

# Caramelized Onion and Bread Soup with Brûléed Blue Cheese

In their book *Wine Food*, sommelier Dana Frank and recipe developer Andrea Slonecker pair funky, bright wines with flavorful, vegetable-forward dishes. In this vegetarian version of classic French onion soup, blue cheese and oloroso sherry bring new layers of flavor and depth. Notes of toasted nuts and fruit compote in the sherry pair well with caramelized onions, and its briny acidity cuts through the richness of the cheese.



## Ingredients

- 4 1/2 pounds mixed onions (such as 2 large yellow onions, 2 large red onions, and 2 large sweet onions), halved and thinly sliced lengthwise (about 16 cups)
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1/4 cup oloroso sherry
- 6 cups homemade or store-bought low-sodium vegetable broth
- 8 thyme sprigs
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 3/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, plus more to taste
- 2 teaspoons sherry vinegar
- 6 day-old whole-grain rustic bread slices, halved
- 4 ounces Stilton cheese, thoroughly chilled and thinly sliced with a wire cheese slicer or crumbled

## Directions

### Step 1

Combine onions, oil, and butter in a stockpot over medium-high; toss together. (Tongs are a great tool to use for tossing this many onions.) Cook, stirring occasionally, until onions start to caramelize, about 20 minutes. Reduce heat to medium, and continue to cook, stirring and scraping any browned bits from bottom of pot with a wooden spoon, until onions are tender and caramelized, about 25 minutes.

### Step 2

Add sherry, and cook, stirring to scrape up any remaining browned bits. Simmer over medium, stirring constantly, until sherry is mostly evaporated, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in broth, thyme, salt, and pepper. Increase heat to high, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer, partially covered, until flavors marry, 20 to 25 minutes. Stir in vinegar, and cook 1 minute; add salt and pepper to taste.

### Step 3

Preheat oven to broil with oven rack 6 inches from heat. Remove and discard thyme sprigs. Divide hot soup evenly among 6 ovenproof crocks or bowls, and place on a rimmed baking sheet. Place 2 bread pieces on each bowl, and gently push them down until half-submerged but still at top of soup. Add cheese slices (or a handful of crumbles) to each bowl. Broil until melted, bubbly, and browned in spots, 2 to 3 minutes.