

Smoky Navy Bean Soup with Leeks, Kale and Crispy Bacon

Ingredients to serve 4:

- ⇒ 1 sweet onion, finely chopped
- ⇒ 1 large leek, finely chopped
- ⇒ 4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- ⇒ 2 c sliced celery
- ⇒ 2 large carrots, sliced
- ⇒ 1 large ham hock (substitute smoked turkey leg)
- ⇒ 2 Tbsp olive oil
- ⇒ 2 c dried navy beans, soaked overnight
- ⇒ 1 Tbsp tomato paste
- ⇒ 2 c thinly sliced kale
- ⇒ 1 Tbsp fresh chopped thyme
- ⇒ 2 tsp bouquet garni (Penzeys)
- ⇒ 2 tsp smoked paprika
- ⇒ 2 tsp chili powder
- ⇒ 4-6 c chicken stock
- ⇒ crumbled bacon, optional garnish
- ⇒ kosher salt and fresh cracked pepper to taste



Directions:

In a large Dutch oven, on medium heat, add oil, ham hock, chopped leeks, onion and garlic. Stir for 10 minutes until wilted, then add celery, carrots and tomato paste and stir for several minutes. Add navy beans, and stock along with aromatics and bring to a boil.

Once boiling, reduce to a simmer and cover, adding additional stock and or water as necessary as soup absorbs liquid (about 1½ hours). Beans will be ready when soft and creamy.

Five minutes before serving, add kale and stir until wilted but still bright green in color.

Adjust seasonings to taste and serve warm with crumbled bacon, if desired. Serve with warm bread on the side.