

Broccoli-Cheese Soup

From America's Test Kitchen Season 12: Soup and Bread from Scratch

Serves 6 to 8

2 Tablespoons unsalted butter

2 pounds broccoli, florets roughly chopped into 1-inch pieces, stems trimmed, peeled, and cut into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-thick slices

1 medium onion, roughly chopped (about 1 cup)

2 medium garlic cloves, minced or pressed through garlic press (about 2 teaspoons)

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons dry mustard powder

Pinch cayenne pepper

Table salt

3–4 cups water

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon baking soda

2 cups low-sodium chicken broth

2 ounces baby spinach (2 loosely packed cups)

3 ounces sharp cheddar cheese, shredded ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup)

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces Parmesan cheese, grated fine (about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup), plus extra for serving

Ground black pepper



Heat butter in large Dutch oven over medium-high heat. When foaming subsides, add broccoli, onion, garlic, dry mustard, cayenne, and 1 teaspoon salt. Cook, stirring frequently, until fragrant, about 6 minutes. Add 1 cup water and baking soda. Bring to simmer, cover, and cook until broccoli is very soft, about 20 minutes, stirring once during cooking.

Add broth and 2 cups water and increase heat to medium-high. When mixture begins to simmer, stir in spinach and cook until wilted, about 1 minute. Transfer half of soup to blender, add cheddar and Parmesan, and process until smooth, about 1 minute. Transfer soup to medium bowl and repeat with remaining soup. Return soup to Dutch oven, place over medium heat and bring to simmer. Adjust consistency of soup with up to 1 cup water. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve, passing extra Parmesan separately.

To make a vegetarian version of this soup, substitute vegetable broth for the chicken broth.