



Smoky Black Bean Soup with Butternut Squash/Sweet Potatoes

Serves 8

INGREDIENTS:

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 medium onion, coarsely chopped
4 large cloves garlic, roughly chopped
2 stalks celery, roughly chopped
1 tablespoon smoked paprika or 1 chipotle pepper in adobo (will make soup very spicy)
2 teaspoons ground cumin
Dash of cayenne pepper (not if using chipotle pepper)
1 14-ounce can diced tomatoes (Muir Glen is best)
1 small (about 1 ½ pounds) butternut squash or 2 large sweet potatoes, peeled, seeded, and cut in 1/2 inch cubes
3 15-ounce cans black beans, drained (not rinsed)
1 quart vegetable or chicken broth
Coarse salt
Fresh lime juice, as needed
Sour cream or Greek yogurt, for serving

In a large, heavy soup pot, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the onions, garlic, and celery, and cook until translucent, about 5 minutes. Add spices and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Stir in the tomatoes, squash, and beans and enough broth to just cover the beans with liquid. Bring the mixture to a boil, reduce heat to low, and simmer, covered, until the squash is tender, about 20 minutes. Transfer one-quarter of the soup to a food processor or blender and puree until smooth (be careful not to fill the blender more than halfway full, because the hot soup may explode out the top...place a kitchen towel over the lid before pureeing to be on the safe side!). Stir the puree back into the soup and season with salt and lime juice. Serve hot with sour cream or Greek yogurt, as desired.