

Roasted Vegetable Stock

Catherine Brown, Plant-based Chef & Culinary Nutritionist at [A Seat at My Table](#)



Homemade vegetable stock is one of the easiest staples to make and should be readily available in every kitchen. Stock is a great way to amp up the flavor of just about ANY savory dish - whole grains, steamed vegetables, sauces or gravies, and give soups a head start.

Want to know the secret to rich, full-bodied stock?

Roast all the veggies first (leaving the skins on), deglaze the pan, scrape up all the lovely bits of fond, and add it all to the stockpot. Don't know what fond is? Keep

reading!

Making stock is one of those I-never-follow-a-recipe-to-make kind of things because there are so many ways to do it. It uses up a lot of ends and bits that might otherwise end up in the compost bucket. Whenever possible, I like to schedule stock making on the same day I'm doing a lot of veggie prep so I can take advantage of those scraps.

You can use almost any combination of non-starchy vegetables depending on what flavors you like and the intended use. I've listed some stronger and weaker flavor profiles below.

For about three quarts of stock, I used:

- ~ 4 short, stocky carrots - any type can be used
- ~ 3 heads of garlic - it's ok if they've started to sprout
- ~ 2 large yellow onions - again, if you have some on hand that are beginning to sprout, use them here!
- ~ 2 ends and leafy middles from two bunches of celery

~ 1 bunch of sage

~ black peppercorns or cracked black pepper, 1 tsp

~ course smoked salt, 1 tsp

A NOTE ON VEGGIE SKINS: Many nutrients are concentrated in the skins of vegetables, so any time you can use them you'll be upping the nutrition (and fiber!) of whatever you're making. For most vegetables, this is also the area that has the greatest exposure to chemicals. If not using organically grown produce, be sure to scrub the skins well with cool water. When vegetables are cooked in water, some of these nutrients are leached out and lost if the water is not also consumed. The advantage of using peels in stock is keeping all those vitamins and minerals in the finished product.

Onion skins, in particular, not only lend a deeper color to this stock, they also contain quercetin, a flavonoid polyphenol-type of phytonutrient [beneficial substance found in plants] that has been shown in [this recent study](#) to lower blood pressure in hypertensive individuals. Additional studies are being conducted to determine quercetin's role in fighting inflammation, preventing arterial plaque, and keeping the heart healthy. **So use those skins!**

THE PROCESS:

1. Pre-heat oven to 400 degrees. Lightly oil a roasting pan with olive oil. If you prefer an oil-free version, line your roasting pan with parchment paper first.
2. Cut clean carrots lengthwise and toss them in the pan.
3. Clean celery ends, drain and toss in whole or cut in half. Chop celery into a few shorter pieces and toss in the pan.
4. Make sure onion skins are clean, cut off root end, quarter and toss in the pan.
5. Cut garlic heads in half (clean first if dirty), toss them in the pan too.

6. Drizzle a little olive oil over all (optional).
7. Break apart the bunch of sage and toss on top.
8. Sprinkle salt and pepper or peppercorns over all.
9. Roast for 45-60 minutes, or until tops and bottoms are slightly charred.
10. While pan is still hot, add roasted vegetables to a 6 qt stock pot. Cooked carrots lend a stronger flavor. If you don't care for this flavor, fish them out before adding water or limit the amount of time they simmer with the other veg to 15-20 minutes. Eat these babies... they are DELICIOUS!
11. Next is deglazing the pan. This is your opportunity to add even more flavor to the stock, so don't skip this step. There's a word for everything in the culinary world - including those lovely brown bits stuck to the bottom and sides of the roasting pan. This is the fond. **Fond is like GOLD.** You want every bit. Choose a liquid to use (water, wine, previous stock) and add about a cup to the roasting pan. Using a spatula or wooden spoon, dissolve and lift off as much of the fond as you can, tilting the pan to get the sides too. If the pan has cooled, you can speed up the process by putting the pan over medium heat on the stove. Add all of this to the stock pot. If you skipped the oil and used parchment paper instead, carefully remove the veggies and herbs and put them in the stockpot. Next add a little hot water to the roasting pan and use a wooden or rubber spatula to carefully scrape up and dissolve any fond. If the parchment paper rips, no worries - just keep any pieces from going into the stock pot! ;-)
12. Next, add about Three and a half quarts of water. Bring to a low boil, reduce heat and simmer for 30-60 minutes. Taste. Adjust seasoning if needed. Continue simmering until color and flavor are to your liking.
13. Strain over a sieve, gently pressing the veggies to extract as much of the liquid as possible. These veg can now be added to the compost bucket - they've done their brilliant job!
14. If not using the stock right away, allow to cool and refrigerate for up to 5 days. You can also freeze stock for 4-6 months by pouring it into ice cube trays,

and then removing the frozen cubes to a zip-lock freezer bag; pouring it into quart or gallon size freezer bags (leaving some space for expansion); or pouring it into wide-mouth canning jars (leaving an inch of headspace for expansion). Zip-lock bags have the advantage of stacking well when frozen flat, but can be a bit messier to fill. Canning jars are great because they can easily be defrosted in the refrigerator, and they can be reused. For my chest freezer, I needed to put down metal cooling racks on the bottom of the freezer before loading the jars, otherwise the bottom jars cracked even with enough headspace. Whichever method you choose, be sure to label and date each container.

Here are some more options to use to make stock:

HERBS:

~ sage

~ thyme

~ rosemary

~ winter savory

~ parsley (added in the last five minutes)

~ fennel seeds

~ marjoram (strong, go easy)

~ peppercorns (any color)

VEG w/LIGHTER FLAVORS:

~ onions

~ shallots

~ leeks (tops can be used here)

~ garlic

~ garlic scapes

~ celery

~ parsnips

~ winter squash scraps

~ seaweed

VEG w/STRONGER FLAVORS:

~ mushroom stems

~ broccoli stalks

~ carrots (and/or peels)

~ celeriac

~ fennel (bulb or fronds)

~ cabbage (purple will color the stock)

~ turnips

~ beets (golden or red will color water)

HOW TO USE THIS STOCK:

~ as a soup base

~ as the liquid to cook whole grains

~ to make gravy or other savory sauces

~ to steam veggies

~ to moisten stuffing or savory French toast

~ to make mashed potatoes

~ to make baby food

~ as the liquid in savory breads (yeasted or quick)

~ as the liquid in dips, like hummus or white bean spread

If you make this, please comment below and let me know how it turned out. Be sure to take a photo and tag me #chefcatherinebrown. I love seeing what you make!