

# French Onion Soup with Smoked Gruyère Croutons

*This is my mother's favorite soup, so it was completely mandatory that I come up with a way to prepare it. She isn't a big fan of the melted cheese that tops this classic, so I found a way to lower the dosage by floating Gruyère-crusting croutons on top instead. The bread absorbs the broth, turning it from an accoutrement into a component of the soup itself.*

YIELD – 8 servings

Melt the butter in a large pot or Dutch oven over medium-low heat. Add the onions and thyme and cook, stirring often, until the onions begin to turn golden brown, about 25 minutes. Deglaze the pan with the wine and cook until it is completely evaporated, about 15 minutes. Pour in the stocks, season with salt and pepper and bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce the heat and let simmer for 30 minutes.

To serve, discard the thyme and ladle the soup into bowls. Float two croutons in each bowl, sprinkle with parsley and serve.

## Smoked Gruyère Croutons

YIELD – 16 croutons

Preheat broiler.

Brush the bread slices with the olive oil and place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Place the sheet in the broiler and bake 2 inches from the flame until the croutons are golden brown on both sides, about 2 minutes per side. Remove from the broiler. Place 1 tablespoon of the cheese and a pinch of pepper atop each crouton and broil until the cheese is completely melted, about 2 minutes. Remove from the broiler and let cool.

3 Tbsp unsalted butter  
6 cups sweet onions, halved and  
thinly sliced  
8 sprigs thyme  
salt to taste  
½ cup dry white wine  
4 cups chicken stock  
2 cups veal stock  
16 smoked Gruyère croutons  
(recipe follows)  
2 Tbsp parsley, finely chopped

1 baguette, sliced into 1-inch thick  
rounds  
¼ cup extra virgin olive oil  
1 cup smoked Gruyère cheese,  
shredded  
½ tsp fresh ground pepper