

# Warm up this winter with puréed poblano soup



Roasted Poblano Soup

Photo Susie Iventosch

## By Susie Iventosch

There is a small correction for last week's recipe. Thanks to a tip from one of our readers, I learned that I had inadvertently typed "unsweetened" butter in the list of cake ingredients for the Rocky Road Cake. My sincere apologies for the oversight, especially since I've never even heard of "unsweet-

ened" butter! The recipe can use either salted or unsalted butter, whichever you prefer, as it makes little difference in this recipe. If you use salted butter, you may want to drop the amount of salt to 1/2 teaspoon from 3/4 teaspoon. But otherwise you are good to go with either one.

This week's recipe is based on a delicious cup of soup I got

at a food stand in Austin, Texas. Although I love roasted poblano peppers, I had never had puréed poblano soup before. It is absolutely delicious and a great comfort dish for cold wintery nights! Even though poblano peppers can vary quite a bit in their heat level from one pepper to the next, the cooking process mellows the peppers quite a bit, so you really don't have to worry too much about the soup being too fiery. In fact, I added a finely diced jalapeño and an Anaheim chili to balance out the flavors. But, if you are concerned over too much heat, just use an even mixture of poblanos and Anaheim chilies for this recipe. Also, to make the dish a bit heartier, simply add 2 cups of shredded cooked chicken breast after the veggies are pureed.

The toasty aroma of the roasting peppers is an olfactory delight, one that propels you to discover the source. In this case, it will be in your very own home, so you won't have to travel too far to find it. But, it can be a real pain to get the papery skin off the roasted

peppers. If you don't roast the peppers, you can simply cut them into small pieces and sauté them along with the onions, and the skins will remain nice and soft and will purée nicely. In an effort to have the best of both worlds, I roasted just two of the poblanos and chopped the remaining peppers without roasting. When I left the house to run an errand shortly after making the soup, the house still had the lovely roasted pepper aroma several hours later.

There are several methods for roasting peppers and the website in the information box below will give you details on how to do all of them.



Susie can be reached at [suziventosch@gmail.com](mailto:suziventosch@gmail.com). This recipe can be found on our website: [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com). If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977.

**How to roast chili peppers:**  
<https://www.chilipeppermadness.com/cooking-with-chili-peppers/how-to-roast-poblano-peppers/>

# Wells Fargo Bank's new interior mural honors Moraga's history



Photo Vera Kochan

## By Vera Kochan

Customers of Moraga's Wells Fargo Bank, located at 1399 Moraga Way, have noticed the obvious remodeling that took place a few months ago. Cubicles have been repositioned, seating has been rearranged, walls have been painted a brighter color, and the biggest change of all was the removal of the western-era mural behind the teller stations.

According to Branch Manager Mandeep Dhindsa, "Branches go through a remodel about every 10 years. Many customers wanted to know what happened to that mural."

A brand new color mural reflecting the town's history was installed in late January near the seating area of the bank's lobby. WFB initiated their Community Mural Project back in 1998 and has since installed more than 2,400 murals in locations nationwide. More locally, there are 175 throughout the Bay Area and 18 murals in Contra Costa County. The murals are not painted, but rather they

are designed by a team of graphic artists to create collage-style historical art.

WFB Vice President of Corporate Communications Rubin Pulido said it was "important to install a mural to showcase some of Moraga's rich history for its close-knit community." Photos include Saint Mary's College, the iconic Moraga Center sign, the Carroll family and their horses c.1920, Moraga School's eighth grade graduating class of 1957, and the Moraga Valley which were provided by the Contra Costa County Historical Society. Additional photos of the Moraga Barn and Willow Spring School were provided by the Moraga Historical Society. Besides the mural, a "key" is located nearby with a description of each image on the 8.7 foot wide by 4.8 foot high installation.

Moraga Historical Society President Susan Sperry said, "We got a message at the Historical Center that Wells Fargo would like to change their mural. They needed our permission to use the Barn and Willow Spring School photos."

While the MHS wasn't consulted about the final product, Sperry added, "It's representative of the area, and I'm so pleased that they used our two photos."

The town's mural project began in July and was completed by November. Pulido explained that WFB makes sure to "use a blend of various images and not all buildings or not all people so that there is good visual variety. In addition to historical relevance, we feature images that are visually strong and read well on a large scale."

Dhindsa said, "Customers have received it well." Remarks have been positive ranging from, "Very nice." to "Oh! It's the old days of Moraga!"

Pulido noted that WFB offers a special bonus regarding each of their nationally located murals. "When family members of people featured in the murals are able to identify their relatives, we are glad to present them with framed replicas of the mural as a special gift!" It's time to dust off the family photo albums Moraga!

## Roasted Poblano Soup

(Makes about 5 cups of soup)

### INGREDIENTS

- 4 poblano peppers, (2 of them left whole, and 2 of them stem and seeds removed and diced)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 Anaheim chili, stem and seeds removed and diced
- 1 jalapeño pepper, stem and seeds removed and finely diced
- 1 yellow onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons minced cilantro
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 4 cups roasted chicken broth, divided
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
- \*2 cups shredded chicken breast (optional)

### Garnishes:

- Grated Cotija cheese
- Crema Fresca (can substitute crème fraiche or sour cream)
- Finely diced poblanos
- Fresh cilantro leaves
- Chopped avocado

### DIRECTIONS

Clean peppers and roast two of the poblanos in any of the methods you prefer. We charred them on the grill, but I have done them on the open flame of the gas burner as well as broiling them in the oven. When they are good and charred, remove them to a paper or plastic bag and seal. Allow them to sit for about 10 minutes to loosen the skins and allow them to cool. Remove skins using a knife or a kitchen towel, leaving as much of the meat of the pepper intact as possible.

Chop the remaining peppers and add to a small soup pot along with the olive oil, chopped onions and garlic. Sauté until onions are translucent and peppers are beginning to soften. Stir in cumin, salt and minced cilantro. Add 1 cup of the broth and allow to cook over medium-low heat for 5-10 minutes. Remove from heat and purée veggies using an immersion blender or food processor. Return purée to pot and add remaining 3 cups of roasted chicken broth and lime juice. Heat over low heat for about 20 minutes to allow flavors to meld. When ready to serve, heat soup over medium-high heat until bubbly and hot. Serve immediately with garnishes. If you decide to add chicken, add it after puréeing the veggies.

## Service Clubs Announcements

**Lafayette Rotary Club**

**Step in on a Thursday and join us for our lunch meeting.**  
 Thursday at noon Oakwood Athletic Club, 4000 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette.

<b>February 20:</b>	<b>February 27:</b>
<b>Tina Akins</b>	<b>Ali Stoddard</b>
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<b>2019-2020</b>	<b>of CBD</b>

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## 'Big Eye Series' exhibit at Orinda Books



### Submitted by Lynn Champagne

Dave Manousos' current art exhibit, "Big Eye Series," which features the Moraga artist's original paintings runs through Feb. 29 at Orinda Books. An artist reception at 7 p.m. Feb. 24 will feature wine and light hors d'oeuvres.