



## Featured Recipes

### Heavenly Vegetable Soup

I can still remember enjoying a bowl of this delicious vegetable soup at one of the restaurants on the slopes of Heavenly Ski Resort in Lake Tahoe many years ago. I actually sought out the chef to hopefully get the recipe, but all I got was an ingredient list of sorts. I came home and put my version of the soup together and we have been enjoying it ever since.

Preparation Time: 20 minutes

Cooking Time: 1 hour

Servings: 6-8

½ cup water  
1 onion, chopped  
2 stalks celery, chopped  
2 carrots, sliced  
1 cup green beans, cut into 1 inch pieces  
2 quarts vegetable broth  
1 15 ounce can chopped tomatoes  
1 8 ounce can tomato sauce  
1 cup frozen corn kernels  
1 cup sliced fresh mushrooms  
1 cup broccoli florets  
1 cup cauliflower florets  
2 tablespoons soy sauce  
2 tablespoons parsley flakes  
2 teaspoons dried basil  
½ teaspoon Tabasco sauce  
¼ teaspoon chili powder  
Freshly ground black pepper to taste  
1/3 cup cornstarch mixed in ½ cup cold water

Place the water, onions, celery, carrots and green beans in a large soup pot. Cook, stirring frequently, for about 5 minutes. Add the remaining ingredients, except the cornstarch mixture, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for about 45 minutes, until vegetables are tender. Stir in the cornstarch mixture until soup thickens slightly and serve.

Hints: This soup does not freeze well because of the cornstarch. To eliminate the cornstarch, substitute about ½ cup of small uncooked pasta and add during the last 15 minutes of cooking time.

### Latin Black Bean Soup

Preparation Time: 15 minutes (need cooked rice)

Resting Time: 1 hour

Cooking Time: 3 hours (see hints below)

Servings: 6

1 cup black beans  
8 cups water  
1 onion, chopped  
1 green bell pepper, chopped  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 teaspoon oregano  
1 teaspoon ground cumin

- 1 6 ounce can tomato paste
- 3 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 2 cups cooked brown rice
- 1 4 ounce can chopped green chilies
- 1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon hot sauce (see hints below)
- 1-2 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro

Place the beans and water in a large pot. Bring to a boil, cook for 2 minutes, remove from heat and let rest for about 1 hour. Return to heat. Add onion, bell pepper, garlic, oregano and cumin. Cover and let cook over low heat for about 1 1/2 hours. Add tomato paste, vinegar and soy sauce. Cook an additional 30 minutes. Add rice, chilies and hot sauce. Cook for another 10 minutes, then stir in cilantro. Serve at once.

Hints: This may also be made in a slow cooker. Add all the ingredients, up to the brown rice. Cook on high for 8 hours, then stir in the rice, chilies and hot sauce. Heat for about 30 minutes in the slow cooker, stir in the cilantro and serve. It will take about 1 hour total time in a pressure cooker. Add the ingredients as above, up to the brown rice. Bring to pressure, cook about 30 minutes, then let the pressure release naturally. Add the rice, chilies and hot sauce and cook for about 20 minutes. Stir in the cilantro and serve. Use any hot sauce that your family enjoys, such as Tabasco, Sriracha, Tapatio, Cholula, starting with a small amount and adjusting the flavor to taste.

#### Cheeze Sauce

I have been making versions of this "cheese" sauce for over 20 years. This is still my favorite because it is easy, fast and tastes great.

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Servings: makes about 2 cups

- 1 cup raw cashews (see hints below)
- 3/4 to 1 cup water (approximately)
- 1 4 ounce jar pimientos
- 2-3 tablespoons nutritional yeast
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/4 teaspoon sea salt (optional)

Place the cashews in a blender jar (a high-speed blender like the VitaMix makes this much smoother and creamier) and add just enough of the water to cover the cashews. Process until smooth. Add the rest of the ingredients and process again until very smooth and creamy. Add more water if necessary to get the consistency that you want. Using less water will make this more spreadable, using more water will make it more sauce-like.

Hints: If you soak the cashews for at least an hour or two before processing the mixture, it will be smoother. Soak them in water to cover and then drain before using in the recipe. Start out with 2 tablespoons of the nutritional yeast and add more for a "cheesier" flavor. The flavors are more intense if you make this at least a day before you want to use it. This will keep in the refrigerator for about 1 week. Use to top vegetables, drizzle on pizza, or spread on a sandwich. Try making this into a "Grilled Cheese" sandwich with tomatoes and basil. Just spread on the "cheese" and grill on a dry non-stick pan until brown on both sides.

#### Tossed Rice

This is another meal that I have been preparing for at least 25 years. It is simple, yet delicious, and can

be varied according to the assorted vegetables that you have on hand at various times of the year.

Preparation Time: 15 minutes (cooked rice needed)

Cooking Time: 10 minutes

Servings: 4

½ cup vegetable broth  
4-5 cups assorted chopped vegetables (see hints below)  
1 tablespoon soy sauce  
½ to 1 teaspoon chili garlic sauce (optional)  
1 tablespoon parsley flakes  
½ teaspoon basil  
½ teaspoon dill weed  
¼ teaspoon paprika  
4 cups hot cooked brown rice  
1 tomato, chopped (see hints below)

Place the broth in a large sauté pan and heat. Add vegetables, soy sauce and optional chili garlic sauce. Cook, stirring frequently for 5 minutes, then add the remaining seasonings. Continue to cook and stir for another 5 minutes. Place the hot cooked rice in a large bowl. Add the vegetable mixture and toss to mix well. Add chopped tomatoes, if in season, toss again and serve.

Hints: Use an assortment of your favorite vegetables that are cut into bite-sized pieces. This can easily be varied according to the seasons. For example, in the winter I usually use chopped onions, chopped celery, broccoli, and kale. In the spring I will use green onions, snow peas and asparagus. In the late summer I will add fresh tomato wedges from our garden. I usually have cooked brown rice in my freezer which can easily be reheated, so I can have this meal on the table in less than 15 minutes.

### Tortilla Chips

Since it can be very difficult, if not impossible, to find fat-free tortilla chips, many people just make their own from soft corn tortillas. My father-in-law carried his own homemade tortilla chips into restaurants for years and enjoyed them with the salsa in many Mexican restaurants.

Preparation Time: 5 minutes

Cooking time: 20-30 minutes

Servings: variable

12 soft corn tortillas

Preheat oven to 300 degrees. Cut tortillas into wedges with kitchen shears. Lay on a baking sheet in a single layer. Spritz lightly with water for crispness. Bake for 20 to 30 minutes until crisp. Watch them carefully so they don't get too brown. Store in an airtight bag.

Hints: Buy thin corn tortillas for best results. The thicker ones don't get as crispy. After spritzing with water, sprinkle with some chili powder, onion powder or another seasoning of your choice. To make with pita bread, cut pita into wedges and separate one side from the other. Lay on a baking sheet and bake as above.