

Pottage - a vegetable soup

This recipe is in categories Normans / Medieval, Healthy eating, Main courses, Soups and Sauces,

About this recipe:

Difficulty: not rated

Comments: Although this is basically an easy dish to make, the preparation of the vegetables is the main work and care needs to be taken using a sharp knife.

Preparation Time: 20-30 mins

Cooking Time: 30 - 40 mins

Number of servings: 4

Serving suggestions: Sprinkle with grated cheese and eat with fresh wholemeal bread.

This is a vegetarian recipe

The ordinary people ate a lot of pottage in Medieval Britain. It is a vegetable soup, flavoured with herbs and thickened with oats. It is very nutritious, although vegetables were not thought to be so in the Middle Ages. In fact, the word vegetable was not used; all green things were herbs. The root vegetables were considered only fit for the common folk and were not eaten by the wealthy.

The ordinary people would not have been able to afford much meat, so would rely on this soup as their staple diet with bread and cheese.

The vegetables in the soup would depend upon what the people had grown and what time of year it was. The amounts of vegetables would also vary according to taste.

Often the soup was made with only a few of the possible ingredients with one vegetable dominating eg cabbage pottage and leek pottage were great favourites.

So, when you make it, you too can choose what vegetables and how much of each to put in - and also what your favourite herbs are to flavour it with.

The ordinary people would not have had salt etc so the herbs are important.

It is surprisingly delicious!

Ingredients

1 litre of water (adding some vegetable stock powder or cube makes it tastier).

Choose a selection of the following vegetables (about 250g of each will do):

- cabbage
- carrots
- celery
- green beans
- leeks
- onions
- parsnips
- sorrel
- turnips
- garlic was also grown, but you don't need 250g - one or two cloves will do

A selection of fresh herbs (to be authentic, though dried will do) chosen from:

- basil
 - marjoram
 - parsley
 - rosemary
 - sage
 - thyme
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- 2tbs oats (porridge oats)

Making and cooking it

1. Wash and prepare the vegetables - eg taking off outer skins etc
2. Chop the vegetables and the herbs
3. Put them all into the stock
4. Bring the soup to the boil
5. Turn down the heat and simmer until vegetables are cooked
6. Add enough oats to thicken and simmer again until cooked
7. You may enjoy it better with a little salt and pepper