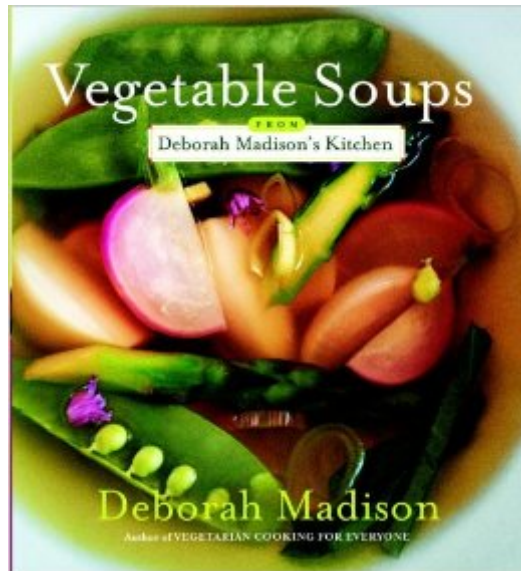


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Vegetable Soups From Deborah Madison's Kitchen



Synopsis

When I said I was working on a soup book, the response was often, "Oh, I love soup!" People enthuse about soup in a way that's so heartwarming it makes me feel as if I'm in the right camp... The soups in this book are based on vegetables, and many of these recipes are new ones for me. But some are soup classics, by which I mean some of those that have stood the test of time in my kitchen, (Quinoa, Corn, and Spinach Chowder) and those that are classics in the culture (Boston-Style Black Bean Soup). I've tried to streamline these dishes as much as possible without sacrificing goodness, so that you can easily enjoy them in your own kitchen. I hope you do enjoy making these soups and add them, one by one, to your repertoire.

—from the Introduction

Vegetable Soups from Deborah Madison's Kitchen, America's favorite vegetarian cookbook author presents more than 100 inventive and straightforward soup recipes guaranteed to satisfy appetites all year long. Deborah Madison has shown millions of Americans how to turn vegetables and other healthful ingredients into culinary triumphs. In her newest collection of recipes, She serves up a selection of soups ranging from stylish first courses to substantial one-bowl meals. Madison begins with a soup-making primer and streamlined recipes for vegetable stocks and broths (such as the Hearty Mushroom Broth), which serve as the foundation for many of the recipes that follow, for those who wish to make their own. Soups like the Mexican Tomato Broth with Avocado and Lime can start a supper or stand alone as a simple, light meal. Cooks looking for heartier choices will find satisfying dishes such as Potato and Green Chile Stew with Cilantro Cream or grain-based soups like the Wild Rice Chowder. Organized by seasons, the recipes make the most of the produce—from a springtime Fennel and Almond Soup with Saffron and Ricotta Dumplings to a deeply flavorful autumnal Roasted Squash, Pear and Ginger Soup. When time just isn't available and prepared soups take the place of home made, Madison offers a battery of suggestions for how to make them your own with simple additions from delicious oils and herbs to an invigorating Cilantro Salsa. Featuring fifty stunning full-color photographs by Laurie Smith, serving suggestions, wine notes, and a host of ideas for creative finishing touches including caramelized pear croutons and souffléed cheese toasts, this friendly soup lover's guide gives the reader a hundred delicious ways to enjoy the benefits and flavors of vegetables by the bowlful throughout the seasons.

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Customer Reviews

'Vegetable Soups from Deborah Madison's Kitchen' is a title loaded with significance, for a book by the foremost writer on vegetarian cooking techniques, Deborah Madison. The first implication, which reading the book bears out, is that this is all about vegetarian, but not necessarily vegan soup recipes. As in all her books, Ms. Madison makes liberal use of milk products and eggs, with no apologies for that fact. The second implication is that Madison is turning her name, or more exactly 'Deborah Madison's Kitchen' into a brand name, in much the same way as Mark Bittman has turned his 'How to Cook Everything' and Rachael Ray has turned '30 Minute Meals' into a brand, with the hopes that brand recognition rather than the quality of the book's contents will get you to buy this book. On the one hand, I can state categorically that this is the one of the best books I have seen on soups at all, let alone its being the very best book I have seen on vegetarian soups. I will begin by exploring why this is true and later consider how much of this book is original rather than simply being a copy from Madison's earlier excellent books. The other vegetarian soup book I have reviewed is Paulette Mitchell's '...a beautiful bowl of soup' which is aimed at giving us a collection of 'the best vegetarian recipes'. This book is very, very good, and I gave it a high rating compared to the dozen or so other soup books I have reviewed, but Madison's book is better. Both books are excellent at giving good general advice on soup cookery, but Madison's book is superior, in that she goes far beyond Mitchell in repeating her excellent doctrine of creating stocks and broths to enhance the primary ingredients from which the soups will ultimately be made. Madison did, not invent this principle I'm sure. You see it in hundreds of recipes for serious soup recipes, such as when one uses the liqueur collected from steaming open clams as the basis of a clam chowder or using corn cobs to create a corny broth for a corn soup. Madison has generalized this principle and

enhanced it with lots of advice on what stock ingredients go best with what. She certainly covers all the obvious stuff such as mirepoix components, fennel, mushrooms, celeriac, and the like. But she also suggests that many nuts, not just chestnuts, are excellent soup and stock ingredients. Madison also does a great job of selling vegetable stocks for being easy and quick to make and, with the right ingredients, almost as bracing as their carnivorous cousins. While Madison states that many of these recipes are original, there are also a whole lot of recipe types that look very familiar to me. For example, there are lots of bean soups, dried split pea soup, fresh pea soup, squash soup, chestnut soup, cabbage and kale soups, corn soup, cream and roasted tomato soups, and a bean and pasta soup (the old Italian pasta fagiole chestnut!). Like Mitchell, Madison gives lots of variations on some of the more popular types of soups. On the whole, it seems, however, that Madison's soup recipes are just a bit more interesting, with just a bit deeper insight into the interplay of tastes and textures. Comparing the chestnut soup recipes from the two books, Mitchell gives us a pretty ordinary chestnut soup, while Madison gives us a much more interesting variation, adding both fennel and lentils for a bit of sweetness and body. This is very similar to my favorite chestnut soup recipe from Daniel Boulud, who adds apples (great seasonal match, of course) to his recipe for sweetness. Another very nice feature of Madison's book is that it is organized by ingredient, consistency, and by season. With almost 500 cookbooks, and at least 12 soup cookbooks from which to choose, I find the books organized by season are more interesting sources to find a suitable soup than those organized by ingredient or consistency (most of the time). I cannot overlook the fact that Ms. Madison has used photographs of some very original pottery to enhance the presentation of her soups. The contribution of her ceramic artist friends is so great, she dedicates the book to these two artisans. The greatest caution against buying this book is the fact that so much of its general material has appeared in earlier Madison books, most especially the great 'Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone', which for me ranks as one of the five very best cookbooks I have ever read, let alone the all time best general vegetarian cookbook. Much of the advice on stockmaking and Madison's ten (10) steps for making soup come from the 50-page chapter on stocks and soups in this book. The new book, however, does include many soup recipes which are not in the earlier book, and where there is overlap of principle ingredient, the new book's recipe is generally more elaborate and more interesting for entertaining. In all, if you own all of Deborah Madison's earlier books, you will encounter a lot of redundancy. If, on the other hand, you own no Madison books, and you happen to be fond of soups, I cannot recommend this book more strongly. It may not have the great number of recipes as James Peterson's 'Splendid Soups', but it is by far the best source for those who wish to be better at ad libbing soup making. This may be comparable to Louis

Armstrong's lessons on how to improvise with a coronet.

for perspective purposes, i'll start by mentioning that i'm an avid vegan cook. i received this book as a gift, and i will use it mostly for inspiration. this book is best for people who want to eat more healthy, nutrient rich vegetable soups. i wouldn't consider it in the vegetarian category, because fish and chicken broth are included in some recipes. deborah says in her introduction that she cooks a chicken once in a while and will make stock from it, which a seasoned vegetarian would not do. so, if you are looking for strict vegetarian recipes, look for something else. if you want to eat more veggies, or if you are already experienced in the kitchen and can edit recipes easily, this book has a lot of interesting flavor ideas. deborah also gives a lot of insight about the structure of soups, like: which veggies are good for stock and which aren't, how and when to add texture, and how to get the best flavors out of your ingredients.

I'm definitely not a vegetarian (and neither is Deborah Madison, as she writes in *Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone*) but this book is full of wonderful soups. We are huge soup eaters in our house and find that a bowl of soup, especially in the winter months is one of the easiest ways to eat healthy. So many of these soups go well as a prelude to a main course of perhaps simply roasted chicken or grilled salmon. Soup is usually economical; my husband packs a thermos of soup for lunch and avoids the vending machine/fast food routine. Vegetables are usually less expensive than meat or poultry and soups made from them really stretch your food dollar. Besides which, these soups just taste great. I didn't find any of them too terribly taxing in regards to preparation; and the most exotic ingredients were saffron and coconut milk. Easy to obtain if you decide you want to spend the money. I've stopped checking this book out from the library; I need to own my own copy!

I've made around 5 soups from this book so far, so I feel like I can truly give a fair review to the book. Things that I Love: Great section on Broths/Lighter Soups Book is organized by Season Creative recipes with some Great Ideas (Examples: roasting squash, pear and ginger in the oven prior to putting in the soup pot, adding crumbled Feta cheese to a Quinoa, Corn, and Spinach soup) Writing is entertaining. I've actually read the book from cover to cover. Things that I'm not a fan of: Fighting over the leftovers Just one recipe I've done was disappointing--it was Cauliflower Noodle Soup w/ Saffron. While good, I was disappointed that the saffron taste wasn't highlighted very much. Especially since saffron is sooo freaking expensive. Overall, I love the recipes in this book--and might try to cook each and every one of them. I already own *Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone*, and

felt that this definitely adds to my cookbook repertoire, and didn't find it redundant at all.

Very nicely illustrated and laid out however for anyone in smaller towns some of the ingredients may not be available. It would be helpful to give a directory of the more unusual ingredients, a description of them and perhaps a buying guide.

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