

Leek and Watercress Soup

3 large leeks
1 or 2 shallots
6 cups chicken stock or 1 quart plus 2 cups water
3 large potatoes
1 bunch watercress
6 tablespoons butter
½ cup heavy cream
Salt and white pepper to taste

Thinly slice the white and tender green parts of the leeks. Mince the shallots, and slice the potatoes.

In a heavy pot, melt 3 tablespoons of butter. Stir in the leeks and the shallots and cook covered over low heat for about 10 minutes until softened but not browned.

Uncover the pot, and pour in the chicken stock or stock and water. Add the sliced potatoes and some salt, and simmer partially covered for one hour.

Meanwhile trim off the tough stems from the watercress, leaving any tender stems. Add the watercress to the soup mixture, and continue to simmer for 5 more minutes.

Transfer the soup in batches to a food processor, and process until as smooth as possible.

Return the soup to the kettle, add freshly ground white pepper, and taste for salt and seasoning.

Just before serving, whisk in the heavy cream and the remaining 3 tablespoons of softened butter. Taste again for seasoning. Can be served hot or cold.