



First Class Cream of Barley Soup



Second Class Pea Soup



Third Class Vegetable Soup

What's Cooking Soups with Class: recipes from the *Titanic*

By Jan Napier

I have never seen the movie, *Titanic*, and probably never will. It's just too tragic and horrific a true tale to have brought to onscreen life for me. I could barely suffer through *The Poseidon Adventure*. Sometimes I'm tempted, knowing that the movie-going public has made this critically acclaimed film the second highest grossing movie of all time (*Avatar* took first place in 2010). But for now, I'm happier giving it a pass.

The extraordinary cuisine of the *RMS Titanic* is part of the story that has fascinated the world and about which much has been written. On that doomed voyage, food was prepared for over 2200 people in the *Titanic* galleys: opulent, over the top ten-course menus for the first class passengers; more reasonable yet wonderful second class offerings; hearty, rustic third class meals; and, of course, sustenance for the crew.

For your dining enjoyment, here are three known recipes for *RMS Titanic* soups (on menus just before the disaster), one from each class, and all tested and tasted in my kitchen. About the pea soup, hubby said, "fantastic – they didn't know what they were missing in first class!" The simple vegetable soup was my favourite. Recipes came from internet sources and have been only slightly modified. And fear not; the recipes below don't make hundreds of servings, and I haven't included gruel.

Cream of Barley Soup (First Class)

- 1 Tbsp vegetable oil
- 1/4 cup chopped bacon or salt pork
- 2 carrots, chopped
- 2 onions, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 bay leaf

- 2 tsp chopped parsley stems
- 1/2 tsp peppercorns
- 1 cup barley
- 7-9 cups beef stock
- 1 cup whipping cream
- 2-4 Tbsp whiskey
- 1 Tbsp red wine vinegar

Heat oil in a large pot on medium heat. Add bacon and cook while stirring for about two minutes. Add carrot, onion, and garlic; cover and cook for 10 minutes. Wrap bay leaf, parsley, and peppercorns in cheesecloth and tie securely to close (bouquet garni). Set aside. Add barley to pot and stir for about 45 seconds. Pour in 7 cups stock and add bouquet garni. Bring to boil, reduce to simmer, cover, and continue cooking for 40 minutes. Remove seasonings, and puree soup. Reheat and whisk in cream, whiskey, and vinegar without allowing to boil. Add additional stock to desired consistency and salt and pepper to taste.

Pea Soup (Second Class)

- 2 Tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 celery stick, finely diced
- 1 large potato, peeled and diced small
- 2 carrots peeled and finely diced
- 1 lb green split peas, rinsed
- 6 cups chicken stock
- 1 Brothers smoked ham hock (or substitute 1/2 lb double smoked bacon)
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1/4 tsp freshly ground pepper
- 1/4 cup dry sherry

Heat oil in a large pot over medium heat. Sauté onion for several minutes. Add next four ingredients and stir for

about two minutes. Add peas, stock, pepper, meat, and thyme. Bring to a boil, then cover and reduce to simmer until peas are very tender, about one hour. Remove ham hock, chop meat finely, and add meat to soup. Stir in sherry. Add salt and more freshly ground pepper to taste.

Vegetable Soup (Third Class)

- 2 Tbsp butter
- 1 onion, diced finely
- 1 potato
- 1 cup sliced carrots
- 1 cup sliced celery
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 6 cups chicken or vegetable stock
- 1 cup corn kernels
- 2 cups white kidney beans, drained
- 1 cup fresh asparagus tips
- 2 cups shredded swiss chard, centre veins removed

Melt butter in large pot over medium heat. Stir in next eight ingredients. Cover and cook with frequent stirring until onion is translucent, about 10 minutes. Add stock and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 15-20 minutes. Stir in corn, beans, asparagus and Swiss chard. Cook for five minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste.



Jan Napier is a freelance writer/photographer with a penchant for people, pets, places and food. Visit her at www.jnapier.ca or www.viewpointgallery.ca