

COLD WHOLE LEMON-ASPARAGUS SOUP

16+ generous servings. Halves easily.

Big pot full! Make a day ahead so it really has time for to chill thoroughly and for flavors to marry. Freezes well and can be served hot another time if you'd rather. Too hot to cook on the stove? Throw the whole shebang in the slow cooker after sautéing the vegetables cook on low for 8 hours or so until tender. Purée, cool and chill.

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- Crushed red pepper
- 4 small yellow onions, chopped
- 1 large shallot, chopped
- 1 fennel bulb, cored, and chopped
- 6 carrots, trimmed and chopped (no need to peel)
- 6 stalks celery, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- Large handful fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 tablespoon each: dried thyme, dill, and basil
- Kosher salt, fresh ground black pepper
- 1 cup dry white wine (can sub vegetable broth)
- 8 cups vegetable broth, gluten-free
- 3 cups water
- 4 pounds asparagus, trimmed and chopped
- 1 large white potato, peeled, and chopped
- Hot sauce
- 1 well-washed lemon, cut into eighths and seeded—including peel
- 1 cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano for garnish OR 1 cup chopped fresh basil for vegan version (Optional ideas for garnishes: crispy garlic croutons, sliced green onions, grated Cheddar cheese, minced fresh tomatoes or cucumbers... ..)

In a 10 or 12-quart kettle, warm the oil along with a generous pinch of crushed red pepper over medium heat for 30 seconds. (Burns easily.) Add onions, shallot, fennel, carrots, and celery, garlic, and parsley; season with 1 teaspoon kosher salt, 1/2 teaspoon pepper, thyme, dill, and basil. Cook for 10

minutes or so, stirring regularly until softened.

Pour in white wine and stir. Bring to a boil; reduce to simmer for a few minutes until wine is nearly evaporated. Pour in broth and water; bring to boil again and add asparagus and potato. Reduce to simmer and cover; cook until all vegetables are nearly tender. Add lemon wedges and let cook until everything truly is very tender. Add a few drops of hot sauce; taste and adjust seasonings.

Purée using a handheld blender or very carefully in batches in the food processor or blender (hold top of blender down tightly with a towel). Taste and adjust seasonings again. Refrigerate over night. Taste once more and adjust seasonings, if needed. Serve cold garnished with cheese or basil (or use other options.)

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