

CREAMY ASPARAGUS SOUP

(adapted from Jamie at Home)

1 3/4 pounds asparagus, woody ends removed
olive oil
2 medium white onions, peeled and chopped
2 sticks celery, trimmed and chopped
2 leeks, trimmed and chopped
2 quarts good-quality chicken or vegetable stock
sea salt and freshly ground pepper

cream for serving (optional)

Chop the tips off your asparagus and put these to one side for later. Roughly chop the asparagus stalks. Get a large, deep pan on the heat and add a good glug of olive oil. Gently fry the onions, celery and leeks for around 10 minutes, until soft and sweet, without coloring. Add the chopped asparagus stalks and stock and simmer for 20 minutes with a lid on. Remove from the heat and blitz with a handheld immersion blender or in a standard blender. Season the soup bit by bit (this is important) with salt and pepper until just right. Put the soup back on the heat, stir in the asparagus tips, bring back to the boil and simmer for a few more minutes until the tips have softened.

Note: I dribbled a little cream over the top before serving. If you like really creamy soup, you could stir in 1/2-1 cup of cream before dishing the soup out.

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