

# SOUP IT FORWARD THE SOUP SISTERS WAY!

*GET READY TO PREPARE WOOD-ROASTED CHICKEN AND FARM VEGETABLE SOUP*



Celebrity Chef MICHAEL SMITH and his wife, Chastity, are the proprietors of The Inn at Bay Fortune and the award-winning restaurant FireWorks, Bay Fortune, Prince Edward Island. Michael is the bestselling author of nine cookbooks, including Real Food, Good Food, Family Meals, Back to Basics, Fast Flavours, Chef Michael Smith's Kitchen, and The Best of Chef at Home. He has hosted several TV shows on Food Network Canada and has appeared as a judge on Chopped Canada. Michael lives on Prince Edward Island with his wife, and their children, Gabe, Ariella, and Camille.

## WOOD-ROASTED CHICKEN AND FARM VEGETABLE SOUP

Every chicken is a myriad of meals waiting to happen. One of my favourites is a simple old-fashioned farmhouse soup. One bird patiently transformed into a meal for many. On Prince Edward Island, every cook knew how to turn a yard bird into enough soup for a tableful of hungry mouths. The best cooks also knew how to build flavour every step of the way. Spatchcocking the bird doubles its surface area and doubles its golden-brown flavour. In our wood oven, humble ingredients are transformed by high heat and aromatic smoke before simmering into a deeply flavoured broth brimming with farm-fresh vegetables and bright green herbs. The method is detailed but the results are deeply, richly worth it.

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Fire up your wood oven, banking a crackling hardwood fire to one side. Alternatively, preheat the oven to 425°F (220°C). Turn on the convection fan if you have one. Preheat a large cast-iron skillet or roasting pan.

## Spatchcock the Chicken

Lay the chicken breast side down. With a pair of sharp kitchen shears cut along each side of the backbone, removing it and the attached neck. Turn the bird over and firmly press down on the breastbone and legs, flattening the bird as best you can. Season generously with salt and pepper.

## Make the Wood-Roasted Broth

Carefully place the chicken, skin side up, in the preheated pan. Nestle the onions, carrots, parsnips, celery, and garlic cloves around the bird, filling the pan. Return to the oven and begin roasting. After 30 minutes, firmly swirl and shake the pan, evenly coating the vegetables with flavourful juices. Continue roasting until the chicken is crispy, golden brown, and fragrant, about another hour.

Remove the chicken from the oven. Carefully pour off and reserve as much of the rendered fat as possible. Using 2 metal tongs, pick, tug, and shred off as much of the roast meat and skin as you can. Cover the meat tightly and refrigerate to use in the soup. Remove and

Serves 6 to 8

### Special Equipment Needed:

preheated wood oven, base fire and coal bed of fragrant hardwood or aromatic fruitwood (such as apple or cherry); fire pit kit (page 11)

### WOOD-ROASTED CHICKEN BROTH

1 large roasting chicken (about 5 pounds/2.25 kg)  
1 tablespoon (15 mL) sea salt  
Freshly ground pepper  
4 large white or yellow onions, chopped  
2 large carrots, peeled and thinly sliced  
2 parsnips, peeled and thinly sliced  
2 stalks celery, thinly sliced  
Cloves from 1 head of garlic, crushed  
12 cups (3 L) water, divided  
12 sprigs fresh thyme  
4 sprigs fresh rosemary  
2 bay leaves

*recipe continues*

reserve the roasted vegetables. Flip the carcass over, exposing the inside. Pour 1 cup (250 mL) or so of the water into the pan, shaking the works to evenly distribute the juices. Return the pan to the oven and continue cooking until the meaty remnants are browned, about 30 minutes.

Remove the pan from the oven. Pour 4 cups (1 L) of the water into the pan. Carefully transfer the chicken carcass and the reserved roasted vegetables to a large soup or stock pot. While the water is still in the pan, stir until every single flavourful browned bit has dissolved. Scrape every last drop into the pot. Pour in the remaining 7 cups (1.75 L) water. Toss in the thyme, rosemary, and bay leaves. Cover tightly and bring to a slow, steady simmer. Stir occasionally and continue simmering until rich and fragrant, an hour or so. Remove from the heat and let rest for an hour. Strain the broth through a fine-mesh strainer and reserve. Discard the solids.

## Make the Farm Vegetable Soup

Pour the reserved chicken fat into the soup pot over medium-high heat. Add the onions, carrots, parsnips, celery, and salt. Cook over medium-high heat, stirring frequently as the vegetables' flavours brighten and their textures soften, about 5 minutes. Add the potatoes and the reserved chicken broth and meat. Cover tightly and reduce the heat to a simmer. Continue simmering until the potatoes are tender, 15 minutes or so. Taste and adjust the salt and pepper if you like. Stir in the parsley, chives, and tarragon. Ladle into bowls and serve.

## FARM VEGETABLE SOUP

2 white or yellow onions, finely diced  
2 large carrots, peeled and finely diced  
2 parsnips, peeled and finely diced  
2 stalks celery, finely diced  
1 teaspoon (5 mL) sea salt  
2 large potatoes, peeled and diced  
½ cup (125 mL) flat-leaf or curly parsley leaves and tender stems, finely chopped  
½ cup (125 mL) fresh chives or green onion tops, very thinly sliced  
2 tablespoons (30 mL) minced fresh tarragon



**'Soup it Forward'**  
In the Fireworks kitchen with  
**Chef Michael Smith**

