

Carrot Apple Soup and Spinach Salad

Tonight we feature a sweet and savory carrot/apple soup with a swirl of sour cream or yogurt. It's topped with toasted pine nuts.

Carrots and crisp Granny Smith apples are almost always available at your local grocery store. The same is true for fresh or packaged spinach. It's a meal to make any time of the year.

And speaking of "Granny," this meal may bring back memories of Grandma's table.

Preparation time: 1 hour and 40 minutes - Servings: 2

Organize Your Ingredients!

Notes on Organizing

Prep and organize ingredients before you start cooking. This simple soup is a joy to assemble. The preparation time allows for the soup to rest. There are two different onion preps today: 1 chopped yellow onion for the soup and 3 chopped green onions for the Spinach Salad.

Carrot Apple Soup

1 Not Chick'n Bouillon cube dissolved in
2 C. water

1 tsp. olive oil
1 yellow onion (chopped)
1 clove garlic (smashed and chopped)

3/4 C. white wine
2 C. Not Chicken Bouillon Broth (above)
2 lbs. carrots (scrubbed and sliced into rounds)
2 C. Low-sodium vegetable broth
2 tart apples (peeled, cored, finely chopped)
1 tsp. cinnamon
1 T. apple cider vinegar
1 T. butter

1 C. low-sodium vegetable broth (use to thin soup as needed)

Bread and Garnishes

1 artisan roll per diner
Garnish:
1/2 C. plain non-fat yogurt (stirred smooth)
1/4 C. pine nuts (toasted)

Spinach Salad

10 crimini mushrooms (sliced)
1 tsp. olive oil

one 4 oz. bag baby spinach (washed)
1/2 of a medium cucumber (peeled and chopped)
3 green onions (chopped)
2/3 C. red bell pepper (thin-sliced)
3 pieces smoky tempeh (chopped)
2 Roma tomatoes (chopped)

2 T. crumbled feta cheese

Dressing for Salad

1 clove garlic (peeled)
2 T. yellow onion (chopped)
1 tsp. low-sodium soy sauce or tamari
2 T. canola oil
2 T. balsamic vinegar
1/4 C. low-sodium vegetable broth
1/2 tsp. Dijon mustard

Let's Prepare, Cook, and Plate This!

Basic Assembly Instructions

Start by Assembling the soup. To ensure freshness, wait to make the salad and dressing until 1/2 hour before dining.

Carrot Apple Soup

1. Dissolve bouillon cube in 2 C. boiling water. Whisk and set aside.
2. In a large soup kettle, sauté onion and garlic in oil until onions turn translucent.
3. Add white wine, bouillon broth and carrots. Bring to boil, reduce heat to low, cover and cook 30 minutes. Allow to cool for 10 minutes.
4. Blend above mixture in food processor until smooth. Return to pan.
5. Add low -sodium vegetable broth, apples, cinnamon, vinegar and butter. Return to a boil and cook 10 minutes.
6. Turn off heat and let rest for 1 hour.
7. As you warm the soup before serving, thin to a desired consistency with some vegetable broth.

Warm bread or rolls

About 15 minutes before you wish to dine, wrap rolls or bread in foil and place in 200° degree oven to warm.

Spinach Salad:

Brown mushrooms in oil and set aside.

Assemble spinach salad ingredients on individual salad plates and divide browned mushrooms over the top. Sprinkle with feta crumbles.

Spinach Salad and Dressing

Dressing for Salad:

Combine dressing ingredients in a food processor and blend until smooth. Transfer to a small serving pitcher.

Plate the Meal/Garnish

1. Measure 2 C. soup per serving into large bowls.
 2. Top bowls with 2 T. yogurt swirled into the center.
- Garnish: Sprinkle each bowl with a generous portion of toasted pine nuts.
Serve salads, dressing and bread on the side.

What I've Learned from this Recipe

This simple soup doesn't require much seasoning. The sweetness of the apple and the savory flavor of the carrots and onion are the identifiable and dominant flavors. The cinnamon adds just enough spice. The profile is finished with the toasted pine nuts and the zing of the yogurt.

Let us know what you think, and ask any questions you may have! chezdon@plate6.com