CONCOCTIONS / SOUP

Browned Mushroom & Thyme Cream Soup



Prep 15 min · Cook about 60 min · Total about 75 min
About 6 cups · 4 generous servings · Active about 55 min

Deeply browned cremini and shiitake mushrooms, sweet shallots and thyme in an earthy, lightly creamy soup, brightened with lemon.

FOR FOUR GENEROUS BOWLS

1 1/2 lb (680 g) cremini, trimmed

1/2 lb (225 g) shiitake caps; weight after removing tough stems

3 tbsp olive oil, divided

2 tbsp unsalted butter

2 large shallots (about 120 g), finely diced

3 garlic cloves, finely chopped

3 tsp fresh thyme leaves, divided

4 cups low-sodium vegetable stock, divided

1/2 cup heavy cream

2 tsp fresh lemon juice

3/4 tsp fine salt, divided; more to taste

1/2 tsp black pepper

Up to 1/2 cup water, if needed

EQUIPMENT

Wide, heavy 5–6 qt pot (9–10 inch cooking base), bowl, immersion blender, thermometer.

FIVE CLEAR STEPS

1 / PREP — 15 MIN. Wash hands; use clean utensils. Rinse mushrooms, thyme and lemon under running water; dry well. Slice mushrooms 1/4 inch thick. Mix, divide into three batches; chop shallots and garlic.

2 / BROWN — 32–38 MIN. Preheat pot over medium-high 2 min. Cook each batch with 1 tbsp oil and 1/4 tsp salt for 10–12 min, stirring occasionally: let liquid evaporate, then brown many edges deeply. Transfer to bowl. Lower heat before fond turns black; color matters more than time. Reserve one-third of all cooked mushrooms for chunks; keep two-thirds separate.

3 / BASE — 8 MIN. Over medium heat, melt butter; soften shallots 4 min. Stir in garlic, 2 1/2 tsp thyme and all pepper, 1 min. Deglaze with 1/2 cup stock, scraping brown fond. Add remaining 3 1/2 cups stock and two-thirds of mushrooms; reach a gentle simmer, about 3 min including deglazing.

4 / SIMMER & BLEND — 10 MIN. Simmer uncovered 8 min, stirring. Off heat, use an immersion blender with blade guard submerged; pulse until creamy but flecked, about 2 min with setup. Stop and unplug before lifting or clearing head. Never use a sealed blender for hot soup.

5 / FINISH — 4 MIN. Return all reserved mushrooms; stir in cream. Warm gently until steaming, about 3 min; do not boil at this first finish. Off heat, stir in lemon juice. Taste for salt; thin with up to 1/2 cup water only if needed. Divide into four bowls; scatter remaining 1/2 tsp thyme over them.

COOK'S NOTE Body comes from partially puréed mushrooms, not flour. Use cultivated mushrooms. Browning may take longer in a narrow pot. Yield is a guide: about 6 cups; 4 portions of about 1 1/2 cups.

LEFTOVERS Promptly refrigerate in shallow containers at 40°F or below within 2 hours of cooking (1 hour above 90°F); do not cool the whole pot on the counter. Discard if left out longer. Use within 3–4 days of preparation. Reheat to 165°F and a rolling boil; stir to limit scorching, even if cream texture changes.

ALLERGENS Milk. Stock may contain wheat, soy or other allergens; check all labels. Choose vegetarian-labeled stock for a vegetarian soup.

Original adaptation; not kitchen-tested. Image is an AI-generated serving illustration, not a photograph of a tested batch.

Inspired by Vivaldi's "Creamy Mushroom Soup" caption; the video was not viewed. This formula is independently developed. Culinary context is separate from safety guidance.

Vivaldi caption · Cafe Delites · The Modern Proper · USDA leftovers · FDA produce