

Baked Potato Soup

To bake potatoes in the microwave, prick each several times with a fork. Microwave 1 inch apart on paper towels at HIGH 14 minutes or until done, turning and rearranging after 5 minutes. Let cool.

- 5 large baking potatoes, baked
- 1/4 cup butter or margarine
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 quart half-and-half
- 3 cups milk
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon ground white pepper
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded Cheddar cheese
- 8 bacon slices, cooked and crumbled

Peel potatoes, and coarsely mash with a fork.

Melt butter in a Dutch oven over medium heat; add onion, and sauté until tender. Add flour, stirring until smooth. Stir in potatoes, half-and-half, and next 3 ingredients; cook over low heat until thoroughly heated. Top each serving with cheese and bacon.

Creamy Avocado Soup

- 3 avocados, quartered
- 1/2 cup coarsely chopped fresh cilantro
- 1/4 cup coarsely chopped onion
- 1/4 cup coarsely chopped green onions
- 1/4 cup coarsely chopped fresh parsley
- 1 to 3 tablespoons lime juice
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon hot sauce
- 1 (32-ounce) container chicken broth
- 1 (16-ounce) container sour cream*

Process avocado in a blender or food processor until mixture is smooth, stopping to scrape down sides. Add chopped cilantro and next 9 ingredients, and process until mixture is smooth, stopping to scrape down sides. Pour into a large bowl; stir in chicken broth and sour cream. Cover and chill 3 hours.

* 1 (16-ounce) container light sour cream may be substituted.

Yield: Makes 8 cups

Cream Of Leek Soup

From *Southern Living*

- 4 leeks
 - 1/4 cup butter or margarine
 - 1 large onion, cut in half and sliced
 - 3 pounds potatoes, peeled and cut into thin slices
 - 5 cups chicken broth
 - 2 teaspoons salt
 - 2 cups milk
 - 2 cups half-and-half
- Garnishes: fresh chives, cracked black pepper

Remove and discard green tops from leeks. Cut white portion of leeks into thin slices.

Melt butter in a Dutch oven over medium-high heat; add leeks and onion, and saute 5 minutes or until tender. Stir in potato, broth, and salt; bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer 35 to 40 minutes. Cool slightly.

Process, in batches, in a food processor or blender until smooth. Return to Dutch oven; stir in milk and half-and-half. Cook over medium heat, stirring often, until thoroughly heated. (Do not boil.) Garnish, if desired.

Yield: Makes 5 quarts

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