Asparagus Soup with Lemon and Parmesan

By: Jennifer Segal

Servings: 4-6

Ingredients

* 2 bunches asparagus (about 2-1/4 pounds)
* 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
* 2 medium yellow onions, chopped
* 3 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed
* 6 cups low sodium chicken broth
* Salt
* Freshly ground black pepper
* 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice, from one lemon
* 1/4 cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano
* Handful fresh herbs, such as thyme, dill or basil (optional, for garnish)

Instructions

* Melt the butter in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onions and garlic and cook until soft and translucent, about 10 minutes.
* In the meantime, cut the tips off of the asparagus spears and set aside. Cut the remaining spears into 1/2-inch pieces.
* Add the chopped asparagus (except for the tips) to the pot, along with the chicken broth, 1 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Bring to a boil, then cover and turn heat down to low. Simmer for about 30 minutes until vegetables are very tender.
* Meanwhile, bring a small pot of salted water to a boil. Cook the reserved asparagus tips for a few minutes until tender-crisp. Drain and refresh under cold water or in an ice bath. Set aside.
* Purée the soup with an immersion blender until completely smooth. (Alternatively, use a standard blender to purée the soup in batches, then return the soup to the pot.) If necessary, pass the soup through a fine sieve to remove the fibers (the best way is to place the sieve over a large bowl, then use a ladle to push the soup through in circular motions). Return the soup to the pot and bring back to a simmer. Stir in the lemon juice and grated Parmigiano-Reggiano. Taste and adjust seasoning with salt, pepper and more lemon juice if desired (you may need up to a teaspoon more salt).

Ladle the soup into bowls, then top each bowl with asparagus tips, fresh chopped herbs, more grated Parmigiano-Reggiano and freshly ground black pepper if desired.