

Scallion, Green Garlic & Lovage Soup

By becrocker

Inspired by a gorgeous bunch of green shallots at my local farmer's market, this vibrant green pureed soup is to me the essence of spring. I love the subtle difference in flavor the green shallots lend, but the soup turns out just as well with any kind of scallion. Lovage is one of the first herbs to make a strong statement in my rainy Pacific NW garden each spring and I love to use it in soups, leaves stalks and all. If you can't find it, substitute an equal quantity of celery and a few sprigs of flat-leaf parsley instead. I find that with a really powerful blender like a vitamix it's not necessary to pass the soup through a fine strainer, but if your blender does not get it quite silky smooth you might want to include this step.

Serves 2 for lunch, 4 as first course

- 1 large handful scallions (3 supermarket size bunches), washed; root end and top 2-3 inches tough green trimmed away
 - 1 bunch green garlic, washed; outer layer, roots, and top 2-3 inches tough green trimmed away, thinly sliced
 - 2 stalks lovage, washed; leaves reserved, stalks thinly sliced
 - 3 small waxy yellow potatoes, peeled and finely chopped
 - 1.5 tablespoons unsalted butter
 - 2 tablespoons soft fresh goat cheese, to garnish
 - a dash of lemon juice
1. Fill your favorite soup pot about 1/3 full of water and set over high heat. Prepare an ice bath. When water boils add 2 rounded teaspoons kosher salt and then the whole scallions, blanching for about 30 seconds. Remove to ice bath. Blanch lovage leaves (or celery leaves & parsley sprigs) for a few seconds and transfer to ice bath. Turn off heat and drain soup pot, reserving blanching water. Drain scallions and lovage leaves and coarsely chop.
 2. Return pot to stove over med-low heat and add 1.5T butter. When butter is melted add sliced green garlic and sweat gently for several minutes until softened slightly, being careful not to brown. Add a touch of salt, lovage stems (or finely sliced celery stalks), and potatoes, and continue to sweat until all vegetables are softened slightly, another 5 minutes or so.
 3. Add blanched scallions and lovage leaves along with reserved blanching water just to cover, and bring to a gentle boil over med-high heat. Reduce heat and simmer gently until all vegetables are just softened and still a vibrant green.
 4. Transfer soup to blender and puree until silky smooth, then return to pot over gentle heat, passing through strainer if necessary.
 5. Add a dash of lemon juice to brighten, salt to taste if needed, and a little more reserved blanching water if needed to thin to desired consistency. Serve hot with a crumbling of fresh goat cheese, which will melt into a lovely swirling cloud.