up our creamy potato soup like a loaded baked potato—with sour cream, chives, cheddar cheese and crispy bacon pieces on top. But it would be very easy to keep the base of the soup and swap in different enhancers, such as roasted broccoli florets, sautéed mushrooms, frozen corn, cubes of ham or whatever else takes you to your happy place.

*This recipe makes 4 entrée servings or 6 appetizers. Any leftovers warm up well, either on the stove or in the microwave.*

### INGREDIENTS

3 Tbsp. bacon drippings, butter or olive oil  
1/2 large onion (about 1 cup), chopped  
3 ribs celery hearts, trimmed and chopped  
Salt and pepper  
2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour (gluten-free 1:1 flour works for this also)  
2 cups low-sodium vegetable broth\* (see notes)  
2 cups milk\*  
About 1/2 tsp. ground cumin  
About 1 ½ lbs. Yukon gold potatoes, scrubbed and cubed (peel if you wish)  
  
Toppings and stir-ins of your choice, for serving

### \*NOTES

Vegetable broths vary widely in ingredients; for best results, choose a broth that does not contain tomatoes. The brand I like for this is Imagine vegetarian “no-chicken” broth. It has a rich golden color and seasonings that are very reminiscent of chicken broth.

I used a combination of whole milk and canned evaporated milk in my recipe. Use 2% or skim milk if you'd like; the flavor will be less rich overall, but the roux will still give the soup a thick and creamy consistency, and you can also achieve extra creaminess with the immersion blender technique.

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### INSTRUCTIONS

Place a heavy-bottomed soup pot over medium heat. Add drippings or butter (I used a combination of both) and sauté the celery and onions (seasoned with salt and pepper) until they are soft and translucent.

Sprinkle flour over them and toss to coat, cooking about two minutes until the mixture is bubbly.

Add broth and stir, scraping the bottom of the pot to loosen any browned bits. Add the milk and blend the mixture together, stirring frequently until it is fully combined and slightly thickened. Sprinkle in the ground cumin.

Add the potatoes to the pot, then stir and adjust seasoning to taste. Reduce the heat to low (you don't want to boil the milk), cover the pot and let it simmer until potatoes are very tender, at least 30 minutes. Mine went almost an hour at very low heat.

If desired, use an immersion blender to puree some amount of the soup. I blended only on one side of the pot, and it resulted in a perfect balance of creamy and chunky. Alternatively, you could remove about 2 cups of the soup, let it cool and puree it in a blender, then stir it back into the pot. Be careful blending hot ingredients.

Ladle into deep soup bowls and top with the ingredients you love.