

SOUPE À L'OIGNON GRATINÉE

(French Onion Soup)

SERVES 8

A TRADITIONAL early-morning restorative for workers at the old Les Halles market in Paris, this rich soup has found its way onto

menus all over France (and the U.S.). Gruyère was probably first added in the Savoie region, where the cheese is often used in cooking.

6 *tblsp.* butter
1 *tblsp.* olive oil
3 *lbs.* medium yellow onions,
peeled and thinly sliced
1 *tsp.* sugar
Salt
1 *tblsp.* flour
8 *cups* beef stock (see page 17)
2 *cups* dry white wine
Freshly ground black pepper
1 *baguette*
1 *lb.* gruyère, shredded

1. Melt 3 *tblsp.* of the butter and the oil in a large heavy pot over medium-low heat. Add onions, cover, and cook, stirring occasionally, until soft and translucent, about 20 minutes. Increase heat to medium-high, uncover, add the sugar, and season to taste with salt. Sauté, stirring often, until onions are very soft and a deep golden brown.

2. Reduce heat to medium, sprinkle in flour, and cook, stirring constantly, for 2–3 minutes. Add about 2 *cups* of stock and stir to blend, then add remaining 6 *cups* of stock and the wine. Season to taste with salt and pepper and simmer for about 30 minutes. Adjust seasonings.

3. Preheat oven to 425°. Meanwhile, slice the bread into at least 8 thick slices. Butter both sides of the bread with the remaining 3 *tblsp.* of butter, then toast until golden brown on both sides in the oven.

4. Place a slice of toast in each of 8 ovenproof bowls, then fill bowls with the onion soup. Spread a thick layer of cheese on top of soup. Set bowls in 2 baking pans, place in the oven, and bake until cheese has browned.