

**ACORN SOUP**  
**CALIFORNIA NATIVE AMERICAN - YOKUT/MIWOK**

**DIRECTIONS FOR PREPARING ACORNS INTO EDIBLE USE FOR SOUP**

Gathering a bucket full of them for this recipe is may seem more an intensive project than it is worth, but the experience is worth it (some “modern day” steps are included though

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1. Carefully select a bucket full of acorns in the Fall when they are dropping on the ground under our favorite black, blue or Valley oak. Make sure the acorn shells are intact and extra sure a worm or some other varmint has not invaded the acorn. Native Americans cherished the acorn so much that they gathered and stored them in the hundreds of pounds.
2. Crack your acorns into a bucket of water, then extract them from the shells into a large bowl water. Keep the acorns under water helps preserve their light color. Acorns are quick to oxidize and will turn dark easily. The soup you will be making should be a tan color.
3. Fill a blender half full with acorns and cover with fresh water. Process them, until you have what looks like a coffee colored milkshake.
4. Pour the mixture into a large ½ gallon to 1 gallon jar about halfway up, and top off with more water. Close the had with a lid and shake it up. Place the jar in the refrigerator.
5. Every day for about 5 days, pour off all the water and replace with fresh water, shake well and set back in the refrigerator. You're done when the acorns have little taste and are not bitter. The blue oak acorns took a week.
6. Now you need to dry the very wet flour. Start by pouring everything into a colander lined with cheesecloth. Gather up the pulp into the cheesecloth and squeeze it to extract as much water as you can.
7. Now spread the still-damp flour evenly on a large rimmed cookie sheet. Break up any clumps. Blue oaks have a lot of oil in them, and you will get an “acorn butter,” a very light, clay-like substance that you can incorporate into the flour. It has a lot of flavor. It has a tendency to clump a lot, so be sure you break the butter up into as of fine particles as you can.
8. Put the cookie sheet in an oven set on “warm”, about 100° Don't get the heat higher than that. You can use a food dehydrator, but keep your eye on that as well..
9. Finally, you need to grind the dried flour one more time. Use a heavy duty coffee grinder, spice grinder or food processor. Process the flour into a fine powder, (less than a minute). Store the flour in the refrigerator or the freezer. Acorn flour will get rancid very quickly.
10. Making acorn flour is a very labor intensive exercise so take your time and do it right.

## THE SOUP

### INGREDIENTS: SERVES 4 - 6

- 3 cups acorn bits (leached and dried) (Can use fresh or canned chestnuts if acorns are not available)
- 1 large carrot, peeled and chopped
- 2 celery stalks, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 2 ounces of dried shitakè, or porcini mushrooms, soaked in 1 cup of hot water
- 2 laurel or leaves
- ¼ cup hard cider •
- 1 quart chicken, beef, mushroom or vegetable stock
- ½ teaspoon cayenne
- Salt
- ½ cup creme fraiche, greek style yogurt or sour cream
- Roasted Pinion pine nuts for garnish

### DIRECTIONS:

1. Soak the mushrooms in the hot water for an hour before starting.
2. Heat the butter in a soup pot over medium-high heat and sauté the carrot, celery and onion for 3-4 minutes. add the mushrooms and acorn bits and stir to combine. Sauté for another 5 minutes.
3. Add the apple cider and boil until it is almost all evaporated then add the bay leaves, mushroom soaking water and the stock. Bring to a simmer.
4. Add Kosher salt to taste
5. Puree the soup with an immersion blender. **\*\*SEE COOK'S NOTE\*\***  
  
**\*COOKS NOTE\* Some prefer straining the soup at this point.**
6. Before serving, turn off the heat and mix in the creme fraiche, yogurt or sour cream. You can substitute regular cream if you don't like the acidity of the others.
7. Garnish with the pine nuts and some chopped parsley if desired.