

## Creamy Lettuce Soup with Herb Puree

### LETTUCE SOUP:

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 medium leeks, white and light green parts only, coarsely chopped
- 2 medium celery ribs, coarsely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 large white potato, peeled and cut into 1-inch dice
- 2 medium heads lettuce, torn, excluding ribs
- 3 c vegetable stock
- ½ c heavy cream
- Salt and pepper

### HERB PUREE:

- 1 T parsley
- 1 T basil leaves
- 1 T chopped chives
- 1 T tarragon
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground pepper

Heat the olive oil in a very large saucepan. Add the leeks, celery, garlic and potato and cook over moderately low heat, stirring often, until the vegetables are slightly softened, about 10 minutes. Add the chopped lettuce by large handfuls, stirring each batch until wilted before adding the next. Add the vegetable stock and simmer, uncovered, for 20 minutes. When ready to serve, process the soup, in batches, taking care since the soup is hot, then return to a clean saucepan. Stir in the heavy cream and the salt and pepper and simmer for another 5 minutes, or until heated through.

In a food processor, add the basil, chives, extra-virgin olive oil and tarragon and blend until emulsified. Transfer the puree to a bowl and season with salt and pepper.

Garnish the soup with the fresh Herb Puree.

## Simple Salad with Herbs and Red Wine Vinaigrette

- 1/4 cup Dijon mustard
- 1/2 cup red wine vinegar
- 1 1/2 cups canola oil
- Salt and pepper
- Lettuce leaves, torn
- Various fresh herbs minced (parsley, chives tarragon)

### Red Wine Vinaigrette:

In a blender or food processor, combine Dijon, vinegar and 3/4 cup of canola oil. Pulse until smooth. Pour dressing in a container, and whisk in remaining canola oil. Can be stored sealed in the refrigerator 5-7 days.

To plate the simple green salad, arrange lettuce leaves in the center of a plate and sprinkle with various herbs. You want to choose palatable soft herbs without a strong flavor (you would want to avoid rosemary or sage). Drizzle with red wine vinaigrette and season to taste with salt and pepper.

## Asian Lettuce Wraps

- 1 T Olive Oil
- 1 lb local ground beef (or ground chicken or turkey)
- 1 3.5 oz package of shitake mushrooms (button or crimini may be substituted)
- 1 can chopped water chestnuts
- 3 scallions chopped, white and green parts
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 T rice wine vinegar
- 1 T light soy sauce
- 1 T sesame oil
- pinch red pepper flakes
- Lettuce leaves

Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add scallions, garlic, and mushrooms. Saute about 3 minutes until the vegetable begin to soften. Add in the water chestnuts and ground beef, breaking up the beef with a spatula and brown 3-4 minutes. Stir in the rice wine vinegar, soy sauce, sesame oil, and red pepper flakes. Reduce the heat the low and continue to simmer 3-4 more minutes until the sauce has thickened and the beef is completely browned. Allow to cool slightly before placing on lettuce leaves to roll and serve.