**Leftover Beer Cheese Soup with Rye Croutons**

Serves 4

Prep time: 25 minutes

**Trash to Treasure**

The Big Game is all about comfort foods and a nice cold beer, but Sunday night’s fun can get sidelined by Monday morning back at the office. Don’t let all that good beer go to waste or take up extra space in your refrigerator - turn it into a delicious soup that’s perfect for lunch or dinner throughout the week. To boot, toss in those leftover veggies from the veggie platter for extra flavor and even less waste.

**Ingredients**

2 tablespoons butter

1 cup chopped up carrot (good use for leftover carrot sticks)

1 cup chopped up celery (good use for leftover celery sticks)

1 small onion, chopped up

1 jar of bell peppers, chopped or ¼ fresh bell pepper, chopped up

2 garlic cloves, chopped fine

1 bay leaf

1 teaspoon Morton® Fine Sea Salt\*

½ teaspoon fresh ground black pepper

1/3 cup flour

3 cups chicken broth

1 bottle light-colored beer(no IPAs or anything hoppy)

1 cup cream or half & half

Pinch of chili flakes

Big pinch of mustard powder

Big splash of Worcestershire sauce

2 slices deli-style rye bread, cut into little croutons

1 teaspoon olive oil

3 cups shredded cheese (use your leftover scraps, but make sure at least half is sharp yellow cheddar)

Handful celery leaves, rough chopped

**Directions**

* Preheat oven to 375º Fahrenheit
* Melt butter in a soup pot over medium heat. Stir in the carrot, celery, onion, bell pepper, garlic, and bay leaf and give it a good stir. Cover and cook until you hear sizzling. Continue stirring and cook until the veggies lose their raw look, about 3 minutes. Season with Morton® Fine Sea Salt and pepper.
* Toss in the flour and stir to coat everything with flour.
* Pour in the broth and beer and stir until it thickens a little. Splash in the cream, and add the chili flakes, mustard powder, and Worcestershire sauce. Stir to bring everything together and simmer until the veggies are soft, about 15 minutes.
* While the soup is simmering make the croutons: toss the rye bread cubes and oil on a baking sheet. Bake until toasted, about 8 minutes.
* Using a blender (traditional or immersion), puree the soup until smooth. Continue simmering, turning down the heat to as low it will go. Stir in the cheese just until fully melted.
* Serve right away in bowls garnished with rye croutons and celery leaves.

*\*Morton® Fine Sea Salt crystals dissolve quickly in order to blend easily, which make it ideal for marinades, soups, sauces and dressings.*