

## **Recipe**

### Cheesy Broccoli & Parsley Soup (with Pumpernickel Croutons)

#### **Chef's Notes**

*The addition of baking soda to this recipe helps to cook and break down the broccoli faster, reducing the cooking time by at least half.*

*Adding the spinach and parsley toward the end helps bring color back to the soup that results in a bright-green finish, though the broccoli still shines through as the predominant flavor.*

#### **Ingredients**

1½ - 2 lbs. Broccoli florets chopped into 1 inch pieces, with stems peeled and sliced into thinner  
¼ inch pieces  
½ stick unsalted butter (4 Tbls.)  
1 small onion, rough chopped  
2 large cloves of garlic, peeled and sliced thin  
2 Tbls. Dijon mustard  
½ tsp. curry powder  
¼ tsp. ground nutmeg  
¼ tsp. ground cumin  
½ tsp. ground black pepper  
2 Tbls. kosher salt  
1½ cup water  
½ tsp. baking soda  
2 cups chicken or vegetable broth  
2 cups white wine (*optional*: substitute 2 cups stout beer for added flavor)  
5 oz. baby spinach (about 3 cups, loosely packed)



1 bunch Italian parsley, cleaned with stems removed  
4 oz. sharp cheddar, grated (about 1 cup)  
2 oz. parmesan, grated (about 1/2 cup)

### **Directions**

- Add butter to a Dutch oven or large stock pot, and melt over medium heat until foaming has stopped
- Add broccoli florets and stems, chopped onion, garlic, Dijon mustard, curry, nutmeg, cumin, black pepper and salt
- Sauté over medium heat for about 7 minutes, stirring frequently.
- Stir in water and baking soda, cover and reduce heat to medium-low and simmer
- Stir occasionally for approximately 20 minutes, or until broccoli is soft, including stems (*Don't be alarmed that the broccoli has lost its green color and become mushy. This may look like a mistake, but it is not. The spinach and parsley will add plenty of green color back to the soup*)
- Add the wine, spinach and parsley; turn heat up to medium-high and bring to a light boil, then remove from heat immediately
- Carefully add about 3 cups of the hot soup to a blender (making sure that the blender container is not more than half full)
- Add the cheddar and parmesan; cover tightly with the blender lid and cover with a towel, as not to let the mixture come over the top
- Blend on medium speed for about 1 minute, holding the top tightly
- Pour the blended portion into a separate container or bowl
- Add the rest of the hot soup mixture to the blender in increments (about a half-full portion at the time); cover and carefully blend for one minute for each portion and add to the rest of the blended portion



- Add all of the soup back to the pot and bring up to a simmer and serve with pumpernickel croutons (recipe follows below)

### **Recipe**

#### Pumpernickel Croutons

### **Chef's Notes**

*Heating the garlic with the oil and straining it off prior to pan-toasting the croutons keeps the garlic from overcooking and burning. This still allows for plenty of garlic flavor to shine through.*

### **Ingredients**

5 slices pumpernickel sandwich bread  
3 Tbls. good olive oil  
1 clove garlic, peeled and minced  
1/2 tsp. kosher salt  
1/4 tsp. ground black pepper  
3 Tbls. finely grated parmesan cheese

### **Directions**

- Remove crust from the bread and cut into 1/4 inch cubes; place in a medium mixing bowl
- Place garlic and oil in a small microwave-safe bowl and microwave on high for 1 minute
- Remove garlic oil from the microwave and strain into a small bowl; discard the garlic
- Drizzle all of the garlic oil over the pumpernickel cubes, and toss lightly with the salt and pepper



- Heat a sauté pan over medium-high heat
- Add bread cubes to the pan, toasting them by turning about every 30 seconds until lightly crispy
- Add the toasted bread cubes back to the mixing bowl and toss lightly with parmesan
- Turn toasted cubes onto a baking sheet to cool
- Croutons will crisp up some more upon cooling
- Add as garnish on top of the Cheesy Broccoli & Parsley Soup

