

Broccoli Cheddar Soup with Chicken

1 pound boneless, skinless chicken, cut into bite-sized pieces
Mrs. Dash Table Blend, or salt, to taste
Ground black pepper, to taste
1 tablespoon olive oil
3 tablespoons butter
1 small onion, chopped
3 tablespoons flour
2 cups half and half (or whole milk)
2 cups chicken broth, homemade or low-sodium
1-2 pounds fresh broccoli florets
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon freshly-ground black pepper
2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
Sriracha sauce (optional, for serving)

Season the chopped chicken with Mrs. Dash (or salt) and pepper to taste. I used a lot of it. Heat a large skillet to medium high, add the oil, then sauté the chicken for several minutes on each side until browned and cooked through. Remove from pan and set aside.

Heat the butter in a large saucepan or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the onions and sauté 3 to 5 minutes, until softened. Sprinkle the flour evenly over the onions and whisk continuously until there are no lumps left. Add the half and half and chicken broth. Bring to a boil, and then reduce heat to medium-low and simmer 15 to 20 minutes, stirring occasionally to make sure it doesn't stick or burn.

Add the broccoli and cook 15 to 20 minutes more until the vegetables are tender when pierced with a fork. Add the salt, pepper, chicken, and cheese. Stir until the cheese is melted. Serve with Sriracha sauce, or any other hot sauce, and thick slices of crusty bread.