

Creamy Tuscan Chicken Soup

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp olive oil (or oil from the jar of sundried tomatoes)
- 1 onion, diced
- 6 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 8.5 ounces jarred sun-dried tomatoes packed in oil and julienned
- 2 pounds or 4 skinless, boneless chicken breasts
- 4 cups chicken stock
- 2 (14 ounce) canned quartered artichoke hearts in water, drained*
- 2 cups half-and-half
- 8 oz. bar cream cheese, at room temperature
- 1 ½ teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 8 ounce bag of fresh spinach (more or less depending on preference)
- Garnish with parmesan cheese, red pepper flakes (optional), and fresh basil.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the oil in a large saucepan. Add the onion and saute for 10 minutes on low-medium heat, stirring occasionally until softened.
2. Add the garlic, herbs, salt, and pepper and cook for another 2 minutes. Add sundried tomatoes, chicken breasts, stock, and bay leaves. Bring to a boil, then simmer for 20 minutes or until chicken is cooked through.
3. Remove chicken and shred into large bite-size pieces.
4. Add in the half-and-half, cream cheese, and Dijon mustard. to the pot. Whisk until blended. Add drained artichoke hearts and cook for 10 minutes.
5. Return shredded chicken back to the pot and heat through for 2-3 minutes. Fold in the spinach and stir until softened. Season with more salt and pepper as needed.
6. Serve immediately. Top with shaved parmesan cheese, fresh basil, and red pepper flakes (optional).

**You can also use jarred artichoke hearts in herbed oil. It will change the flavor of the dish, but it will be just as delicious.*