

Shitake Corn Chowder

1 lb potatoes, peeled & 1" cubed
8 oz shitake mushrooms, dice or slice mushroom caps. No stems.
1 large onion, diced
4-5 garlic, minced
15 oz/1.5 cups canned/frozen corn kernels
1-2 tsp fresh or dried thyme
2 bay leaves
dried kombu (edible kelp) - Cut out a roughly 6×3" sheet
salt & pepper
olive oil
5 cups water
* heavy cream, old bay seasoning, fresh lemon (all 3 optional)

Heat oil in a stockpot. Salt and sauté onions until translucent, then add garlic and cook for another couple minutes. Add potatoes, corn, shiitake, thyme, and bay leaves. Stir for a couple of minutes. Add the water and kombu. Bring to a boil and lower to a med-low simmer for 20 minutes, the pot partially covered. Remove kombu, thyme (if you used fresh twigs), and bay leaves from the soup. Cook for another 5 minutes, uncovered. Remove from the heat. Puree the soup with a stand or immersion blender until completely smooth or with a few chunks of potato and corn kept for added texture.

The consistency should thicken up. Add a splash of cream if you choose and stir. Season with sea salt and pepper. If you have old bay seasoning on hand, this adds extra emphasis on that "sea" taste. Serve alone or with whatever herbs you have (herbs are abundant at the market!), a wedge of lemon, and some crunchy bread or oyster crackers!

Recipe by Garden Chef Ilene Rouamvongsor



ATLANTA BOTANICAL GARDEN