

## Broccoli Beer Cheese Soup

*This recipe makes a wonderful broccoli cheese soup, even without the beer.*

*I always make a larger batch and pop individual servings into the freezer for grab-and-go lunches.*

—Lori Lee, Brooksville, FL

Prep: 20 min. • Cook: 30 min.

Makes: 10 servings (2½ qt.)

- 3 Tbsp. butter
- 5 celery ribs, finely chopped
- 3 medium carrots, finely chopped
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 4 cups fresh broccoli florets, chopped
- ¼ cup chopped sweet red pepper
- 4 cans (14½ oz. each) chicken broth
- ½ tsp. pepper
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup water
- 3 cups shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese, cubed
- 1 bottle (12 oz.) beer or nonalcoholic beer

Optional toppings: Shredded cheddar cheese, cooked and crumbled bacon, chopped green onions, sour cream, croutons

**1.** In a Dutch oven, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add celery, carrots and onion; saute until crisp-tender. Add broccoli and red pepper; stir in broth and pepper. Combine flour and water until smooth; gradually stir into pan. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, until thickened and the vegetables are tender, 25-30 minutes.

**2.** Stir in cheeses and beer until cheeses are melted (do not boil). If desired, top with additional shredded cheese, bacon, green onions, sour cream and croutons.

**Freeze option:** Before adding toppings, cool soup; transfer to freezer containers. Freeze up to 3 months. To use, partially thaw in refrigerator overnight; heat soup through in a large saucepan over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally (do not boil). Add toppings if desired.

**Per serving:** 316 cal., 23g fat (13g sat. fat), 69mg chol., 1068mg sod., 13g carb. (5g sugars, 2g fiber), 12g pro.