

Celery and Stilton Soup

This one's entirely down to me. This is one of jolly old England's classic combinations of flavours turned into a warming soup. These quantities make about a pint/550 ml so you can have either two steaming bowlfuls or four nicely pretentious coffee-cupfuls for a dinner party.

Planning

serves:	2 - 4
prep time:	5 mins
cooking time:	50 mins

Ingredients

30 g butter
1 medium onion, roughly
chopped
3 large ribs celery, roughly
chopped
500 ml light chicken stock
60 g blue Stilton cheese,
crumbled
salt & pepper

Method

Melt the butter in a suitable saucepan over moderate heat and, when the foam subsides, sweat the onion in it for about 5 minutes without colouring. Add the chopped celery and sweat, stirring occasionally, for another 5 minutes also without colouring. Add the light chicken stock, increase the heat and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat to simmering point and cook gently uncovered for 30 minutes. Liquidize the soup and return it to the saucepan.

Now it's time to add the cheese. Since Stilton cheeses vary greatly both in strength and saltiness, I suggest that you treat the cheese as a seasoning and add it in stages to avoid over-doing it. Start with about a half (30 g). While gently reheating the soup, add the crumbled Stilton cheese stirring constantly so that it dissolves (this may take about 5 minutes). Taste the soup and try to balance the flavour of both the celery and the Stilton; neither should dominate. Add as much of the cheese as is necessary to achieve this balance.

Finally, adjust the seasoning to taste bearing in mind that you may not need any salt because of the salty Stilton.