
White Bean and Sausage Soup

*Chef Jean-Pierre Knaggs - The Bijou Cafe - Sarasota, FL
Sarasota's Chef Du Jour - 1992*

1 cup chopped onion
1/2 cup chopped carrot
1/2 cup chopped celery
1 tablespoon chopped fresh garlic
1 teaspoon thyme
1/2 tablespoon nutmeg or allspice
2 or 3 bay leaves
1 tablespoon tomato paste
1/2 pound thick-cut bacon, diced
2 cups white beans (great northern), soak overnight
5 to 6 cups homemade chicken stock
1/2 to 3/4 pound smoked sausage (kielbasa, etc.)
hot sauce (optional)
dry sherry (optional)
salt (optional)
pepper (optional)

In a skillet, saute' the bacon until lightly browned. Remove the bacon and set aside.

Saute' the onions, carrots and celery in the bacon drippings until soft but not browned.

Add the garlic, do not brown.

Place the sautee'd vegetables into the soup pot with the thyme, nutmeg, bay leaves, tomato paste and bacon.

Add the chicken stock and drained beans.

Cook for at least one hour or until the beans are very soft and the soup has thickened somewhat.

Add more chicken stock or water if the soup gets too thick.

Cut the sausage into 1/2-inch cubes. Saute' briefly to remove excess fat.

Drain the sausage on paper towels. Add the sausage to the soup.

Simmer gently for 20 minutes. Season to taste with salt and black pepper.

Add a few drops of hot sauce if you like it spicy.

Add a touch of dry (not sweet) sherry just before serving.

Serve the soup in hand-made crocks with lots of crusty French bread.

Yield: 6 to 8 servings

Soups, Chili, Stew

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 116 Calories; 1g Fat (4.5% calories from fat); 4g Protein; 27g Carbohydrate; 7g Dietary Fiber; 0mg Cholesterol; 210mg Sodium. Exchanges: 0 Grain(Starch); 5 Vegetable; 0 Fat.