

CREAM OF ASPARAGUS SOUP

1 bunch asparagus, bottoms broken off, cut into one-inch pieces

1 medium onion, chopped

3 T white spelt flour

1 T olive oil

1 T dry white wine

1 cup unsweetened soy milk (we use Westbrae, which has a nice color and taste)

3 cups vegetable stock

sea salt to taste

This is a real breeze to make, and keeps for a few days if promptly cooled down. Also wonderful to eat chilled the next day. The asparagus is barely cooked, resulting in a great fresh, almost meadow-y flavor.

By no means is this recipe just limited to asparagus. A cream of green bean soup can be prepared with the identical method. I also make creamy soups with sorrel and parsley, leeks, frozen organic green peas, and cauliflower. It would work with many more variations, so choose which based on what is looking best.

Feel free to garnish with minced fresh herbs, avocado chunks, and a pat of Earth Balance buttery spread.

A great first course or a late-night meal by itself.

Directions: In large saucepan (at least 2-quart) with a tight-fitting lid, soften the onions over medium-high heat until soft and golden, about three minutes. Stir in the chopped asparagus pieces, and sauté for a few minutes more, until just soft.

Sprinkle the flour onto the onions and asparagus and stir it for a minute, still over the heat. Add the milk in a stream, stirring vigorously to break up the lumps of cooked flour. Add more flour if necessary to make a relatively thick paste. Add the wine and stock, also in streams, stirring in to break up lumps. Reduce heat and simmer for five minutes. Remove from heat and carefully, in small batches, thoroughly blend the soup in a blender – use the top so you don't get splattered. If the resulting soup has strings or is too chunky for you (blenders differ in their efficiency, and eaters differ in their tolerance for chunks), press the soup through a colander, mashing with a rubber spatula to get all the liquid out.

Re-warm, add salt to taste, garnish if you want, and serve.

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