

Celery Root and Wild Rice Chowder

| SERVES 4 TO 6

Rich, fragrant, and chewy, this soup features wild rice you'll find at the St. Paul farmers' market and other markets in Minnesota and Michigan. The drop of truffle oil is optional, but just right with celery root.

If you want to make a vegetable stock, there are lots of good trimmings to work with—leek greens and roots, parsley stems, and the celery root peels (see page 385).

½ cup wild rice
1 celery root (about 1 pound)
2 large leeks, white parts only
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 celery rib, diced
1 cup thinly sliced russet potato
¼ cup chopped parsley, plus extra
for garnish
1 bay leaf
1 large thyme sprig
sea salt and freshly ground pepper
2 cups Vegetable Stock, page 385,
chicken stock, or water
2 cups half-and-half or milk
truffle oil, optional

1. Cover the wild rice with 5 cups water in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat. Cover and simmer for about 45 minutes or until tender.
2. Thickly cut away the celery root skins, then quarter and chop the root into bite-sized pieces. You should have about 3 cups. Chop and wash the leeks.
3. Melt the butter in a soup pot. Add the vegetables, parsley, bay leaf, thyme, and 1½ teaspoons salt. Cook over medium-high heat for about 5 minutes, then add the stock. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to low, and simmer for 20 minutes. Add the half-and-half and simmer until the vegetables are tender. Taste for salt and season with pepper. To give the soup a creamy background, puree a cup of the vegetables and return them to the pot. If the soup is too thick, thin it with some of the rice water or additional stock.
4. Divide the soup among 4 or 6 bowls and then add a mound of the wild rice to each. Garnish each bowl with parsley and a drop of truffle oil, if using, and serve.