

Questa Del Rio News

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NEW YEAR, NEW AGE, 2022

JANUARY IS NATIONAL SOUP MONTH!

BY ELIZABETH BRUNAZZI

These soup recipes feature black-eyed peas, lentils, and winter vegetables, with all my best wishes for peace, love, luck, and prosperity in 2022. May the new year bring all our readers every kind of joy, healing, and renewal. And then, a good table and some fun!

New Year's Luck Black-Eyed Pea Dish

2 C fresh or frozen black-eyed peas
3 strips thick-sliced bacon
3 T finely chopped mushrooms
2 T chopped red bell pepper
2 T finely chopped onion
3/4 C tomatoes, canned or fresh ripe, preferably Italian plum or Roma, cut into small pieces
1/4 C tomato paste
1/4 t freshly ground black pepper
1/4 t chile powder or Cholula chili pepper sauce
1/2 t coarse salt

Cook peas in lightly salted water. Drain. Fry bacon crisp. Use drippings to sauté bell pepper, onions, and mushrooms. Add sautéed mixture, crumbled bacon, tomatoes, tomato paste, and spices to cooked peas. Serve hot. Feeds 6 or 8.

Spanish Lentil and Chorizo Soup

2-1/2 C lentils, picked and rinsed
Salt and pepper
1 large onion
5 T extra-virgin olive oil
1-1/2 lbs chorizo sausage, pricked
3 carrots, peeled, cut into 1/4" pieces
3 T minced fresh parsley
3 T sherry vinegar
2 bay leaves
1/8 t ground cloves
2 T sweet smoked paprika
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 T all-purpose flour

Place lentils and 2 t salt in heat-proof container. Cover with 4 C boiling water: soak 30 minutes. Drain.

Finely chop the large onion to get 1 cup plus 3 T. Heat 2 T oil in a Dutch oven over medium heat until shimmering. Add chorizo, brown on all sides, 6 to 8 minutes. Remove chorizo, reduce heat to low. Add carrots, 2 T parsley, 1 t salt, and chopped onion. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until all is soft but not browned, 25-30 minutes.

Add vinegar and lentils to the pot. Increase heat to medium high. Cook, stirring frequently, until vinegar starts to evaporate, 3 to 4 minutes. Add 7 C water, chorizo, bay leaves, cloves, and bring to a simmer. Reduce heat to low, cover and cook until lentils are tender, about 30 minutes.

Heat remaining 3 T oil in small saucepan over medium heat until shimmering. Add paprika, garlic, some grated onion, and 1/2 t pepper. Cook, stirring constantly, about 2 minutes. Add flour, continue to stir constantly, 1 minute. Remove chorizo to a plate, and discard bay leaves. Stir paprika mixture into lentils. Continue to cook, 10-15 minutes. Cut chorizo lengthwise and slice 1/4 inch thick, return to soup. Add remaining 2 T parsley, heat 1 minute. Season with extra vinegar, salt and pepper to taste. This marvelous soup can be made three days in advance.

Curried Squash and Mushroom Soup

2 medium acorn or butternut squashes
2-1/2 C water or stock
1 C orange juice
2 T butter or plant butter
1/2 C chopped onion
1 clove crushed garlic
6 oz mushrooms sliced
1/2 t ground cumin
1/2 t coriander
1/2 t cinnamon
3/4 t ground ginger
1/4 t dry mustard
1-1/4 t coarse salt
Dashes of cayenne
Dashes of fresh lemon juice
Yogurt and chopped toasted almonds
Split squash lengthwise and bake face down in a 375° oven on an oiled tray 30 minutes, until soft. Cool, scoop out insides, for about 3 C. Put in your blender with water or stock, purée until smooth, or hand-purée using a masher and sieve. Combine in a heavy saucepan with orange juice.
Heat butter in heavy skillet; add garlic, onion, and spices. Sauté until onion is soft, add mushrooms, cover, and cook 10 minutes.
Add sauté to squash, scraping skillet for remainder. Heat gently and taste for seasoning.
Top with yogurt and chopped toasted almonds.
Allow to rest and serve.

