

Cream of Portobello

In Albuquerque, NM each year there is a fundraiser for the Road Runner Food Bank, called the Souper Bowl, on the weekend of Super Bowl Sunday. Most of the best chefs and restaurants compete in it. In 1999 I won first prize with this recipe!

There is a myth that one needs to wipe mushrooms with a damp cloth and never clean them under running water or in a bowl of cold water. This has been proven wrong! There are also chefs who scrape out the gills of portobellos. I don't. I not only like the flavor that leaving the gills on imparts to the soup, but also the hint of an almost purple-brown tint the soup has.

This soup tastes best after it's rested for at least an hour, otherwise the sherry can give it a raw alcohol flavor.

3/4 lb	portobello mushrooms, coarsely chopped
5½ ounces	button mushrooms coarsely chopped
3 3" to 4.5"	potatoes, scrubbed and diced
5 tsp	garlic, minced
2 tsp	basil
1 quart	half-and-half
1¼ cup	cream sherry
3 Tbs	turbinado or brown sugar, packed
2 tsp	salt
2 tsp	black pepper
1/2 tsp	nutmeg

Procedure

- Add both types of mushrooms, potatoes, garlic and basil to a stock pot. Add enough water to cover. Bring to a boil and then simmer for 1 hour. BE AWARE: mushrooms float, so be sure that the water is just covering them.
- Cool. Blend until smooth, adding water, if necessary, to allow the blender to do its job.
- Add to a pot with all the remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil and then simmer 5 minutes more. Serve hot.

Servings: 8

Yield: 78 ounces