

Black Bean and Chicken Soup

By Chef Tom Douglas

THE ART OF
AGING

Serves 4 to 6

- 1 cups black beans, picked over and rinsed (or 3 cups canned beans)
- 6 cups (1.5 quarts), or more if needed, home-made chicken stock (see Basics, page 000)
- 1 chicken breast, bone-on and skinless
- 3/4 cup coarsely chopped onions
- 1/4 cup coarsely chopped carrots
- 1/4 cup coarsely chopped celery
- 1 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 1/2 teaspoons chopped garlic
- 1 cups canned tomatoes, drained and chopped
- 1 teaspoon tomato paste
- 1 teaspoons whole coriander, toasted and ground
- 1 teaspoons cumin seed, toasted and ground
- 1 1/4 teaspoons paprika (reserve 1/4 teaspoon for chicken)
- 3/8 teaspoon cayenne, or to taste
- 1 to 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice, or to taste
- freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro

Place the beans in a large pot with the chicken stock. Bring to a simmer and cook until the beans are soft, about 2 hours (1 hour if beans are pre-soaked).

Meanwhile, in a sauté pan over medium-low heat, slowly cook the onions, carrots, and celery in olive oil, stirring occasionally, until the onions are golden, about 10 minutes. Stir in the garlic, cumin, coriander, paprika and 3/4 part of the cayenne and sauté for 1 more minute.

Add the onion mixture, tomatoes, tomato paste, and chicken to the simmering beans, cook for 10 minutes or until chicken is cooked through. Remove the chicken from the liquid. Pull all the meat off the bone, finely slice the meat into shreds, and reserve.

In a food processor or blender, coarsely puree the soup in batches just long enough to leave a little texture. (An immersion blender is perfect for this job, as you can puree directly on the stove) Return the soup to the pot.

Season with lime juice and pepper to taste. Just before serving, stir in chopped cilantro. Ladle the hot soup into the bowls and top with warm shredded chicken seasoned with the reserved 1/4 part of cayenne

(Note: If using canned beans instead of dried cut back 1 cup of stock.)

A Step Ahead: You can make this soup a few days ahead and store it in the refrigerator. To serve, just reheat.