Broccoli, Potato and Cheddar Soup

2 thick broccoli-potato soup bowls, each with 25 g/about 1 oz melted cheddar | Active 16 min | Cook 19 min | Total 35 min

Ingredients

- 180 g (6 1/3 oz) prepared fresh broccoli, divided into 60 g peeled stalk in 5 mm/3⁄16 in dice and 120 g small florets about 2 cm/3/4 in across
- 160 g (5 2/3 oz) peeled potato, cut into 1 cm/3/8 in cubes
- 40 g (1 1/2 oz) peeled onion, finely chopped
- 5 ml olive oil (1 tsp)
- 400 ml (about 1 2/3 US cups) ready-to-use lower-sodium vegetable stock, divided
- 100 ml pasteurized milk (about 1/3 cup plus 1 tbsp plus 2 tsp)
- 50 g cheddar (1 3/4 oz; about 1/2 cup loosely grated)
- 0.5 g fine salt, a small pinch, or omit if the stock is salty
- 0.3 g ground black pepper (about 1/8 tsp)

Set out

1000 W microwave with turntable, Kitchen scale and measuring jug, Knife and board, Spoon, Oven mitts, Two serving bowls, Microwave-safe bowl, at least 2.5 L/about 2 2/3 US qt measured capacity, about 21 cm/8 1/4 in inside diameter and 10 cm/4 in deep, Microwave-safe vented cover, Potato masher, Cheese grater, Food thermometer for leftover reheating checks

Allergens

Milk. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Put the onion, oil and 30 ml/2 tbsp of the measured stock in the 2.5 L bowl. Cover with the vent open and microwave at 1000 W full power for 3 minutes, stirring halfway, until softened.

2. Add all 160 g potato, 60 g peeled diced broccoli stalk, remaining 370 ml stock, salt and pepper. Stir, cover with a vent and heat at full power for 8-10 minutes, stopping every 3 minutes to stir. Continue in 1-minute bursts if needed until the potato and stalk cubes crush readily with the masher.

3. Add the 120 g small florets. Fold into the hot liquid, cover with a vent and cook at full power for 3-4 minutes, stirring halfway, until the florets are tender enough to press with a spoon. Mash the potato and some broccoli to make a thick, coarse soup; leave some soft floret pieces visible.

4. Stir in all the milk and grated cheddar. Cover with a vent and heat at 50% power for 1-2 minutes, stopping after 1 minute to stir. Continue in 30-second bursts if needed until the cheese melts and the whole soup is steaming hot. Stand covered for 2 minutes, stir and divide the complete batch equally between two bowls.

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Weigh the usable stalk

The 60 g stalk is the peeled tender center, not tough outer trimmings. Buy enough broccoli to obtain both measured portions.

Soft cheese, no browned lid

The finished soup has melted cheese through it. It does not acquire an oven-baked surface in the microwave.

Ingredient labels

Milk and cheddar contain milk. Stock may contain celery, wheat or soy; check its actual label. Frozen broccoli is not a direct replacement unless its complete package cooking process is followed separately.

A useful detail

The 35-minute plan allows 10 minutes of preparation, up to 19 minutes of sequential heating, a 2-minute stand and 4 minutes for mashing and portioning. The baseline oven is 1000 W. Peeled stalk and potato must be fully tender before the shorter floret and cheese stages; extra bursts can extend the total.

Another way

Use 50 g/1 3/4 oz grated Gouda instead of cheddar for a milder finish. Keep the same reduced-power melting stage.

Replace 120 g/4 1/4 oz broccoli florets with 120 g/4 1/4 oz small fresh cauliflower florets; keep the 60 g peeled broccoli stalk or use the same weight of peeled cauliflower stalk. Extend the floret stage until fully tender.

Keep it well

Refrigerate shallow portions within 2 hours, or within 1 hour above 90°F/32°C, at 40°F/4°C or colder. Use within 3 days or an earlier milk or stock deadline. Stir 15 ml/1 tbsp water into a thick chilled portion if needed. Reheat under a vented cover in short bursts with frequent stirring, then stand 2 minutes and verify 165°F/74°C throughout. Heat only the portion needed.