

Caroline Dumas

*soupe*soup



65 soups
40 salads
40 sandwiches
and desserts ...

photos by
Dominique Lafond





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For Alexia and Clara



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I grew up in Beauce, a quiet yet friendly village in Quebec where large families are common and where people take the time to be together and to share with each other. I had a beautiful childhood with many happy memories of family meals drenched in maple syrup! At the age of seven, I read the cookbook *Fermières de Saint-Côme*, written by some of the women of Beauce. For me, it was more than just a book—it was a novel. In fact, I vividly remember its blue cover. In reading the book, I just wanted to understand and learn what the authors cooked for their families. And so, very early in life, I too began experimenting with food and creating recipes. Today, in the same spirit of sharing and creativity as the women of my village, I am proud to share this cookbook with you.

I tend to cook with spontaneity, moving around the kitchen quickly, often surprising myself with the result. I acquired this sense of urgency in the kitchen by working as a canteen cook on movie sets. Quickly yet effectively, I prepared and cooked “little miracles” on the spot and received many compliments from the movie crews who were enjoying the pleasures and benefits of a delicious and healthy cuisine. Then came the idea of a restaurant for soups: a place that was to be warm and comforting, a place where you would find soups, stews and dishes just like my mother’s ... It seemed to me that there was, indeed, a place for Soupesou in this country full of snow!



I worked, cooked, created ... and shopped! I stirred soups and lifted countless pots of chicken carcasses and beef bones and crates and crates of vegetables! I shopped endlessly to find the best quality bread and meats for my sandwiches, I met several suppliers of vegetables, and I sourced the finest chocolate and maple syrup for my desserts. It was important to me that I have only the

freshest and most natural products.

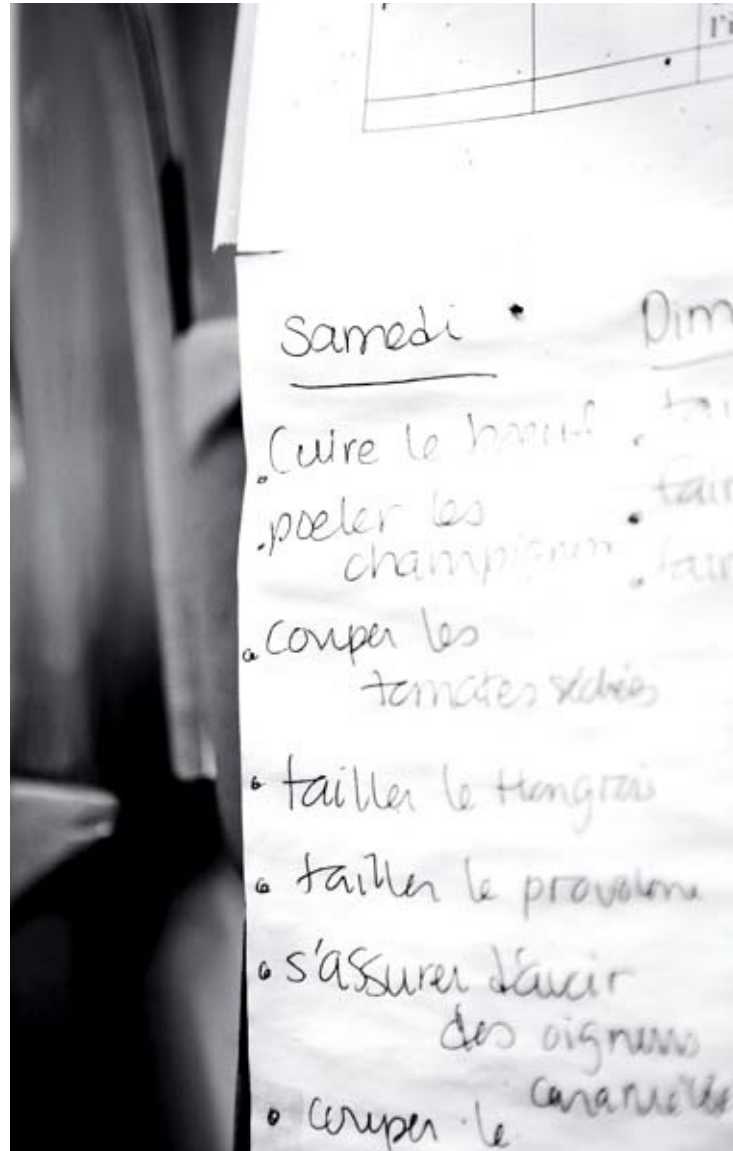
Over time, I realized I could do things more efficiently. I developed a different way to start my soups: first caramelizing the onion, leek and garlic, then adding stronger-tasting fresh herbs like thyme and rosemary, and then finally incorporating vegetables one by one with just a little water. Using this gradual method, and ending with a handful of fresh herbs, I no longer have to prepare meat broth. I save time, and my soups triumph in flavour and nutritional properties.

While my first daughter learned to read in the kitchen, my second was almost born in a pot! The day I went into labour, Reema, my colleague, posted a sign on the restaurant door: “Closed. Left to give birth!” After only one week off, I was back in the kitchen. Luckily, my eldest daughter helped out tremendously. The result? A baby perfumed in caramelized onions and roasted peppers! What a wonderful time in my life, with so much laughter and so much happiness.

I love what I do—cook, chat with my colleagues, and discover food artisans, local farmers, and cheesemongers, all of whom produce organic foods simply because they believe in it. My greatest reward is all of my loyal customers, but my greatest pleasure would be to find that some of my recipes have become part of your own repertoire!



1 Soups









Serves 4 to 6

Mango Lassi



3 large ripe mangoes, coarsely chopped

½ cup (125 mL) yogurt

⅓ cup (80 mL) 35% cream (optional)

Juice of 1½ limes

1 teaspoon (5 mL) finely chopped bird's eye chili or red pepper flakes

1 to 2 cups (250 to 500 mL) water

Sea salt and freshly cracked pepper

Fresh herb sprigs or thin strips of sweet red pepper

Variations

For a change of flavours, add 1 tsp (5 mL) nigella seeds (see p. 20) or 1 tsp (5 mL) grated fresh ginger simmered in 1 tbsp (15 mL) olive oil.

PURÉE all ingredients, except herbs or red pepper, in a blender, adding water gradually to reach desired consistency. Season.

REFRIGERATE for at least 2 hours. Serve garnished with fresh herbs or red pepper.

Serves 6 to 8

Cold Mango Soup with Cucumber and Lime

2 mangoes, coarsely chopped

3 English cucumbers, peeled and coarsely chopped

Juice of 2 limes

2 small garlic cloves

1 chili pepper, seeded

1 to 2 cups (250 to 500 mL) yogurt

1 cup (250 mL) water

½ cup (125 mL) basil leaves

Sea salt and freshly cracked pepper

Basil leaves for garnish

Ice cubes

Variation

You can make a similar soup by replacing the mangoes with white peaches and the basil with tarragon.

PURÉE all the ingredients, except basil garnish and ice, in a blender.
Season.

SERVE with a few basil leaves and a couple of ice cubes in each bowl.

Serves 4

Chilled Fig Soup with Feta and Mint

10 fresh figs

2½ cups (625 mL) water

¼ cup (60 mL) yogurt

3 tablespoons (45 mL) white balsamic vinegar

Juice of 2 limes

8 mint leaves

1 tablespoon (15 mL) chopped chives

Sea salt and freshly cracked pepper

¼ cup (60 mL) crumbled feta cheese (preferably sheep's milk)

Olive oil

4 thyme sprigs

Variation

To achieve a different, softer flavour, replace the mint in any fruit soup with an equal amount of lemon balm heated in 1 to 2 tbsp (15 to 30 mL) agave nectar.

PURÉE all the ingredients, except feta, oil and thyme, in a blender.
SEASON.

REFRIGERATE for 1 hour. Garnish each serving with feta, drizzle with olive oil and top with a sprig of thyme and some cracked pepper.

Serves 4 to 6

Chilled Peach Soup with Basil



4 or 5 white or regular peaches, pitted

½ medium chili pepper, very finely chopped

1 cup (250 mL) yogurt

½ cup (125 mL) water

6 or 7 basil leaves

Juice of 2 limes

1 teaspoon (15 mL) nigella seeds (optional)

Sea salt and freshly cracked pepper

6 chives, chopped, or edible flowers

Nigella seeds

These small black cumin seeds are lemony in aroma and slightly spicy. They are primarily used to flavour naan bread.

PURÉE all the ingredients, except chives, in a blender.

REFRIGERATE for 30 minutes. Season and garnish with chives and flowers just before serving.

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