



SPLIT PEA SOUP WITH MAPLE-BROWN BUTTER CROUTONS

SERVINGS: 6 ACTIVE TIME: 30 mins TOTAL TIME: 90 mins

We're officially in the thick of one of my favorite times of year: soup season. This week, we're serving up Split Pea Soup with Maple & Brown Butter Croutons. This soup is thick and smooth, with a delicious, nutty and sweet crunch coming from the croutons that have been coated in brown butter and a solid dose of maple syrup. Hunker down with this comforting soup tonight!

Ingredients

For the Split Pea Soup

- > 8 oz. bacon, cubed
- > 1 large onion, diced
- > 1 large carrot, peeled and diced
- > 1 large leek, white part only, cut into strips
- > 2 ribs of celery, diced
- > 4 cloves garlic, minced
- > 1 tablespoon of flour
- > 3 cups of dried split green peas
- > 8 cups chicken broth or stock
- > 3 bay leaves
- > 10 allspice berries
- > 1 tablespoon of thyme
- > 2 teaspoons of sage

For the Maple-Brown Butter Croutons

- > 3-4 cups of stale bread, cut into 1/2 inch to inch cubes
- > 1 stick unsalted butter
- > 1/2 cup of maple syrup

Directions

Preheat oven to 400 degrees

1. To make the Split Pea Soup, start by rendering out the fat of the cubed bacon in a large soup pot over low heat. Slowly cook the bacon for about 10 minutes to crisp up the pieces and render out the fat. Once done, use a slotted spoon or a pair of tongs to transfer the bacon to a paper-towel lined plate and set aside.
2. Increase the heat to medium and add in the leeks, onions, carrots and celery to the pot and lightly brown in the bacon fat for five minutes. Next, add in the garlic and flour and reduce heat to low. There should still be enough bacon fat in the pan to mix with the flour. Stir fairly regularly over low heat for five minutes to cook the flour.
3. Once the flour has become a light, golden brown, stir in the split peas and the chicken stock. Mix well to thoroughly combine the ingredients and then add in all of the herbs and spices remaining in the Split Pea Soup ingredient list. Bring the liquid to a boil and then cover. Reduce heat to low and simmer for an hour.

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Shopping List

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| <input type="checkbox"/> 8 oz. bacon | <input type="checkbox"/> all-purpose flour | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 tablespoon of thyme |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 large onion | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 cups of dried split green peas | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 teaspoons of sage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 large carrot | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 32oz containers chicken broth | <input type="checkbox"/> 3-4 cups of stale bread |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 large leek | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 bay leaves | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 stick unsalted butter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 ribs of celery | <input type="checkbox"/> 10 allspice berries | <input type="checkbox"/> maple syrup |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 cloves garlic | | |

4. While the Split Pea Soup is cooking, make the Maple & Brown Butter croutons. Melt the butter over low heat (any higher and it will burn) and skim any milk fat that raises to the top. This isn't totally necessary, but it can lend a cleaner flavor as sometimes the milk fats and solids in butter can burn when you are browning it. If you keep your heat to low, this shouldn't be a problem. Allow the butter to cook for approximately 10 minutes, lightly skimming and stirring as you go, until the butter is a nice amber color. Do not try to rush this step as it will result in burnt as opposed to browned butter.
5. Cut the bread into croutons while the butter is melting and browning. I will usually grab a crusty baguette at the grocery store and cut that into small cubes. Technically speaking, stale bread is the best to make croutons with, but breads are loaded with so many preservatives these days that bread doesn't turn stale like it used to. For me, I will usually try to cut the croutons earlier in the day and sit out on the counter to dry out a little bit.
6. Once the butter is browned and the croutons are cut, turn off the heat and quickly whisk in the maple syrup. Transfer the cut croutons to a large mixing bowl and toss in the butter and maple syrup mixture. Line a baking sheet with tin foil or a silpat and spread the croutons out into a single, even layer. There is no need to grease the pan because of the butter content in the croutons. Bake in a 400 degree oven for 20 minutes total, rotating the pan and stirring the croutons half-way through. If after 20 minutes your croutons are feeling soft and aren't brown enough, let them go a little bit longer in the oven, say 5 minutes at a time.
7. After an hour has elapsed, uncover the soup pot and cook for another 15 – 30 minutes to allow the peas to finishing cooking and the liquid to reduce slightly. Taste the soup and make any necessary flavor adjustments, including adding salt and pepper. Try to finish out the bay leaves and then use an emulsion blender to puree the soup. You can also use a regular blender and blend the soup in batches. Once the soup is pureed and smooth, you can reheat it if you think it has cooled off too much in the blending process or you can serve it immediately – just make sure to garnish each bowl of soup with a generous handful of croutons first!



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