

-- Spencer's Weekly Recipes --

Best-Ever Black Bean Soup with Cilantro-Lime Rice

- 1 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 small onion, minced
- 2 garlic cloves
- salt & pepper
- 2 tsp.s chili powder
- 1/4 tsp. cumin
- 2 cans seasoned black beans, drained but not rinsed
- 1-1/2 cups water
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 4-5 dashes green Tabasco sauce
- Toppings: sliced avocado, salsa, sour cream, cilantro

For the Cilantro-Lime Rice:

- 1 cup long grain white rice
- 2 cups water
- 1 Tbsp. canola or vegetable oil
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- juice of 1/2 lime
- 3 Tbsp.s chopped cilantro



1. Heat oil in large soup pot over medium heat. Add onion, season with salt and pepper, then sauté until soft, about 10 min. Add garlic and sauté for 30 more seconds, stirring constantly. Add chili powder and cumin then sauté for 30 more seconds.
2. Add drained beans, water, and chicken broth, bring soup to a boil, then lower heat slightly and simmer for 15 min. Scoop 2 ladle-fulls of soup into a blender or food processor then blend until almost smooth. Alternatively use a hand-held immersion blender to process 1/3 of the beans in the soup pot. Add blended soup back into the pot then add hot sauce and stir to combine.
3. For the Chipotle-Lime Rice: While soup is simmering, bring water, oil, and salt to a boil in a saucepan. Add rice, place a lid on top, then turn heat down to medium-low and simmer until rice is tender, about 15 min. Stir to fluff then add lime juice and chopped cilantro.
4. To serve, scoop cooked rice into bottom of bowls then top with hot soup. Top with sliced avocado, salsa, sour cream, etc.
<http://lowacireats.com/2012/12/04/best-ever-black-bean-soup-with-cilantro-lime-rice/>



Loaded Baked Potato Soup

- 1 tbsp. canola oil
- 2 slices bacon, cut in half
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 1/2 pounds medium russet potatoes (2-3), scrubbed and diced (can also use red potatoes with skin on)
- 4 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1/2 cup reduced-fat sour cream
- 1/ cup shredded extra-sharp Cheddar Cheese, divided
- 1/4 tsp. fresh ground pepper

Preparation

1. Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add bacon and cook, turning occasionally, until crisp, 4 to 5 min. Transfer to a paper towel to drain, leaving oil and bacon drippings in pan. Add onion to pan and cook, stirring, until starting to soften, 2 - 3 min. Add potatoes and broth. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to a simmer and cook until the potatoes are tender, 12 - 15 min.
2. Using a slotted spoon, transfer half the potatoes to a bowl and mash until almost smooth, but still a little chunky. Return the mashed potatoes to the pan along with sour cream, 1/4 cup cheese and pepper. Cook, stirring, until the cheese is melted and the soup is heated through, 1 to 2 min. Serve garnished with crumbled bacon, the remaining 1/4 cup cheese and chives (or scallion greens). Serves 4.

http://www.eatingwell.com/recipes/loaded_baked_potato_soup.html

Moroccan Chicken & Sweet Potato Soup

- 2 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 2 large cloves garlic, minced
- 1 1/2 tsp. ground cumin
- 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp. cayenne pepper
- 8 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 2 lb. bone-in chicken breasts, skin removed
- 3 cups diced sweet potato
- 2 cups diced red bell pepper
- 2 cups green beans (1-inch pieces), fresh or frozen (thawed)
- 1 15-oz. can chickpeas, rinsed
- 1 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. ground pepper
- 1 tsp. harissa, or to taste (see Tip) (Chili paste is an alternative)



1. Heat oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add onion and garlic and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, 2- 3 min. Add cumin, cinnamon and cayenne; cook, stirring, for 1 min. Add broth and chicken. Cover, increase heat to high and bring to a simmer. Uncover and cook, turning the chicken occasionally, until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part without touching bone registers 165°F, 20-22 min. Skim any foam from the surface after the chicken cooks. Transfer chicken to a clean cutting board. When cool enough to handle, remove meat from the bones and shred.
2. Meanwhile, add sweet potato, bell pepper and green beans to the pot; return to a simmer. Cook until the vegetables are tender, 4 to 10 min. Stir in shredded chicken, chickpeas, salt and pepper and cook until heated through, about 3 min. more. Remove from heat and stir in harissa.

http://www.eatingwell.com/recipes/moroccan_chicken_sweet_potato_soup.html

~~ Beef and Butternut Squash Stew ~~



- 3 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 onion, peeled and chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 tbsp. minced fresh rosemary
- 1 tbsp. chopped fresh thyme
- 2 lb. stew beef, cut into 2-inch cubes
- 1/2 tsp. salt, plus more to taste
- 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper, plus more to taste
- 2 tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1 cup Marsala wine
- 1 lb. butternut squash, trimmed and cut into 2-inch cubes
- 1/4 cup chopped sun-dried tomatoes
- 3 to 4 cups beef broth
- 2 tbsp. fresh chopped flat-leaf parsley
- Crusty bread, for serving

Directions

In a large soup pot heat 3 tbsp. of olive oil over medium heat. Add the onions, garlic, rosemary, and thyme and sauté until the onions are tender, about 2 min.

Toss the beef cubes in salt and pepper and flour. Turn up the heat to med-high and add the beef to the pot. Cook until the beef is browned and golden around the edges, about 5 min. Add the Marsala wine. Using a wooden spoon, gently stir up all the brown bits off the bottom of the pan. Add the butternut squash and sun-dried tomatoes and stir to combine. Add enough beef broth to just cover the beef and squash.

Bring the stew to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat to low and simmer, covered, for 1 hour. Season stew with additional salt and pepper to taste. Sprinkle with chopped parsley. Serve with crusty bread alongside. Serves 4.

<http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/giada-de-laurentiis/beef-and-butternut-squash-stew-recipe.html>

Tortellini Florentine Soup

- 1- 9 oz. package refrigerated three-cheese tortellini
- 2- 14 oz. cans reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1- 10 oz. container refrigerated light Alfredo pasta sauce
- 2- cups shredded deli-roasted chicken
- 1/2- cup oil-packed dried tomato strips, drained
- 1/2- 5 oz. package (about 3 cups) fresh baby spinach
- Shaved or shredded Parmesan cheese (optional)



Directions

In a 4-quart Dutch oven cook tortellini according to package directions; drain and set aside.

In the same Dutch oven combine broth and pasta sauce. Stir in chicken and dried tomatoes. Bring just to boiling; reduce heat. Simmer, uncovered, for 5 min. Stir in cooked tortellini and spinach. Cook for 1 to 2 min. or just until tortellini is heated through and spinach is wilted. If desired, top each serving with cheese. Serves 6.

<http://www.bhg.com/recipe/tortellini-florentine-soup/>



Old-Time Beef Stew



- 2 pounds stew beef
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 cups water
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 clove garlic, peeled
- 1 or 2 bay leaves
- 1 medium onion, sliced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- Dash ground allspice or ground cloves
- 3 large carrots, sliced
- 3 ribs celery, chopped
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch

Directions

Brown meat in hot oil. Add water, Worcestershire sauce, garlic, bay leaves, onion, salt, sugar, pepper, paprika, and allspice. Cover and simmer 1 1/2 hours. Remove bay leaves and garlic clove. Add carrots and celery. Cover and cook 30 to 40 min. longer. To thicken gravy, remove 2 cups hot liquid. Using a separate bowl, combine 1/4 cup water and cornstarch until smooth. Mix with a little hot liquid and return mixture to pot. Stir and cook until bubbly. Serves 6.

<http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/paula-deen/old-time-beef-stew-recipe.html>

