

## Leek and Shittake Mushroom Soup

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Servings: 2-3

Cook Time: 45 minutes

Difficulty: Easy

### Ingredients:

1 large leek  
2 bay leaves  
4 sprigs fresh thyme  
2 thick-cut bacon slices  
1 T. unsalted butter  
Salt and pepper  
10-12 shittake mushrooms; stems removed and discarded; wiped clean with damp washcloth, then chopped roughly  
½ C. dry white wine  
5 C. chicken stock  
½ C. heavy cream  
Crème fraiche  
Thyme or chives; for garnish

### Special Equipment:

Kitchen twine  
Immersion blender or standard blender  
Sieve or fine mesh colander



## Cooking Instructions:

Clean the leek by removing the upper green portions and discarding. Then, cut the leek in half lengthwise exposing the multiple layers inside. Remove the sandy grit from the inside of the leek by running it under cool water. Cut the leek crosswise into thin slices. Set aside.

Tie the bay leaves and thyme sprigs together with kitchen twine (this is called a bouquet garni) and set aside. Tying these herbs together makes it easier to fish them out of the soup later.

Put a large soup pot on the stove over medium-high heat. Chop the bacon into small bite-size pieces, and then throw them into the warm pot to render and get crisp.

Once the bacon is golden brown and crunchy, remove with a slotted spoon and set aside, leaving the bacon fat in the pot. Add the butter, then toss in the chopped leeks and mushroom pieces to sauté. Season with salt and pepper. Cook until the vegetables are soft; about 5 minutes. Add the wine and bring to a boil, scraping up the bacon bits with a wooden spoon. Add the chicken broth, bouquet garni, and salt and pepper; stir. Lower the heat. Allow to simmer for 30 minutes.

Remove the bouquet garni and puree the soup using the immersion blender or a standard blender (working in batches, if you're using the latter). When the soup has been completely pureed, run it through a sieve to remove any leftover pieces of vegetable. Freeze and store leftover vegetable pieces – you can use it in the future for soups and stews.

Place the soup back into the original pot and stir in the heavy cream. Season to taste.

Serve soup in bowls. Add a few pieces of bacon to each bowl, then top with a dollop of crème fraîche and clippings of chives or thyme leaves.