

Country Ham and Potato Soup

Courtesy of *In Our Grandmothers' Kitchens*

Ingredients:

3 cups diced potatoes
5 slices bacon
3 leeks (mostly white part), cleaned and diced
2 tablespoons flour
1 quart warmed chicken broth
2 cups chopped ham
pepper to taste
1 cup milk
cream to taste

Instructions:

In lightly salted water bring the potato pieces to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer the potatoes for 10 minutes. Leave them in the water while you prepare the bacon.

In a heavy Dutch oven fry the bacon until it is crispy and brown. Remove the bacon pieces from the pan and set them aside. Remove all but 2 tablespoons of the bacon fat, reserving the remaining fat as well.

Use the bacon fat in the pan to sauté the leek pieces until they soften.

Push the leeks to the side of the pan and add 2 to 3 additional tablespoons of bacon fat. Whisk the flour into this fat to make a roux. Whisk for at least a minute or two to let the fat and the flour combine.

Gradually stir in the chicken stock; then stir in the ham, the potatoes, and 1 cup of the potato water. (You may discard the remaining potato water now.)

Bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer, covered, for 1/2 hour. Add the milk and a little cream to thin and lighten the soup.

Serve with the bacon (crumbled) as a garnish. Serves 6.