

U S SENATE BEAN SOUP (for 4-6)

SOURCE: SAVEUR SEPT/OCT 2001

Prep/Cooking time: 1 1/2 hours

INGREDIENTS:

1 lb dried navy beans
1 tsp butter
1 small yellow onion, peeled & finely chopped

1 meaty smoked ham hock
salt & freshly ground black pepper

DIRECTIONS:

Discard any stones among beans, then rinse under cold running water. Put beans, ham + 2 qts water into medium, heavy bottomed pot. Cover & bring to boil over high heat. Uncover, reduce heat to medium low & simmer till beans are tender & interiors are soft (about 1 hour).

Meanwhile, melt butter in medium skillet over medium heat. Add onions - cook, stirring frequently with wooden spoon, till soft & just beginning to brown (3-5 minutes). Remove skillet from heat & set aside.

When beans are cooked, reduce heat to low & stir in onions. Retrieve ham hock from pot & set aside till cool enough to handle. Remove/discard skin, bone & excess fat - dice meat & add to soup. Mash some of the beans against side of pot to make soup more thick/creamy. Season to taste with salt & pepper. Serve.