

Black Bean Soup with Salsa Cream

2 cups dried black beans
2 tablespoons canola oil
2 yellow onions, finely chopped
1-2 jalapeno chiles, seeded and minced
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 small red bell pepper, diced
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon dried coriander
1 teaspoon dried oregano
8 cups water
½ small ham hock or ham bone
2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
2 tablespoons minced fresh cilantro (plus 6-8 sprigs)
salt & pepper

for the cream:

½ cup sour cream
2 tablespoons purchased fresh salsa
salt & pepper

Pick over beans removing any stones or misshapen beans. Rinse well. In a large pot, cover beans by 3 inches cold water. Soak 4 hours or overnight. Drain beans, set aside.

In large soup pot, warm oil over medium heat. Add onions, saute until tender. Add chile to taste, garlic, bell pepper, cumin, coriander and oregano. Saute, stirring frequently until vegetables are softened and mixture is very aromatic (7-10 minutes).

Add beans, water, and hamhock. Cover partially and simmer over medium heat until beans are soft (1 ½ -2 hours). Remove from heat and discard hamhock.

In blender, puree the soup in batches leaving some texture. Return to pot, add lime juice, minced cilantro and salt and pepper to taste. Reheat gently over medium heat.

Before serving, combine all ingredients for salsa cream. Ladle soup into bowls and garnish with salsa cream and cilantro sprig.

Courtesy of:
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