

Chilled Nettles Soup

Stinging nettles earn their name from the tiny hairs that produce a stinging sensation on the skin. Its Latin name, *Urtica dioica*, comes from uro which is Latin for “I burn”. Wear long sleeves and gloves when working with raw stinging nettles to protect yourself. Once cooked, the nettles no longer sting. Roots, seeds, stems, and young leaves are all edible when cooked.

YIELD: About 1 quart / 4 portions

INGREDIENTS:

Ice bath, for shocking nettles

250 grams Cleaned stinging nettles, tender leaves and tops only

150 grams Yukon gold potato, peeled and thinly sliced

60 grams Leek, white and light green only, thinly sliced

1 Small garlic clove, sliced

750 grams Light vegetable stock

60 grams Spinach, optional, for brighter color

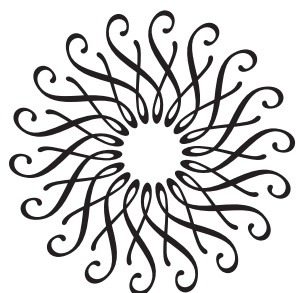
30 grams Extra virgin olive oil

15 grams Lemon juice, plus more to taste

5 grams Champagne vinegar or white wine vinegar

Kosher salt, to taste

White pepper, to taste



PREPARATION:

1. **Blanch the nettles.** Wearing gloves, wash the nettles well. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Blanch the nettles for 45 to 60 seconds, until fully wilted and vibrant green. Shock immediately in ice water. Drain and squeeze dry.

2. **Build the base.** In a small pot, sweat the leek and garlic gently in a little olive oil with a pinch of salt until soft, with no color. Add the sliced potato and vegetable stock. Simmer until the potato is completely tender, about 15 to 20 minutes.

3. **Blend.** Transfer the hot potato-stock base to a blender. Add the blanched nettles and spinach, if using. Blend on high until very smooth. Stream in the olive oil while blending.

4. **Strain and chill.** Pass through a chinois or fine mesh strainer. Chill quickly over ice to preserve the green color.

5. **Season cold.** Once fully chilled, adjust with lemon juice, vinegar, salt, and white pepper. The soup should taste bright, green, lightly earthy, and refreshing. Add a splash of cold vegetable stock if it becomes too thick.

We garnish our chilled nettles soup with a toasted focaccia crostini dotted with lime aioli, smoked and marinated black mussels, and pickled Fresno chilis.