

## Soupe à l'Oignon Gratiné: The Ultimate French Onion Soup Recipe

Soupe à l'Oignon Gratiné: Your Guide to Perfect French Onion Soup



**TIME**  
**5-10 min**

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**ChefManiac**

### INGREDIENTS

4-5 large yellow onions (about 3 pounds), thinly sliced  
 2 tbsp unsalted butter  
 1 tbsp olive oil  
 1 tsp sugar (optional, helps with caramelization)  
 1 tsp salt, plus more to taste  
 ½ tsp black pepper, plus more to taste  
 2 cloves garlic, minced  
 ½ cup dry white wine (such as Sauvignon Blanc or Pinot Grigio), or dry sherry/cognac  
 6 cups beef broth (good quality is key!)  
 2 bay leaves  
 Several sprigs of fresh thyme (or 1 tsp dried thyme)  
 For the Gruyère Toast: 4-6 slices of sturdy bread (baguette or sourdough work best), sliced about ¾ inch thick  
 1 tbsp olive oil or melted butter (for brushing)  
 1 ½ cups shredded Gruyère cheese (or Emmental, Comté, or provolone)

### DIRECTIONS

1. Caramelize the Onions (The Most Important Step!): In a large, heavy-bottomed pot or Dutch oven, melt the butter and olive oil over medium-low heat. Add the thinly sliced onions, a generous pinch of salt, and the sugar (if using). Stir well to coat the onions. This step requires patience. Cook the onions slowly, stirring occasionally (every 5-10 minutes), for 45-60 minutes, or until they are a deep golden-brown color and very soft. This process allows the sugars in the onions to caramelize, developing incredible depth of flavor. Don't rush this! If they start to stick, add a tablespoon of water or broth.
2. Build the Flavor Base: Once the onions are deeply caramelized, add the minced garlic to the pot and cook for another minute until fragrant. Pour in the white wine (or sherry/cognac) and scrape the bottom of the pot with a wooden spoon to deglaze, loosening any browned bits (this is where lots of flavor lives!). Let the wine simmer and reduce for about 2-3 minutes.
3. Simmer the Soup: Add the beef broth, bay leaves, and fresh thyme sprigs (or dried thyme) to the pot. Bring the soup to a gentle simmer, then reduce the heat to low, cover, and let it simmer for at least 30 minutes, or up to an hour, to allow the flavors to meld. Taste and adjust seasoning with more salt and pepper if needed. Remove the bay leaves and thyme sprigs before serving.
4. Prepare the Gruyère Toast: While the soup simmers, preheat your oven broiler to high. Arrange the bread slices on a baking sheet. Brush both sides lightly with olive oil or melted butter. Broil for 1-2 minutes per side, or until golden brown and toasted. Be

careful, they can burn quickly!

5. 5. Assemble and Broil: Ladle the hot French onion soup into oven-safe bowls (crock-style bowls are traditional and work best). Place one or two toasted bread slices on top of each bowl of soup. Generously sprinkle the shredded Gruyère cheese over the bread, ensuring it covers the toast and drapes slightly over the edges of the bowl. Place the bowls back on the baking sheet (to catch any drips) and carefully place them under the broiler. Broil for 2-4 minutes, or until the cheese is melted, bubbly, and deeply golden brown. Watch carefully to prevent burning!
6. 6. Serve Immediately: Carefully remove the hot bowls from the oven. Serve your "Soupe à l'Oignon Gratiné" immediately, warning your guests that the bowls and soup are extremely hot!

## SWAPS & NOTES

Onion Types: While yellow onions are traditional and give the best flavor, you can use a mix of yellow and sweet onions (Vidalia) for a slightly different sweetness.

Avoid red onions as they can make the soup too dark and strong.

Alcohol-Free Option: If you prefer not to use wine, dry sherry, or cognac, you can simply omit it or use an extra splash of beef broth and a touch of red wine vinegar at the end for acidity.

The wine helps deglaze and adds depth, but the soup will still be delicious without it.

## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

**Patience with Onions:** The key to great French Onion Soup is the slow caramelization of the onions.

Don't rush this step-it's worth the time!

**Good Quality Broth:** Invest in a high-quality beef broth or stock.

It's the foundation of your soup's flavor.

**More recipes:** [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/soupe-a-loignon-gratinee-the-ultimate-french-onion-soup-recipe/>