

STOCK

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ingredients, in 30 minutes to an hour after coming to a boil — just enough time to relax with a glass of wine and consider your next steps. Don't leave vegetable stock on the burner for hours; you'll end up with a wilted flavor and a slight bitterness from the aromatics. For the longer-simmering stocks, cut the vegetables into larger pieces.

When a vegetable stock has finished cooking, strain it immediately through a fine mesh strainer lined with a cheesecloth. Letting the vegetables stand in the stock after cooking can cause the stock to lose vibrancy. After straining, however, you may refrigerate or freeze as desired.

Serve a fennel-onion soup with simple garlic toasts made by rubbing crostini with a cut clove of garlic. Or, for a cheese-crusted version, divide the soup into four baking dishes and top each with two or three croutons and about one-fourth cup shredded Gruyere cheese before baking in a 400-degree oven for 30 to 35 minutes.

ROASTED VEGETABLE STOCK

Makes about 8 cups

2 cups diced onion
2 carrots, scrubbed, diced (about 1 cup)
3 celery stalks, diced (about 1 cup)
6 whole peeled cloves garlic
2 cups peeled, diced celery root
3 tablespoons olive oil
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon ground pepper
2 leeks, white part only
10 whole peppercorns
1 bay leaf
3 to 4 sprigs fresh thyme
3 to 4 sprigs fresh parsley
½ cup dried porcini mushrooms
2 Yukon Gold potatoes

Heat the oven to 425 degrees.

Toss together the onion, carrots, celery, garlic and celery root with the olive oil, salt and pepper in a large baking pan. Roast 35 to 45 minutes or until vegetables are lightly browned, stirring occasionally.

Place the roasted vegetables in a tall 8-quart stockpot. Cut the leeks into quarter-inch slices and add them to the pot. Add the peppercorns, bay leaf, thyme, parsley and dried mushrooms. Peel the potatoes and add the peels to the pot. Cut the peeled potatoes into half-inch dice, cover them with cold water, and set aside to use in the soup (recipe below). Add 10 cups cold water to the stockpot.

Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cover. Simmer 45 minutes. Remove the pot from the



Herbs and mushrooms add depth to the vegetarian stock.

BOB CHAMBERLIN | LOS ANGELES TIMES PHOTOS



Mushroom, Barley and Swiss Chard soup has muscle.

heat. Strain the stock through a cheesecloth-lined strainer, lightly pressing the vegetables with the back of a spoon to extract juices. Discard the vegetables.

Editor's note: Because of the nature of this recipe, nutritional analysis is not possible

ROASTED VEGETABLE SOUP

Makes 4 to 6 servings

2 cups sliced cremini mushrooms
4 teaspoons plus 2 tablespoons olive oil
Kosher salt
Ground white pepper
1 medium onion, diced (about 1 cup)

½ cup diced celery
½ cup diced carrot
2 garlic cloves, minced
½ cup dried small white beans
8 cups Roasted Vegetable Stock (recipe above)
3 cups coarsely chopped savoy cabbage
Yukon Gold potatoes, reserved from stock recipe above

½ pound green beans, stemmed, cut diagonally into 1-inch pieces
½ pound yellow beans, stemmed, cut diagonally into 1-inch pieces
Sliced, toasted French bread

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.

9 cups Light Vegetable Stock (recipe follows)
2 teaspoons salt, plus more to taste
2 tablespoons Armagnac (optional)
8 (¾-inch-thick) slices baguette
1 large garlic clove, halved

Trim the feathery fronds and stems from the fennel bulbs. Chop 1 tablespoon of the fronds and reserve. Cut the bulbs in half lengthwise and remove the cores. Thinly slice bulbs. Peel the onions, then slice very thinly.

Heat the oil in a heavy 5½-quart pot over high heat. Add fennel, onions and sugar and saute 5 minutes. Reduce the heat to medium and cook until the vegetables are very tender and lightly browned, 30 to 40 minutes.

Add the wine and simmer 1 to 2 minutes or until the wine is almost evaporated. Add the vegetable stock and salt. Cover and simmer 20 minutes to blend flavors.

Add the Armagnac, if using, and simmer, uncovered, 10 minutes. Stir in the reserved chopped fennel fronds. Season to taste with salt.

Put the baguette slices on a baking sheet. Broil until golden brown and crisp, about 45 seconds to 1 minute. Rub each slice with the cut garlic clove, then turn and brown the other side, about 20 seconds. Serve the soup with the garlic toasts on the side.

PER SERVING: 216 calories; 4 g protein; 27 g carbohydrates; 5 g fiber; 10 g fat (1 g saturated); 0 cholesterol; 937 mg sodium

LIGHT VEGETABLE STOCK

Makes about 9 cups

1 tablespoon olive oil
2 cups finely diced leeks, white part only (about 2 to 3)
1 cup finely diced carrots (about 3 medium)
1 cup finely diced celery (about 2 stalks)
3 whole garlic cloves, peeled
6 peppercorns
1 bay leaf
2 sprigs parsley
2 sprigs fennel
1 sprig thyme

Heat the oil in a tall 8-quart stockpot over medium-high heat. Add the leeks, carrots and celery. Cook until tender, about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Add the garlic, peppercorns, bay leaf, parsley, fennel and thyme. Add 10 cups cold water. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat, cover and simmer 35 minutes.

Strain the stock through a fine mesh strainer, gently pressing the vegetables to extract liquid. Discard the vegetables.

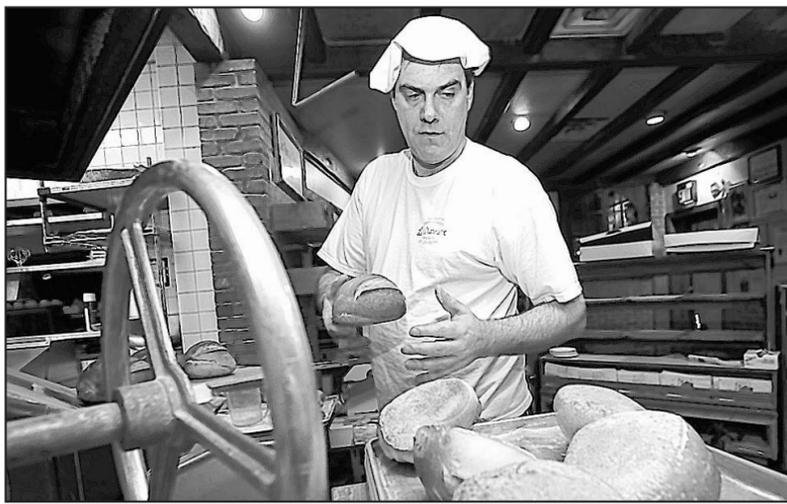
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FENNEL AND ONION SOUP

Makes 4 to 6 servings

2 fennel bulbs (about 1½ pounds)
2 large onions (about 1½ pounds)
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 teaspoon sugar
½ cup light dry white wine

PER SERVING: 271 calories; 8 g protein; 30 g carbohydrates; 10 g fiber; 15 g fat (2 g saturated); 0 cholesterol; 451 mg sodium



BARTH FALKENBERG | DISPATCH

"Bread speaks to you," Tad Wielezynski says. "You're working with something that's alive."

midnight-to-8 a.m. shift he once did, he still pulls 24-hour holiday shifts — as most bakery owners do.

He isn't complaining. "Most bakers are not logical people, but we are creative," he said. "There's something special about taking a pile of ingredients to make something that somebody comes in to pick up in the morning and goes 'Oooh.'"

Erika Herr, 25, a culinary-school graduate who works with Cooper, arrives at 5 a.m. — a night-life-killing wake-up call.

"Weekends you don't even go out because you're so tired from the week," she said. "My friend is, like, 'You have to get up at the butt crack of dawn.'"

"Now I'm used to it." Bread Basket Family Bakery owner Bryan Tyler goes to work between 2 and 3 a.m. To prepare for the weekend rush, the 35-year-old father of two sometimes spends Friday nights there.

"Sometimes I go home and take a shower and go right back," he said. "Or, I'll just sit down for a while."

He sleeps four or five hours a day and tries to nap after work.

"It's tough when you have a family," he said. "The kids are already in bed by the time I get home, and I get up and leave before they're awake."

David Beach, 47, bakes for Eleni-Christina Bakery in the Short North and the

Andersons General Store off Sawmill Road. "It's hard to find people willing to do this," he said. "I pretty much don't go out at night."

"But if you're motivated, it's not a problem. After a while you get used to it."

Beach arrives just before 2:30 a.m. "to avoid the people driving home from bars" and makes coffee.

"You have to be efficient, especially in the beginning," he said. "If you lose time at the start, you pay for it down the road." David Mathess, who bakes for Omega Artisan Baking in the North Market, relishes the wee hours.

"I've always had a knack for baking and getting up early," he said. "It's a quiet time. It's when you can get into the mode where you can really relax. You get things done, the bakes are coming out great."

"It's wonderful." Back at La Chatelaine, Wielezynski, his fresh-baked bread hissing and crackling on cooling racks that early morning — would agree.

"Beautiful, isn't it?" he said. "Bread speaks to you. You're working with something that is *alive*. You take it out of the oven and it's a piece of art. It's your own creation, and it's something you made with five ingredients: water, flour, yeast, salt and starter."

"It's magical." abeck@dispatch.com

VEGETARIAN COOKING

Rich brown-rice dish is similar to risotto

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Classic risotto is hardly effortless fare because of the constant stirring required. But its appeal is enough for cooks to find smart ways to cut preparation time and still get the great taste.

Vegetarians especially will appreciate a stand-in version using instant brown rice and a creamy Neufchatel cheese. This makes a rich, nutty-tasting dish.

The recipe, from the April-May issue of *EatingWell* magazine, bursts with a variety of colorful vegetables: asparagus, green peas and red bell pepper. But any vegetables can be substituted for the asparagus and bell pepper.

To make it a perfect vegetarian main course, add a salad. Meat-eaters can serve it as a side dish with grilled chicken or steak.

MOCK RISOTTO

Makes 4 servings

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1 medium onion, diced
¾ teaspoon salt
2 cups instant brown rice
4 garlic cloves, chopped
2½ cups vegetable broth
1 pound asparagus, trimmed, cut into ¾-inch pieces
1 red bell pepper, finely diced
1 cup frozen peas, thawed
4 ounces reduced-fat cream cheese (Neufchatel)
½ cup grated Asiago or Parmesan cheese, plus more for passing, if desired
¾ cup minced chives or green onion tops

Heat oil in a large nonstick

MUSHROOM, BARLEY AND SWISS CHARD SOUP

Makes 6 to 8 servings

If the mushroom stock yields less than 11 cups, add enough water to make up the difference.

3 tablespoons olive oil
1 cup diced onion
½ cup finely diced carrot
½ cup finely diced celery
1 teaspoon minced garlic
¾ cup pearl barley
11 cups mushroom stock (recipe follows)
¾ pound shiitake mushrooms, stems trimmed, caps sliced
1 tablespoon sea salt
2 bunches Swiss chard, stemmed and coarsely chopped (about 8 cups)
2 turnips (about ¾ pound), peeled, cut into ½ dice (about 3 cups)

Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a tall 8-quart stockpot over medium-high heat. Add the onion, carrot and celery and saute until the vegetables are tender but not browned, about 4 minutes. Add the garlic and cook 1 minute.

Stir in the barley and stock. Bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce the heat to simmer and cover. Cook 1 hour, stirring occasionally.

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a medium nonstick skillet. Add the mushrooms and saute until lightly browned, about 7 minutes. Add the salt, chard, turnips and sauteed mushrooms to the stockpot. Bring the soup to a simmer, cover and cook 30 minutes.

PER SERVING: 139 calories; 3 g protein; 21 g carbohydrates; 5 g fiber; 5 g fat (1 g saturated); 0 cholesterol; 534 mg sodium

MUSHROOM STOCK

Makes about 11 cups

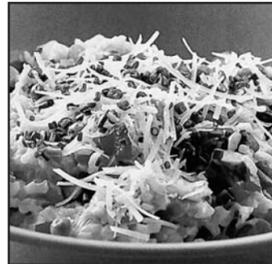
1 pound fresh cremini mushrooms
1½ ounces dried shiitake mushrooms
¾ cup sliced leek (white part only)
2 garlic cloves, cut in half
2 sprigs thyme
4 whole peppercorns

Clean the mushrooms with a damp paper towel. Trim the stem ends and quarter the mushrooms.

Put the mushrooms in a tall 8-quart stockpot. Add the dried shiitakes, leek, garlic, thyme and peppercorns. Add 3 quarts (12 cups) cold water. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat, cover and simmer 35 minutes.

Remove the pot from the heat and let stand to cool 5 minutes. Strain through a mesh strainer, gently pressing the vegetables with a spoon to extract juices. Discard the vegetables.

Editor's note: Because of the nature of this recipe, nutritional analysis is not possible.



KEN BURRIS | EATINGWELL

Mock Risotto has a rich, nutty flavor.

skillet over medium-low heat. Add onion and salt and cook, stirring often, until soft and just beginning to brown, 4 to 6 minutes. Add rice and garlic and cook until the garlic is fragrant, 30 seconds to 1 minute. Add broth and bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat to a simmer and cook for 5 minutes.

Remove cover and spread asparagus and bell pepper on top of the simmering rice — do not stir into the rice mixture. Replace cover and continue simmering, adjusting the heat if necessary, until the liquid is almost absorbed and the asparagus is bright green but still crisp, about 5 minutes.

Add peas and cream cheese. Stir until the mixture is creamy and the cheese is incorporated. Return to a simmer and continue cooking until the liquid has evaporated and the asparagus is tender, about 5 minutes more. Stir in ½ cup Asiago.

Serve topped with chives and additional grated cheese, if desired.

PER SERVING: 368 calories; 13 g protein; 51 g carbohydrates; 7 g fiber; 14 g fat (6 g saturated); 29 mg cholesterol; 665 mg sodium

BAKERS

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baking and cleaning."

At 5:20, with bread in the oven, perpetual-motion machine Wielezynski announced, "Ah, time for my coffee."

Wielezynski, 38, has worked in bakeries since he was 13. Born in Belgium, he lived with his family in Morocco before moving to southwestern France. There, in his teens, he became a baker's apprentice.

"I was always fascinated with pastries and bread," he said.

A bakery in Brussels — La Duree — "was like a jewelry store to me," he recalled. "Beautiful, beautiful pastries."

From a young age, he also was fascinated with the early-morning hours.

"And I always woke up early. At 8, 9 years old, I'd wake up and make breakfast for my parents."

These days, he goes to bed at 9 p.m. or so and wakes up just before he drives to La Chatelaine.

"I don't party anymore," he said. "I can't. I watch a couple of (TV) shows and go to bed. My body is trained."

"This life is just a rhythm. The body gets used to it."

Ask any baker about the hours they keep. Most likely you'll hear "You get used to it."

Bets are, if we could travel to ancient Egypt and witness the dawn of raised bread — defined by H.E. Jacob in his *Six Thousand Years of Bread* as "a product baked in a properly constructed oven from a dough that has been raised by yeast or some other leavening agent" — no doubt those first bakers would say, "The hours? You get used to it."

With sliced sandwich bread available on every corner, and with every chain grocery store using dough shipped from across the country, baking from scratch is a dying practice.

But throughout Columbus and central Ohio, bakers — thankfully — still wake every morning under cover of the night sky.

Some chose this antiquated, rigorous life; and the antiquated, rigorous life chose others.

Paul Cooper, owner of Tremont Goodie Shop in Upper Arlington, hails from a family of bakers that started honing their craft in Germany in the 19th century.

Now 53, he started baking at age 9 and hasn't stopped.

Although he no longer works the nasty