

Carabaccia (Onion and Bread Soup)

Adapted very slightly from [Via Carota](#), by Jodi Williams and Rita Sodi with Anna Kovel

Serves four

2 pounds red onions, halved lengthwise and thinly sliced
2 medium carrots, finely diced
2 celery stalks, finely diced
extra-virgin olive oil
4 fresh sage leaves
salt
pepper
7 cups vegetable broth, preferably homemade (you can also use chicken or beef broth, if that's what you have)
1 cup hot water, or as needed
4 thick slices country bread
4 large eggs
3/4 cup finely grated Parmigiano Reggiano, for serving

Coat the bottom of a large, heavy-bottomed pot with olive oil (about 2 tablespoons) and set over medium heat. Add the onions, carrots, celery, and sage leaves; stir in 1 1/2 teaspoons salt and a few grinds of pepper. Reduce the heat to medium-low and cook gently, stirring often, until the vegetables are completely soft and begin to release their sweetness, 30 to 40 minutes. (You aren't looking for a dark-brown caramelized onion here.) When the onions begin sticking to the bottom of the pot, raise the heat to medium-high, pour in the stock, and bring to a simmer.

Stir the soup, partly cover the pot, and reduce the heat to medium. Cook until the soup is a deep, tawny color and the olive oil has risen to the top, about 45 minutes. Taste and add salt and pepper as needed. The soup should be brothy—add hot water to thin it if necessary.

As the soup cooks, soft-boil your eggs. (I cook mine for 7 minutes, and then drop into an ice bath. You could also poach them.) When you're almost ready to serve, toast or fry your bread; frying it in a few tablespoons of olive oil will give it a gorgeous crust that both tastes delicious and stands up well to soup submersion.

A minute or two before the soup is done, pop your chilled eggs into the pot to warm them up.

Place a slice of bread in each soup bowl. Ladle the soup on top, with an egg for each bowl. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with plenty of parmigiano. I like to add a few extra cracks of pepper, too.