

Leftover Soup

[photo credit](#)

I call my homemade soup leftover soup for the obvious reason; many of the ingredients of each batch are leftovers from my fridge or freezer. Meat, vegetables, broth, gravy, rice, quinoa; anything and everything goes.

I make my own broth by keeping the pan drippings from roast chicken, turkey or beef in a container in my freezer, all mixed together. As soon as each addition to the container starts to freeze, i scrape off and discard the fat that has risen to the top. I also add any excess liquid from steamed vegetables to the bucket in the freezer. Then when the day comes to make soup, out comes the container to use for the base of the soup. This is a simple, healthy and delicious way to make broth without added artificial flavors or preservatives. If you are really organized and efficient, you can pour the broth into ice cube trays to be frozen individually instead of all together in a bucket. This works well when you only need a few spoonfuls of broth for a recipe. I prefer the bucket method.

The broth is flavored with the roasted onions and garlic that I always add to the bottom of the pan before roasting meat. The onions and garlic brown up nicely when cooked this way, adding color and flavor to the pan drippings. These pan drippings can be used to baste the roasting meat and then to either make gravy when the meat is done cooking, or to add to my broth bucket in the freezer.

The other thing I freeze for homemade soup is chicken or turkey bones. When the carcass is almost picked clean after a roast dinner, i stick it in a freezer bag and store it in the freezer until soup day. Simmered in a pot of water with added spices such as cilantro, basil or bay leaves, it makes a great

base for soups too. If it appears too watery, I just add some of the broth from my bucket.

I have also frozen broccoli stalks to add to simmering soup stock for added flavor. I store them in a freezer bag as well after removing them from the florets anytime I serve broccoli as a vegetable. Once cooked, the stocks can be pureed in a blender to thicken the soup or chopped and added to the finished soup in chunks. It is amazing what nutritious vegetables you can hide in a soup!

Once I have the base prepared, I add rice, quinoa or beans for texture and heartiness, as well as any other fresh vegetables I have on hand such as grape or cherry tomatoes and mushrooms. Frozen corn is always an option too for added crunch to the soup. Occasionally I will roast a batch of mushrooms, onions and peppers to add to the soup pot. Just before serving, I often add a few tablespoons of [jalapeno flavored tzatziki](#) to give the soup a little kick.



The only problem with this leftover soup is, no two batches of soup are ever the same! When one turns out particularly well, it is difficult to remember what exactly was in it. My mother-in-law used to love my homemade soup, but would get quite frustrated when I couldn't produce a recipe for her to follow to make her own.

