

## CREAMY WILD RICE-MUSHROOM SOUP

Susan Denzer, Chef and Culinary Consultant  
Love + Craft Kitchen, LLC  
[www.loveandcraftkitchen.com](http://www.loveandcraftkitchen.com)



*Photo: Love + Craft Kitchen*

Growing up in Minnesota, wild rice soup was a favorite, and still is. A steaming bowl does wonders for the soul on a chilly fall or winter day, and can also be a welcome change at other times of year.

This version is similar to traditional ones found on many restaurant menus but I add sweet potato, a few extra spices and a dash of balsamic vinegar to deepen the flavor profile. If a leek is not available, use half of a medium onion. This soup lends itself nicely to using up left-over chicken or turkey - add 1 cup diced of either one, if desired. For a vegetarian version, eliminate the bacon and use a plant-based milk such as canned coconut milk or refrigerated almond or oat milk.

Makes: approximately 6 cups soup

### INGREDIENTS

¾ cup wild rice	4 cups low sodium vegetable or chicken broth
2 ¼ cups water	½ teaspoon poultry seasoning
2 slices of bacon (uncured, low/no sugar)	¼ teaspoon dried thyme
2 tablespoons olive or avocado oil	¼ teaspoon dried parsley
1 medium leek, washed thoroughly, diced	1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
2 carrots, peeled, small dice	1/8 teaspoon ground allspice
1 small sweet potato, peeled, small dice	¼ teaspoon Kosher salt
8 ounces button or Baby Bella mushrooms, cleaned, sliced	1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper
2 cloves garlic, minced	1 cup half & half or plant-based milk
1/3 cup dry sherry or apple cider	1 tablespoon traditional balsamic vinegar
4 tablespoons all-purpose flour (wheat or gluten-free)	¼ cup slivered or sliced almonds, optional garnish

### DIRECTIONS

1. Place the wild rice and water into a medium saucepan. Bring to boil over high heat, then reduce heat to low. Cover, and simmer for 30 - 40 minutes, until water is almost all absorbed, rice is soft and some of the kernels have popped open. Drain any remaining liquid from the rice and set aside.
2. In large saucepan, heat ½ tablespoon of the oil over medium heat. Add the bacon and cook until just crispy. Remove, drain on paper towel, and dice when cooled; set aside. Reserve 1 tablespoon bacon fat in the pan.
3. Place the remaining 1 ½ tablespoons of oil to the bacon fat in the saucepan and heat to medium heat. Add the leek, carrots, sweet potato and mushrooms to the pan. Saute until soft and lightly browned but still hold their shape, about 5 - 8 minutes. Then add the garlic and saute an

additional 30 seconds until fragrant but not brown. Carefully add the sherry or cider, allow to bubble up and deglaze the bottom of the pan. Scrape up the browned bits from the bottom of the pan, incorporating them into the sautéed vegetables.

4. Reduce the heat to medium-low and sprinkle the flour over the vegetables, stirring to coat. Allow to cook about 2 minutes to brown slightly and remove the flour taste, stirring often.
5. Add about 1 cup of the broth to the pan and stir to blend. Slowly add the remaining 3 cups of broth, stirring constantly to blend until smooth. Liquid will thicken slightly. Bring to a gentle boil, then reduce heat to low and simmer for 1 minute.
6. Stir in the cooked rice, bacon, poultry seasoning, thyme, parsley, nutmeg, allspice, salt and pepper. Add the half & half and balsamic vinegar, stirring to blend completely. Continue to simmer uncovered over low heat for 10 minutes.
7. When ready to serve, ladle into bowls and garnish with slivered or sliced almonds, if desired.