

YIELD: Serves 8

INGREDIENTS:

4 Tbsp butter
8 oz mushrooms, sliced
1 cup celery, chopped
5 Tbsp all-purpose flour
1/2 tsp dried thyme
1 Tbsp salt-free all-purpose seasoning
1 tsp garlic powder
2 cups whole milk
1 1/2 cups chicken broth
2 1/4 cups cooked shredded chicken (or leftover turkey)
1 (12 oz) bag pearl onions, defrosted
1 (12 oz) bag crinkle cut carrots, defrosted
1 cup peas, defrosted
1 1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
1 1/2 bag frozen tater tots

PREPARATION:

Melt the butter in a 4 quart dutch oven over high heat. Add the mushrooms and allow them to brown, about 5 minutes. Add the celery and let it cook for about 3 minutes or until slightly softened. Sprinkle the flour over the veggies and stir to coat evenly. The mixture will get dry and crumbly, let cook 1 minute. Season with the dried thyme, all-purpose seasoning, and garlic powder.

Slowly stream in the milk while you use a whisk with the other hand to work out any lumps. Add the chicken broth and allow the soup to reach a simmer, about 8-12 minutes. While the soup reaches a simmer, position a rack in the center of the oven and preheat the oven to 425°F. Once the soup reaches a simmer, add the shredded chicken, onions, crinkle cut carrots, and peas. Stir and allow the mixture to come back to a simmer.

Spray a 9x13 baking dish with nonstick spray. Transfer the prepared chicken mixture to the dish. Top with the shredded cheese and then arrange the tater tots in rows on top to cover. Bake for 25-35 minutes or until the tots get nice and golden brown -- turn the broiler on for the last 1-2 minutes just to give them more of a crispy texture on top. Remove from oven and let cool slightly before serving.

Recipe adapted from www.littlespicejar.com, November 16, 2017