

BLACK BEAN & MACARONI SOUP

Source: Lee Bailey's Soup Meals

INGREDIENTS:

1 C dried black beans
8 C chicken stock
2 small bay leaves
1 1/4 C olive oil
1 large onion, coarsely chopped
1 C drained/chopped canned tomatoes (NOT in paste)
2 TBS red wine
1 tsp sugar
1/4 tsp black pepper
1 1/2 C elbow macaroni
2 very large red bell peppers, roasted/peeled/cut into medium dice
Finely chopped flat-leaf parsley + green onions, for garnish

DIRECTIONS:

Wash & pick over beans - cover with 1" water & bring to boil over high heat - boil 2 minutes & turn off heat - allow to sit, covered, 1 hour OR simmer 2 hours - drain beans & cover with 3 C chicken stock - bring to boil & turn down heat to simmer - add bay leaves - simmer till beans start to get tender (about 90 minutes).

Meanwhile, heat olive oil & sauté onions till wilted & starting to brown (about 5 minutes) - stir in garlic & continue to cook another minute or so. Scrape onion-garlic mixture into beans & add tomatoes. Continue cooking, adding more stock if needed, till beans are done. This can take up to another hour. Add wine, sugar, pepper & balance of stock.

To serve, boil macaroni 6 minutes in very well salted water - drain & add to bean mixture along with diced red pepper. Simmer just long enough to completely cook macaroni. Allow to sit about 5 minutes before serving. It will probably need salt, so correct seasoning if needed. If you have cooked the soup too rapidly you may have evaporated too much of the liquid - if so, add a bit more stock. Garnish with parsley & onions if desired.

Serves 6