

strategies Applied:

- **Olive Oil:** I have a little strategy for buying [olive oil](#) - using coupons and sales to lower the price, so click on the link. I think it's important to use olive oil as opposed to many others - the health benefits outweigh a bit more extra cost, and it can be had at a very reasonable price. Cost for this recipe: 16 cents.
- **Mushrooms:** They are often on sale at my grocery for about 1/2 price, especially around holidays. I pick them up when they run 89 to 99 cents a package. Turns out, according to the World's Healthiest Foods, the [simple button mushroom](#) has many good qualities as it's more expensive siblings! Go underdog! Cost 98 cents.
- **Celery:** generally inexpensive, but does go on sale from time to time, so I buy extra when it does - it keeps several weeks in the fridge. Two stalks at 98 cents a package run about 10 cents. Use the stalks and stems - both are flavorful. To keep longer, slip a plastic bag loosely over the exposed top of the celery.
- **Carrots:** Another inexpensive item even not on sale - but it keeps so well I buy a couple of packages if it is cheaper. \$1.00 a pound is standard in our area, but the larger packages of 5 pounds are often on sale for \$2.50 - that's 50 cents a pound, or about 10 cents for two. Carrots will keep longer if you rotate the package, so often on the bottom of the drawer so they don't sit in condensation.
- **Onion:** Yet another basic that, just like carrots and celery, does go on sale now and then and keeps well. At 48 cents a pound, my large onion was about 15 cents.
- **Tomatoes, canned:** These go on sale periodically, and if you're flexible about brand you can often find inexpensive prices at the same time the producer issues coupons or Catalinas (slips that print out at check out giving you money back if you buy so many. Catalinas are often unadvertised.) Check your coupon matching site and load up when they are at very low prices. My tomatoes were no cost, but I'll price it out at 50 cents, which is an easily attainable sales price.
- **Soy Sauce:** Often on sale during the Asian New Years, and often with coupons - Soy Sauce is an item I normally am able to pick up at no cost. Even without coupons, three tablespoons is just pennies.
- **Garlic:** I look for a price of about \$2.99 a pound, or about 54 cents a head. Check the pricing of the bulk per pound as opposed to the packaged. I never really find it on sale, but I use so much, I pay attention and buy a bit more when I see the price is lower. Cost for 4 cloves, around 5 cents.
- **Parmesan cheese rind:** I just save mine, but I've heard that you can buy them in bulk in the big box stores, or ask at cheese shops. Alton Brown put a larger piece in his soup, but I cut it back on my Vegetable Soup so as to tone down the "Italian" influence. I sometimes just give my parmesan rind a quick rinse and freeze for the next batch - especially in a soup like this...it depends if it is still intact.
- **Potatoes:** The pricing generally drops in fall and winter, and I can pick up a 10 pound bag for \$1.98 or so, sometimes less. 1 1/4 pound, about five medium, is about 25 cents.

- **Cabbage:** Here's another item that is generally lower in the late summer, early fall and around St. Pat's day. You'll want to watch the per item price as opposed to the per pound price to see if you're getting a good deal. Cabbage is a very "healthful" vegetable. I bought mine for 48 cents a pound and used half - cost 25 cents.
- **Vinegar:** Buy around Easter for the plain vinegar and during the summer or holidays for the flavored when sales and coupons abound. A tablespoon of white vinegar is nominal.

<https://frugalhausfrau.com/2012/09/19/classic-vegetable-soup-recipe/>