

Fresh Asparagus Soup

I always look forward to spring and fresh asparagus season. Generally, I prefer the thick stalks in contrast to the thin ones as they are more forgiving when cooked so that they are tender but not overcooked. Over the 2-month asparagus season, I will enjoy them steamed, sautéed, grilled, or in soup.

I have prepared this dish two ways, with dairy and cream and without, both recipes listed below. The vegan (non-dairy) version uses boiled potatoes to add a creamy texture to the soup. Take your pick and/or make both.

Prep and Simmering Time: 25 Minutes

Serves: 4

INGREDIENTS:

VEGAN (DAIRY FREE) VERSION

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 medium sweet onion, chopped
2 cups baby gold potatoes (1-inch in size), sliced into quarters
3 medium garlic cloves — minced
3 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
1.5 pounds asparagus — base trimmed and discarded and cut into 1-inch pieces
½ teaspoon sea salt
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
2 tablespoons fresh chives, chopped

DIRECTIONS:

Heat a large saucepan over medium heat. Add olive oil and onions, stirring occasionally, until the onions turn translucent, about 2-3 minutes. Add potatoes, cover, and heat for another 1 minute with a couple stirs, then add the garlic and cook for 1 minute.

Add the broth, asparagus, salt, and pepper. Bring to a gentle boil, then reduce heat and simmer until the vegetables are tender, 10 to 12 minutes.

Carefully transfer pot contents to a blender or food processor in batches and blend until smooth. (Use caution as hot soup may splatter.)

Serve hot, garnished with fresh chives.

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INGREDIENTS:

ORGANIC SOUR CREAM AND MILK VERSION

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1 medium sweet onion, chopped
2 medium garlic cloves — minced
2 cups low-sodium vegetable broth — or low-sodium, organic chicken broth
1.5 pounds asparagus — base trimmed and discarded and cut into 1-inch pieces
½ teaspoon sea salt
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
1 cup whole organic milk
½ cup whole organic sour cream
2 tablespoons fresh chives, chopped

DIRECTIONS:

Heat a large saucepan over medium heat. Add olive oil and onions, stirring occasionally, until the onions turn translucent, about 2-3 minutes. Add the garlic and cook about 30 seconds.

Add the broth, asparagus, salt, and pepper. Bring to a gentle boil, then reduce heat and simmer until the vegetables are tender, 10 to 12 minutes.

Carefully transfer pot contents to a blender or food processor (in batches if needed) and blend until smooth. (Use caution as hot soup may splatter.) Return the blended soup to the pot. Stir in the milk and sour cream and bring to a minimal gentle boil. Then immediately remove from heat.

Serve hot, garnished with fresh chives and a dollop of sour cream.

Enjoy,

Steven Masley, MD