

Soup and Super Sandwich

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From Aunt Olivia's Kitchen

by Lydia Lovell

Growing up and learning to cook under the watchful eye of Aunt Olivia meant that I absorbed several lessons while, as far as I knew, I was learning only one. For example, teaching me to disjoint a chicken gave Aunt Olivia an opportunity to point out how its anatomy resembled my own, to show me how each of my arms and legs had the same number of bones and joints as a chicken's wings and legs, and to compare my own ribs with that of the fowl's and my own sternum with its wishbone. Such parallels made cutting up a chicken far more interesting than it might otherwise have been. Together Aunt Olivia and I prepared many a chicken because we made gallons and gallons of chicken broth, over the years.

Chicken broth makes good soups, and good soups make hearty meals. Lunches, often as not at Aunt Olivia's house, consisted of a big bowl of rich soup, followed by a sandwich, with fruit for dessert. On a bleak February or March day, a lunch like that sticks to your ribs until suppertime. Chicken broth forms the base for homemade **Cream of Mushroom Soup**.

1/4 C. chopped scallions 2 C. homemade chicken broth
2 C. sliced mushrooms 2 T. flour
1/4 C. butter or margarine 1 C. milk
Salt and Pepper to taste

In a Dutch oven, melt butter and saute scallions and mushrooms for four or five minutes. Set aside. In a medium saucepan, combine chicken broth with milk; bring to a scald, but do not boil. Stir flour into mushroom mixture; gradually mix in broth; reheat, stirring, until smooth and creamy. Allow to simmer over low heat for 10 minutes, but do not boil. Adjust seasonings. Makes four cups.

Aunt Olivia always made a large pot of Cream of Mushroom soup to insure enough would be left over to prepare **Broccoli Soup** later in the week.

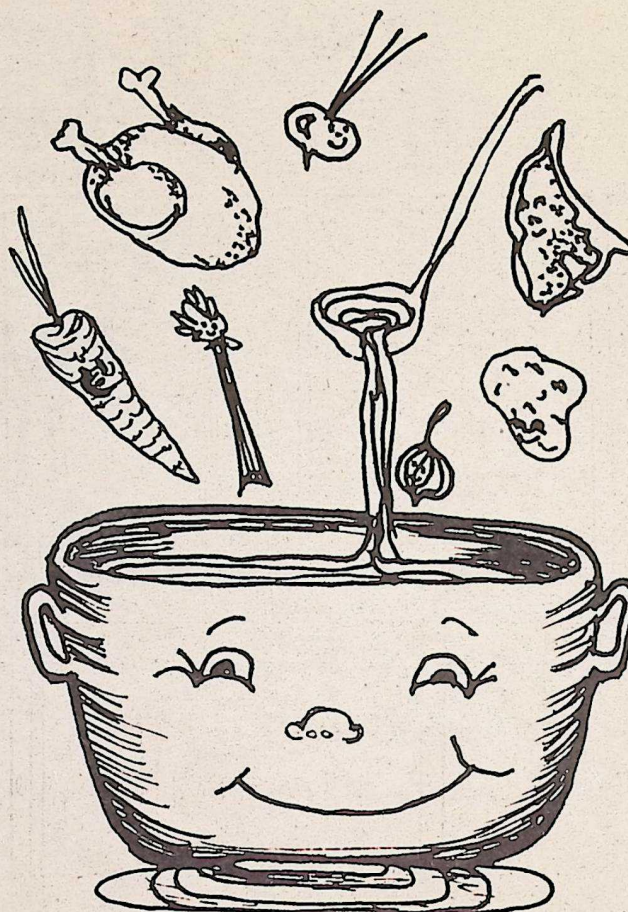
3 C. broccoli flowerets 1/4 C. butter or margarine
1 medium onion, chopped 3 C. Cream of Mushroom Soup
1 carrot, shredded Paprika

In a large saucepan, saute onion, carrot and broccoli in butter until vegetables are tender. Stir in mushroom soup and heat until piping. Ladle into bowls and sprinkle with paprika. Garnish with croutons if some are handy.

Coarsely chopped zucchini may be substituted for broccoli; use a teaspoon of curry powder instead of paprika. The result is **Curried Zucchini Soup**. Stir the curry with the vegetables before pouring in the mushroom soup. Garnish with a dollop of commercial sour cream. Delicious? Believe it.

Perhaps among your family's favorite soups, potato is high on the list; again, the base is chicken broth. Aunt Olivia prepared two quarts of **Potato Soup** this way.

5 medium white potatoes, 2 T. dried Parsley flakes
peeled and diced 4 C. chicken broth
1 small onion, chopped 2 C. water
2 large stalks celery, chopped 4 slices bacon, crisp-fried
2 t. seasoned salt 2 T. flour
1 t. dried whole basil 1-1/2 C. milk
1/4 t. pepper



In a large Dutch oven, combine potatoes, onion, celery, all the seasonings, the chicken broth, and water. Cover and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer 20 minutes. Meanwhile, fry bacon and drain on absorbent paper. Reserve 3 T. bacon fat in frying pan. Add flour to bacon fat, stir until smooth. Cook one minute over medium heat, stirring. Gradually add milk, stirring, until thick and bubbly. Crumble bacon into milk mixture, then add gradually to potato mixture. Simmer, uncovered, for 15 minutes. Soup may be served immediately, but to enjoy potato soup at its best, cool, and refrigerate overnight to allow the flavors to blend. Served hot or icy cold, this soup is not easily equaled.

Sandwiches to serve with soup come in all kinds, sizes and shapes. (Anyone knows how to make sandwiches, right? You'd be amazed.) Simple ones, such as grilled cheese may be improved by the addition of a slice of crisp-fried lean bacon and a thick slab of tomato. A hamburger on a bun or a hot dog

on a roll supplements soup beautifully. Pizzas built upon English muffins make quick and easy soup-followers. Many salads are good sandwich fillers: egg, tuna, chicken, crabmeat, turkey, salmon, cucumber and BLTs. Cold-cuts—bologna, summer sausage, any sliced, cold, roasted meats and many canned ones—corned beef, deviled ham, and the like—are other possibilities.

A fancy sandwich after a generous bowlful of rich soup might best be divided between two people with moderate appetites... the **Reuben**, for instance, is a full meal in itself for most people.

4 large slices rye bread 4 slices Swiss cheese
2 t. mayonnaise 1/2 C. sauerkraut, well drained
1 t. chili sauce 3 T. softened butter

In a teacup, stir mayonnaise and chili sauce together. Butter one side of bread and place two slices, butter-side-down, in a large skillet. Spread tops of slices with mayonnaise mixture. Layer cheese slices, corned beef and heated sauerkraut on top of bread. Top with two remaining slices of bread, butter-side-up. Grill, turning once to toast other side. Makes four half-sandwich servings.

The bread used for sandwiches further diversifies the meal. In Aunt Olivia's day, her only choices were from kinds she baked herself. We never tired of them for there were wheat and rye, oatmeal and white, corn and brown breads; and there were loaves, rolls, muffins and gems. Today, breads somewhat akin to those Aunt Olivia baked appear on supermarket shelves along with kinds she never dreamed of. Pita breads that originated in the Middle East make dandy sandwiches with their pockets stuffed with any traditional "makin's." A fine way to satisfy some who want only a light snack and others with bigger appetites is to present sandwich fillings in small bowls and pass a heap of pita bread, giving each his own options. A canape tray divided in sections is an ideal server; one compartment might contain sliced tomatoes and onion rings; another, tuna, chicken or egg salad; a third, any cold meat combination alternating with cheese slices. Heap cottage cheese or mayonnaise in the central compartment. Cluster custard cups filled with mustard, ketchup, sour cream and pickle-relish on a doily-dressed oval platter piled with pita bread at either end.

For sandwiches just like those Aunt Olivia sometimes made for us, start with homemade bread. Mix up a batch of **Wheat Bread**; you'll find the results worth the time and effort.

1 pkg. dry yeast 4 C. all-purpose flour
2 C. warm water, divided 2 t. salt
1/2 t. sugar 2 T. sugar
2 C. whole wheat flour 1/4 C. cooking oil.

In a large bowl, dissolve yeast in 1/2 C. warm water; stir in 1/2 t. sugar. Let stand 10 minutes. Combine remaining 1-1/2 C. warm water, 2 T. sugar, salt and cooking oil. Add to yeast mixture. Stir in whole wheat flour and mix well. Add, a cup at a time, the white flour. Dough will form a ball. Cover bowl and let stand 10 minutes. Turn dough out on a floured board and knead 10 minutes until dough is elastic. Clean bowl and grease well. Return dough to bowl and flip to grease all sides. Cover with tea towel and let rise in warm place about an hour, until double in bulk. Divide into four equal parts, shape into round loaves and place two loaves in each of two greased loaf pans, 8"x5"x3". Allow to rise again until double. Baked at 375° for 25 minutes. Cool on wire rack. Brush tops with butter for soft crusts.

Now that's bread that makes a soup-and-sandwich lunch worth coming home for; and learning to cook was one lesson that was always rewarded, immediately, with both praise and satisfaction that all the Lovells took in good food.

Bon appetit.