



Eating for a Lifetime

Bring Your Food to Life!

Nourishing Nettle Soup

Makes: 6 cups

When I was vacationing in Bilzingen, Germany, I found a patch of wild stinging nettles. I'd never harvested them before, so I did a little research on the web and learned the technique. After harvesting several shopping bags full, I cooked the leaves and used some of them to make this delicious soup.

Here are some tips on handling nettles:

- Don't touch the fresh leaves or stems with your bare hands. Use tongs or a large fork to move them.
- Cook nettles in boiling salted water until wilted before eating. You won't de-activate the sting with just a quick sauté.

Ingredients:

3 tbsp. olive oil
1 small onion, small dice
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 red potato (about 2-inches in diameter),
peeled and large dice
½ pound nettle leaves (only use leaves
from top 4 inches of the plant)
1 quart water

1 bouquet garni (little bundle of herbs tied
with a string) containing any or all of these:
a bay leaf, sprigs of thyme, parsley stems,
and sage leaves
Vegan Cream (see next page)
Salt and black pepper to taste
Pinch of grated nutmeg

Procedure:

1. Sauté onions in olive oil. Add garlic and sauté about 20 seconds. Add potato and water and bring to a boil.
2. Add nettles (being careful not to touch them with your bare hands!) and bouquet garnii.
3. Cover, bring to a boil, then simmer until the nettles are very soft.
4. Remove the bouquet garni from the soup, turn the heat to low, and puree using an immersion blender, adding salt and pepper.
5. Grate some fresh nutmeg into the soup.
6. Taste and adjust seasoning to make it savory and delicious
7. Serve with a dollop of "Vegan Cream" and a little fresh ground pepper and nutmeg on top.

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Vegan Cream
Makes 1 cup

Ingredients:

1 cup hemp seeds or sunflower seeds
4 tbsp. olive oil
1 onion, finely chopped
1 boiled potato
Salt and Pepper to taste

Procedure:

1. Soak seeds in enough water to cover; about 2-3 hours.
2. Cook seeds in soaking water.
3. Saute onion in olive oil.
4. Process seeds, onion and boiled potato in food processor or put through a food grinder. Add more water if necessary to thin to a thick cream consistency.
5. Adjust seasonings to taste.

Adapted in 2009 by Laura Pole from a recipe in Lithuanian Traditional Foods Compiled by Birute Imbrasiene and published by Baltos Lankos; 1998