



Thick 'n Creamy Golden Corn Chowder

No heavy cream – just the goodness of farm-fresh corn

1 cup fine chopped onion
2 celery stalks, trimmed and finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, germ removed, minced
1 tablespoon olive oil
Fine Sea salt and freshly ground pepper
1 to 2 sprigs fresh rosemary
2 sprigs fresh thyme
1 bay leaf
4 to 5 cups chicken or vegetable broth
3/4-pound Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled, quartered
20 ounces fresh or frozen fresh corn kernels
2 to 4 slices bacon
2 tablespoons white wine or water
Garnish: Minced chives; fine chopped parsley

Combine Onion Mixture: In a small bowl, place onion, celery, and garlic.

Sauté Onion Mixture: Heat the olive oil in a Dutch oven or large saucepan over medium heat. When warm, add half of the reserved onion mixture; set the remaining onion vegetable mixture aside. Season with salt and pepper, lower the heat; cook stirring until they soften, about 10 minutes.

Cook Corn and Potatoes: Toss in fresh rosemary and thyme sprigs and 1 bay leaf. Add the chicken stock, potato chunks, and half of the corn kernels; season with salt and black pepper. Turn the heat up, bring the liquid to a boil; lower the heat, partially cover the pot and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes. Test to see if the potatoes are tender. If not, cover the pot completely and cook until a potato can be pierced easily with the tip of knife. Remove from the heat.

Cut Potato Cubes: Using a slotted spoon, remove half of the potatoes out of the soup to a cutting board; cut them into small cubes; set aside. Remove and discard the bay leaf and woody herb sprigs.

(You can make the soup up to this point a day ahead and refrigerate it.)

Puree Soup Broth: Working in batches, if necessary, puree the soup in a blender or a food processor, or use a handheld (immersion) blender. Whatever you use, try to get the soup as smooth as possible. Return the pureed corn sauce to a rinsed soup pot, over a gentle simmer.

Fry Bacon: In a large skillet, cook the bacon strips until crisp; remove to paper lined plate; set aside to dice bacon when cooled.

Cook Remaining Vegetables and Corn: Add the remaining onion vegetables and corn to bacon drippings. Put the skillet over medium heat. Season with salt and pepper; cook stirring, for about 6 minutes and almost tender. Add wine or water; cook until liquid evaporates.

Prepare Corn Chowder: Add the skillet onion vegetables, diced bacon, and potato cubes to the pureed soup; cook at a simmer for 5 to 10 minutes, until everything is piping hot. Taste for salt and pepper.

To Serve: Ladle the chowder into bowls; sprinkle with minced chives and parsley.

About the Recipe: As early as 1884, corn chowder was a favorite dish to prepare. The creamy texture of fresh corn and its sweet flavor make it a popular holiday dish as well as a comfort supper soup. This recipe is especially tasty because the natural flavor of the corn, enhanced as it is blended into a smooth, thick silky broth, is served with bits of corn and potato cubes. Just garnish with a sprinkle of fresh minced chives or parsley.

Recipe Inspired by: Dorie Greenspan in her book, *“Everyday Dorie,”* *Fresh-Off-The-Cob Corn Chowder*.

Notes from Dorie: You can make the soup a day ahead up to the point it's pureed; refrigerate it, reheat and carry on, or leftover soup can be kept in the refrigerator for up to 2 days. Bring to a boil and then simmer gently for about 10 minutes before serving. Because of the potatoes, the soup will thicken when chilled; if you'd like it thinner after reheating, add water.

Add-Ins and Swaps:

The soup lends itself to lots of add-ins and swaps. If you don't want bacon, sauté the reserved vegetables in a tablespoon of olive oil. If you opt out of the half-and-half but still want something extra, try a drizzle of chive or even chili oil, a little pesto, or some grated Parmesan. As for add-ins, consider small cubes of ham (nice if you're not using the bacon), chunks of cooked shrimp or lobster or even thinly sliced raw scallops — the heat of the soup will cook them perfectly.