

## Creamy Broccoli Soup with Cheddar Fricos

Recipe slightly adapted from Sohla El-Waylly.

Serves 2

1 large head of broccoli (about 450 grams)  
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided  
1 large shallot, coarsely chopped  
¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)  
1½ cups 2% or whole milk (or plant-based milk)  
½ teaspoon Diamond Crystal kosher salt  
2 ounces sharp cheddar, coarsely grated

1. Using a sharp knife, shave off the dark green parts of the florets from the head of broccoli. Thinly slice the tender stems. Set the tough thick stalks aside. You will use them a bit later.
2. Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat until it shimmers.
3. Add the diced shallot and red pepper flakes, (if using) and sauté on medium heat for 3-4 minutes. If the shallots start burning, add a few tablespoons of water. Add shaved broccoli florets and thinly sliced tender stems. Cook, while stirring frequently, until the color darkens and florets soften, about 3 minutes. Season with kosher salt. Don't overcook, or you will lose the bright green color.
4. Add the milk and bring to a simmer; taste a floret and make sure it is tender. Transfer the mixture to a blender and puree on high until completely smooth.
5. Using a vegetable peeler, peel the tough thick stalks and then dice into ¼ inch cubes. Rinse and dry the saucepan and heat the remaining tablespoon of olive oil over medium heat until it shimmers. Add the diced broccoli stems and cook, stirring frequently, until tender but still maintains a little bite, about 3 to 4 minutes.
6. Add the blended soup, bring to a simmer, and taste the soup for seasoning. Adjust with salt as needed.
7. Sprinkle the grated cheddar evenly across a 10-inch non-stick skillet and heat over medium-low heat until the cheese melts and starts to crisp into its own fat. Cook until the cheese is golden brown and smells nutty, about 5 minutes. Flip onto some paper towels and let cool to crisp. Break into large shards or crumble into smaller pieces and garnish bowls of soup with it. Serve immediately.