

Long Crendon Forest School: **Saxon Soup**

This soup is made from vegetables and herbs that would have been available to Saxons living in Britain. Cook it in a cauldron over a fire pit for a truly authentic experience, (simmering in a saucepan on the hob will do just as well though).

Equipment needed:

- 1 cauldron (or a large saucepan with a lid)
- 1 chopping board
- A sharp chopping knife (made sure you ask an adult first - YouTube videos for how to use the 'Bridge' and the 'Claw' grips for chopping if you're not sure how to keep your fingers safe).
- 1 wooden spoon

Ingredients (for 4 hungry Saxons):

- 1 **Celeriac** (peeled and diced into small chunks)
- 3 small or 2 medium **Parsnips** (scrubbed, woody core removed, and diced into small chunks)
- 1 large **leek** (washed and diced)
- 1 medium **onion** (peeled and diced)
- A good handful of **mixed fresh herbs**, finely chopped (we used Parsley, Sage, Rosemary, and Thyme)
- Enough **vegetable stock** to cover the veg once they are in the pot. (Follow the instructions on the packet if you are using a stock cube*).
- **Optional** - 3 or 4 tablespoons of spelt or barley grains (precooked as per the packet) - We used 1/2 a packet of pre-cooked mixed grains from the supermarket.

* Saxons wouldn't have used a stock cube, they would have used yesterdays left over soup as a base for todays (that had sat in the cauldron over night) and just added more water and a bit of salt. Unless your veg stock is freshly made or has been kept in the fridge, it's probably best to just use a stock cube!

Method

1. Prepare all your veg as described in the ingredients, and pre-cook your grains if needed.
2. Add the chopped celeriac, parsnip, leeks, onion, herbs, and pre-cooked grains (if using) to your cauldron (or saucepan).
3. Pour in enough vegetable stock to completely cover the veg.
4. Bring to boiling, then simmer over the fire (or on the hob) with a lid on, for about 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Your soup is cooked when the celeriac and parsnip chunks feel soft enough when you stab them with a fork or knife. Remember, the smaller you cut up the veg, the faster your soup will cook.
5. Serve warm with hunks of crusty bread.

Variations:

Try other veg instead of celeriac and parsnip. Swede, or turnips would also make an authentic Saxon soup. Potato, carrot or butternut squash would also taste delicious (although these were not available to Saxons).

Try a different combination of herbs, or add a pinch or 2 of your favourite ground spices.

Add in some chopped mushrooms, torn up left over roast chicken, or a drained tin of beans to make a more hearty soup.

Try squishing some of the soup against the side of the saucepan with the back of your wooden spoon (or blitz half in a blender) then stir back into the rest of the soup to make the soup thicker.