**Soups for the Soul**

By Rachel Tallis

Looking for a way to avoid the cold this winter? Of course, gingerbread lattes and hot chocolate are always great treats. However, sometimes making a meal for friends and family who are coming to visit can be a nice way to come together. Here a few wonderful soup recipes to help keep warm.

1. Pumpkin Soup: There are several variations of pumpkin soups, but this one is extremely simple and fast! Start off with buying canned pumpkin; it is much simpler than using an actual pumpkin. For a salty soup, mix the canned pumpkin with chicken stock, and add different spices, such as salt, pepper, garlic and onion powder. Interested in a sweeter version? Use vegetable stock instead of chicken, and add spices such as cinnamon and pumpkin pie spice. Onion is a great addition to both variations.



<http://www.chefpepin.com/2/?p=637>

1. Chicken Soup: Chicken soup is always a classic during the winter season, especially when a cold gets the best of you. It is extremely simple, and quick to make! First, find a can of chicken broth, possibly Progresso, for the base of the soup. Next, make egg noodles to add in at the end. Some great additions to chicken soup are cooked carrots, celery, onion, parsnip, turnip and pieces of pulled chicken. For some added flavor, include salt, pepper, and a bit of parsley. Saltine crackers on the side are always a terrific idea next to chicken soup.



<http://family.go.com/food/recipe-an-814458-easy-chicken-noodle-soup-t/>

1. Minestrone Soup: This hearty soup is great either as a meal or even right before a light dinner. It is a wintertime favorite! Start this soup off by sautéing an onion in some olive oil. Add some minced garlic cloves, celery, and carrots. Zucchini also makes a wonderful addition to this soup. Once the vegetables are cooked through, pour a can of vegetable or chicken broth, along with a can of diced tomatoes. Once the base begins to warm through, add a can of kidney beans, as well as some elbow pasta. The spices used for this soup are, but not limited to, oregano, basil, salt and pepper. Once the soup is finished, pour a heaping spoonful into a bowl and sprinkle a few tablespoons of grated parmesan on top.



<http://crazyhorsesghost.hubpages.com/hub/Homemade-Minestrone-Soup>

These recipes can be made in large quantities and saved in the freezer for the next time someone is having a soup craving or even has a cold. Stock up on broth and veggies and make soup a winter must have! Each of these soups are, of course, free for interpretation to fit everyone’s tastes.