

Spanish Bean Soup

1 lb dried chickpeas or 58 oz canned chick peas
3 quarts chicken stock
Smoked ham hocks or ham bone (*enough to yield 1 1/2 c. meat*)
1/4 t. saffron
2 bay leaves
2 T. granulated onion
2 c. potatoes, cut into half inch cubes
1 c. pepperoni, diced
Salt and pepper to taste
3 c. greens
Balsamic vinegar, optional

If using dried chickpeas, soak overnight, then drain when ready to use. Combine chickpeas, chicken stock, ham hocks or bone, saffron, bay leaves, and onion. Bring to a boil, then cover and simmer on low for 2-3 hours.

If using canned chick peas, wait to add them with the potatoes in the next step.

Remove ham bones from broth, strip off meat, cut into bite sized pieces, and return the meat to the soup. Add potatoes, pepperoni, and canned chick peas, if using. Let soup simmer slowly until the chickpeas and potatoes just start to break down to thicken the broth. Remove bay leaves.

If using spinach or other soft greens, add right before serving. If using cabbage, kale, or other heartier greens, add about 10 minutes before soup is finished to achieve desired texture.

Season with salt and pepper to taste. Add a splash of balsamic vinegar to each bowl when serving.