

Hearty Cream of Chicken Soup

SERVES Serves 6

TIME 1¾ hours



Why This Recipe Works

The canned version of this creamy soup is anything but satisfying, but could we make a homemade version that wasn't too labor-intensive? We start with store-bought chicken broth, which we infuse with even more flavor by using it to simmer bone-in chicken breasts. We brown the chicken skin to create fond and render flavorful fat, which we then use to make a roux—our preferred thickener for silky soup. Leaving the browned skin in the simmering soup extracts even more flavor, and potatoes, carrots, and leeks bulk up the soup. Finally, sherry, bay, and fresh herbs add deep, complex flavor.

Gather Your Ingredients

- 2** (12-ounce) bone-in split chicken breasts, skin removed and reserved, trimmed
- Salt and pepper
- 1** tablespoon water
- 1** pound leeks, white and light green parts only, halved lengthwise, sliced 1/4 inch thick, and washed thoroughly (2 1/2 cups)

Instructions

- 1.** Season chicken with salt and pepper. Place water and chicken skin in Dutch oven and cook over medium-low heat with lid slightly ajar until enough fat has rendered from skin to coat bottom of pot, about 7 minutes.
- 2.** Uncover pot, increase heat to medium, and continue to cook until skin has browned, about 3 minutes, flipping skin halfway through cooking. Add leeks and butter and cook until leeks are just softened, about 3 minutes. Stir in flour and cook for 1 minute. Stir in sherry and cook until evaporated, about 1 minute.
- 3.** Slowly whisk in broth until incorporated. Add potatoes, carrots, thyme sprigs, bay leaf, and chicken and bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, uncovered, until chicken registers 160 degrees, 20 to 25 minutes.

- 2** tablespoons unsalted butter
- ½** cup all-purpose flour
- ⅓** cup dry sherry
- 8** cups chicken broth
- 12** ounces Yukon gold potatoes, peeled and cut into ¾-inch pieces
- 3** carrots, peeled and cut into ½-inch pieces
- 3** sprigs fresh thyme
- 1** bay leaf
- ½** cup heavy cream
- 3** tablespoons minced fresh chives

- 4.** Transfer chicken to plate and let cool for 20 minutes. While chicken cools, continue to simmer soup for 20 minutes. Using shallow spoon, skim grease and foam from surface of soup. Discard chicken bones and shred meat into 1-inch pieces. Discard chicken skin, thyme sprigs, and bay leaf. Off heat, stir in cream and chicken. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Sprinkle individual portions with chives and serve.

TEST KITCHEN DISCOVERY: BUILDING CHICKEN FLAVOR

BUILDING CHICKEN FLAVOR: We remove the skin from bone-in breasts, simmer it in water to render its fat, and then brown it to create flavorful fond.



SKIN IS IN: We brown just the chicken skin.