

Ken White's 'Sockless Onion Soup'

It'll knock your socks off...

Here's how to make the recipe in a slow cooker:

Yield: Serves 6-8

Ingredients:

- 3 pounds yellow onions, peeled, sliced and cut into quarter moons
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons kosher salt, plus more as needed
- freshly ground black pepper
- 10 cups reduced-sodium beef broth
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 3 tablespoons brandy (optional)

To serve:

- 4-6 toasted baguette slices per bowl
- 1/3 cup grated Gruyere cheese per bowl (1 1/3 to 2 cups total)
- chopped shallot or fresh onion (optional)

Equipment:

- cutting board and chef's knife
- 5-quart or larger slow cooker
- wooden spoon
- oven-safe soup bowls
- rimmed backing sheets

Instructions:

- season the onions: Place the onions in a 5-quart or larger slow cooker. Stir in the butter, oil, salt and a generous amount of pepper.
- cook on LOW for 12 hours or overnight. The onions should be dark golden-brown and soft.
- stir in the broth and vinegar.
- cook on LOW for an additional 6-8 hours (tip: wrap a towel over the lid if a lot of steam escapes). Longer cooking intensifies the flavors. Taste and season with more salt and pepper if needed and, if using brandy, stir it in as well.

- portion the soup into oven-safe bowls on a rack in the upper third of the oven and heat to 350 degrees. Ladle and place the bowls on a rimmed baking sheet.
- top with toast and shredded cheese. Top each bowl with a slice of toast and a generous quantity of grueyere cheese, about 1/3 cup per bowl.
- bake in the oven for 2-3 minutes until the cheese is bubbling and browned. Remove from the oven and let cool for a few minutes. Serve with chopped fresh shallot or onion, if desired.