

Food for Thought

by Leslie Barnes



Soup and salad are a great option for lunch or dinner, year 'round. Make up a mixed green salad and top it off with this easy-to-make sun-dried tomato salad dressing. For a stand alone meal, just add oven roasted chicken to your salad and a splash of shredded cheese.

CHEDDAR CHICKEN CHOWDER

2 bacon slices
Cooking spray
1 lb skinned, boned chicken breast, cut into bite-size pieces

1 cup chopped onion
1 cup diced red bell pepper
2 garlic cloves, minced
4-1/2 cups chicken broth
1-3/4 cups diced, peeled red potatoes
2-1/4 cups frozen whole-kernel corn
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
2 cups 2% low-fat milk
3/4 cup (3 oz) shredded cheddar cheese
1/2 tsp salt
1/4 tsp pepper

Cook bacon in a Dutch oven coated with cooking spray over medium-high heat until crisp. Remove bacon from pan. Crumble; set aside. Add chicken, onion, bell pepper, and garlic to bacon fat in pan; sauté 5 minutes. Add broth and potatoes; bring to boil. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer 20 minutes or until potatoes are tender. Add corn; stir well.

Place flour in a bowl. Gradually add milk, stirring with a whisk until blended; add to soup. Cook over medium heat 15 minutes or until thick, stirring frequently. Stir in cheese, salt, and pepper. Top with crumbled bacon.

Serves 4.

CHILI CON CARNE

8 poblano chiles
3 lb boneless chuck roast, trimmed and cut into 1/2-inch cubes
1-1/2 tsp salt
1/2 tsp black pepper
3 T all-purpose flour
2 T olive oil, divided

3 cups chopped onion
4 garlic cloves, minced
3 cups peeled seeded chopped plum tomatoes (about 10 medium)
1 T dried oregano
1 T ground cumin
1 chipotle chile, canned in adobo sauce
3 T chopped fresh cilantro
6 T shredded reduced-fat cheddar cheese

Preheat broiler.

Place poblanos on a foil-lined baking sheet; broil 8 minutes or until charred, turning after 6 minutes. Place poblanos in a zip-top plastic bag; seal. Let stand 15 minutes. Peel and cut chiles into 1-inch pieces.

Sprinkle beef with salt and black pepper; dredge in flour. Heat 1 T olive oil in a Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add half of beef to pan; sauté for 5 minutes, turning to brown on all sides. Remove from pan. Repeat procedure with remaining oil and beef.

Reduce heat to medium. Add onion to pan; cook 12 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add garlic; cook 3 minutes, stirring frequently. Return beef to pan. Stir in tomatoes, oregano and cumin; bring to a simmer. Cover and cook 1 hour, stirring occasionally. Stir in poblanos; simmer for 45 minutes or until beef is tender, stirring occasionally. Rinse, seed, and chop chipotle. Stir in chipotle and cilantro. Sprinkle with cheese.

Serves 6.

CUBAN BLACK BEAN SOUP

2 bay leaves
1 lb dried black beans
12-1/2 cups water, divided
1 T canola oil
3-1/2 cups chopped green bell pepper (about 3 medium)
2-1/2 cups coarsely chopped onion
1/3 cup chopped shallots (about 2 small)
1 T ground cumin
2 T dried oregano
2 T chopped fresh oregano
1-1/2 T sugar
2 tsp kosher salt

2 cups diced peeled avocado
2 T fresh lime juice
2 cups thinly sliced red onion
1-1/2 cups chopped smoked, fully cooked ham
1 cup chopped fresh cilantro
1 cup light sour cream
1/3 cup unsalted pumpkinseed kernels, toasted
1/3 cup finely chopped seeded jalapeño peppers (about 2 medium)
Lime wedges (optional)

Place bay leaves and beans in a Dutch oven. Add 12 cups water to pan; bring to a boil. Reduce heat, and simmer 2-1/2 hours or until tender, stirring occasionally.

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add bell pepper, chopped onion and shallots to pan; cook 10 minutes or until onion is tender, stirring frequently. Stir in cumin, dried oregano and fresh oregano; cook 2 minutes, stirring frequently. Remove from heat; let stand 10 minutes. Place vegetable mixture in a blender; add remaining 1/2 cup water. Puree until smooth.

Add vegetable mixture, sugar, and salt to beans; simmer 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Discard bay leaves. Combine avocado and juice; toss gently. Ladle 3/4 cup bean mixture into each of 10 bowls; top each serving with about 3 T avocado mixture, about 3 T red onion, 2 T ham, about 1-1/2 T cilantro, about 1-1/2 T sour cream, 1 tsp pumpkinseed kernels, and about 1/2 tsp jalapeño pepper. Serve with lime wedges, if desired.

Serves 10.

Church Directory

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<p>SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST Larry Gibson, Pastor 2nd Ave. and Nehalem St., Vernonia 503 429-8301 Morning Worship, 11:00 a.m. Sabbath School 9:30 a.m.</p>	<p>VERNONIA COMMUNITY CHURCH Ralph Young, Pastor 957 State Avenue, Vernonia 503 429-6790 Sunday Bible Classes 9:00 a.m. Family Praise & Worship 10:30 a.m. Wednesday Prayer 6:30 p.m. Thursday Ladies Study 7:00 p.m. Nursery 10:15 a.m. Vernonia Community Preschool</p>	<p>NEHALEM VALLEY BIBLE CHURCH Gary Taylor, Pastor Grant & North Streets, Vernonia 503 429-5378 Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Morning Worship 11:00 a.m. Nursery available Wednesday Service 7:00 p.m.</p>
<p>ASSEMBLY OF GOD Wayne and Maureen Marr 662 Jefferson Ave., Vernonia, 503 429-0373 Sunday School 9:45 a.m. Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.</p>	<p>VERNONIA CHRISTIAN CHURCH Sam Hough, Minister 410 North Street, Vernonia 503 429-6522 Sunday School 9:45 a.m. Sunday Worship 11:00 a.m. (meets in Youth & Family Center) Various Home Group Meetings</p>	<p>CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS Marc Farmer, Branch President 1350 E. Knott Street, Vernonia 503 429-7151 Sacrament Meeting, Sunday 10 a.m. Sunday School & Primary 11:20 a.m. Relief Society, Priesthood and Young Women, Sunday 12:10 p.m.</p>
<p>ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH Rev. Luan Tran, Administrator 960 Missouri Avenue, Vernonia 503 429-8841 Mass Sunday 12:00 Noon Religious Educ. Sunday 10:30 a.m.</p>		

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