

SAUSAGE & WHITE BEAN SOUP

Source: Lee Bailey's Soup Meals

INGREDIENTS:

2 C dried white (Navy) beans
8 C chicken stock + about 2 C more for taste
1 large bay leaf
1/4 tsp dried thyme
1/4 C olive oil
1 1/2 C coarsely chopped onions
1/2 C coarsely chopped celery
2 large carrots, peeled/cut into rings
12 links pork sausage (about 1 1/2 lbs)
2 large garlic cloves, minced
1/4 C dry red wine

DIRECTIONS:

Pick over beans & soak overnight OR quick soak: place beans in large pot with enough water to cover by 1" - bring to boil over high heat - turn back to simmer & cook 2 minutes - remove from heat & allow to soak 1 hour - drain & return to pot. After beans are drained, add chicken stock, bay leaf & thyme - bring to simmer & cook, skimming as needed, till beans begin to get tender & fall apart (about 1 1/2 - 2 hours). Add another 2 C chicken stock (or to taste) IF soup has reduced too much at end of cooking time.

Meanwhile, place olive oil in large skillet & sauté all the veggies except garlic till they start to brown. Scrape into food processor & puree - reserve this puree & add to beans for last 30 minutes of cooking time. Place sausage in cold skillet & cook over high heat 6 minutes, turning often - pour off fat - add garlic & wine - simmer, covered, another 15 minutes - cut sausages into rings & add to soup - degrease pan with a few TBS water or chicken stock, then add to soup.

NOTE: to cut down on cooking time, substitute dried baby lima beans for navy beans, since limas don't require more than about 45 minutes to cook.

Serves 6-8