

Souper simple!

Spring is in the air, so add a little sunshine to your meals with these colourful, nourishing and easy soup recipes – to feed the soul and welcome the new season

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What could be better than some fresh crusty bread dipped into a bowlful of nourishing soup as we – finally – celebrate the joys of spring? Whether served hot, or chilled as an al fresco accompaniment, it's such a versatile dish; plus, it's wholesome and a great way to get your five-a-day health fix. From light vegetable broths to creamy and luxurious medleys, there's a soup for every season – a feast in a bowl that can be enjoyed as a snack, starter or main meal, even better still, in the sunshine!

Belinda Williams, founder of soup company Yorkshire Provender, brings us a collection of delicious assortments for every occasion in her new book, *Delicious Soups* (Ryland, Peters & Small, £16.99). So, fire up the stove for a sweet and buttery 'Yorkshire ale, caramelised onion and thyme soup', an immune-boosting 'Red lentil soup with chicken, turmeric and chilli' or a light and tasty 'Fresh spinach soup with minted pea and coriander'.

MOUTHWATERING MINESTRONE

A classic and delicious Italian-inspired soup that can be easily adapted depending on what vegetables you have in the fridge.

SERVES 6

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 4 rashers of bacon, chopped
- 1 large onion, diced
- 3 carrots, peeled and diced
- 1 celery stick, sliced
- 1 leek, sliced
- 3 potatoes, peeled and diced
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 400g can chopped tomatoes
- 1.5 ltr vegetable stock
- Handful (about 70g) of broken spaghetti, or similar
- 400g can cannellini or haricot beans, drained
- 250g spinach or other greens, chopped
- 1-2 courgettes, diced
- Bunch of fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 tsp mixed dried herbs
- Paprika, to taste (optional)
- Sea salt and ground black pepper
- Freshly grated Parmesan cheese, to serve

1 Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan and fry the bacon until browned.

2 Add the onion, carrots, celery, leek and potatoes, put the lid on the pan and sweat for a couple of minutes over a gentle heat, until the vegetables soften without colouring.

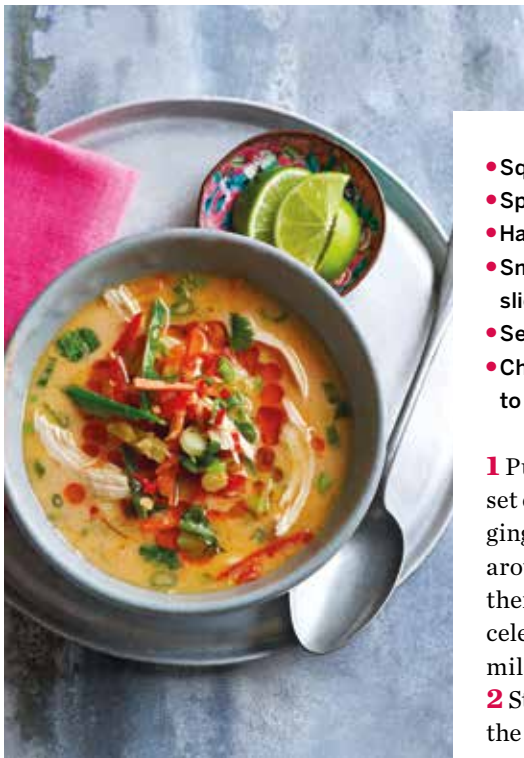
3 Add the garlic to the pan and carry on cooking for a few minutes more before adding the chopped tomatoes, stock and pasta. Bring the liquid to the boil, then reduce to a simmer and cook until the vegetables are just tender, and the pasta is almost cooked.

4 Add the beans, greens, courgettes and parsley to the pan and continue to cook for a few minutes until the greens are tender but still green.

5 Season to taste with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper and, if you like a bit of heat, stir in a little paprika.

6 Serve generous portions of the soup in big flat bowls and finish with plenty of freshly grated Parmesan cheese. >>>





GENTLE SPICED VEGETABLE SOUP WITH CHICKEN, COCONUT AND GINGER

Bring the taste of Thailand into your kitchen with this zesty soup, bursting with interesting flavours and the freshness of lime and coconut.

SERVES 6

- 2 tbsp light vegetable oil
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 3cm piece of fresh ginger, grated
- 1 red chilli, finely chopped
- 6-7 spring onions, finely sliced and whites and greens separated
- 1 red pepper, deseeded and finely sliced
- 1 green pepper, deseeded and finely sliced
- 4 carrots, peeled and very finely sliced
- 2 celery sticks, very finely sliced
- 300ml coconut milk
- 750ml vegetable stock
- 1 tbsp tomato puree
- 500g cooked chicken

- Squeeze of lime juice
- Splash of fish sauce
- Handful of fresh coriander, chopped
- Small handful of sugar snap peas, sliced lengthways
- Sea salt and ground black pepper
- Chilli oil and lime wedges, to serve (optional)

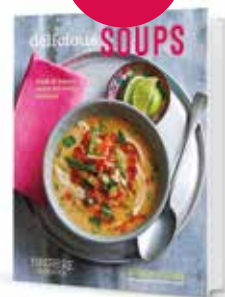
1 Put the oil in a large saucepan set over a high heat. Add the garlic, ginger, chilli and spring onion. Toss around the pan for a few seconds, then add the peppers, carrots and celery, followed by the coconut milk and stock.

2 Stir in the tomato puree and add the chicken, then pop the lid on the pan and simmer for a few minutes, until the vegetables are wilted and the chicken is heated through.

3 Season to taste, adding a squeeze of lime juice and a splash of fish sauce, then the chopped coriander.

4 Just before serving, throw in the sugar snap peas and the sliced spring onion. Ladle the soup into bowls, then serve, drizzled with a little chilli oil and lime wedges on the side.

Reader offer



Delicious Soups by Belinda Williams (Ryland, Peters & Small, RRP £16.99) is available to *Psychologies* readers for £12, plus free UK p&p (UK mainland only) until 1 July 2020. To order a copy, go to rylandpeters.com, and quote 'PSYCHDELISOUP' at checkout.

CHILLED SMOKED SALMON AVOCADO AND CHIVE SOUP

A great way to enjoy avocado and a real treat for al fresco lunch in the sunshine with some crusty garlic bread.

SERVES 6-8

- 5 spring onions, roughly chopped
- 5 ripe avocados, peeled, stoned and diced
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2 green chillies, sliced
- ½ cucumber, peeled, deseeded and diced
- 60g cream cheese
- 60g sour cream
- 1ltr vegetable or chicken stock
- 5 slices of smoked salmon, cut into fine ribbons and any brown meat removed
- Small bunch of fresh chives, finely snipped
- Squeeze of lime juice, to taste
- Sea salt and ground black pepper

FOR THE SALSA GARNISH

- Small bunch of fresh coriander, chopped
- Zest and freshly squeezed juice of 1 lime
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 4 ripe tomatoes, peeled, deseeded and diced
- ½ red onion, finely diced
- ¼ cucumber, finely diced

1 Trim the greens from the spring onions and set them aside to use in the salsa.

2 Put the chopped spring onions, avocado, garlic, chillies, cucumber, cream cheese and sour cream in a food processor with about a quarter of the stock to loosen.

3 Blitz on full speed until smooth, then pour into a large bowl and stir in the rest of the stock slowly, to achieve an even consistency – it should coat the back of a spoon.

4 Season, then add the smoked salmon (reserve a few ribbons), the chives and a squeeze of lime juice. Cover the soup and chill.

5 To make the salsa garnish, finely chop the reserved spring onion, put them in a mixing bowl with all the salsa ingredients and mix.

6 Serve a generous amount of avocado soup with a spoonful of salsa piled in the centre and garnish with a few of the reserved salmon ribbons.

