

## Bolivian Peanut Soup

### Sopa de mani

*As Rommy Holman, from Cochabamba, Bolivia, taught Lindsay Sterling in Cumberland, Maine, June 2011*

Serves: 8

Cooking Time: 2-3 hours

### Ingredients

Phase 1:

- 1 Tbsp salt
- 4 beef ribs or bone-in cut of beef
- 1 small red onion
- 2 small carrots
- 1/2 green pepper, medium dice
- 1/4 red bell pepper, medium dice
- 10 green beans, sliced diagonally across for long, thin ovals
- 1/2 pound skinless raw peanuts (they're not tan or brown, they're cream-colored and may be called blanched)

Phase 2:

- 4 yukon potatoes
- 1/2 cup white rice
- 1 big clove garlic
- 1/2 tsp powdered cumin
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- handful fresh cilantro
- handful fresh parsley
- small bunch fresh celery leaves
- 1/4 cup peas

Accompaniments:

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- 1 tomato
- 1 jalepeno
- small handful cilantro
- crusty bread

## Instructions

1. Fill a soup pot 2/3 full of water, and add 1 Tbsp salt and the beef. Bring to boil and simmer for 1 hour or two until meat is tender. Keep a lid on while you simmer to keep broth from evaporating too much. As the soup simmers, skim any fat and foam that rise to the top of the soup with a big flat spoon and discard.
2. While the meat broth is brewing, cut your veggies. Cut carrots lengthwise into 1/4" thick planks and then crosswise into 1/4" strips. Dice the green and red pepper and onion. And cut the green beans on the diagonal to make thin long ovals. Put the veggies in the soup pot.
3. Make a raw peanut puree by blending the peanuts in a blender with about a cup of water until you have what looks like almost-melting vanilla ice cream. After the meat has cooked for at least an hour, add the peanut puree so the soup turns white with a creamy surface. Continue cooking for an hour. I wouldn't fudge that particular cooking time because Rommy said, "Raw peanuts need to be cooked an hour at least or it makes the tummy ache. That's what my mom says." An hour then! Stir occasionally so the peanut particles don't burn on the bottom.
4. While the peanut broth is cooking, mash the garlic, 1/4 tsp pepper, and 1/2 tsp cumin in a mortar and pestle, adding a little salt to aid in the grinding. Don't forget to smell this because it's very satisfying. Add the garlic-spice-mash to the soup.
5. Make a bowl of fresh feathery herbs by gathering a tight bouquet of parsley and cilantro (she'd also use quilquina if she were home) and cutting across them toward your thumb with a paring knife.
6. Peel the potatoes slice them into round slices, and then slicing across the the slices to make thin strips. Cover these with water (to keep from turning brown) until soup is almost done.
7. Make homemade hotsauce, called *llajua*, by pulsing in a blender: fresh jalapenos, tomatoes, and fresh cilantro (at home she would use a native herb called quilquina). Her mother would make llajua on a traditional tool, a rectangular mortar and pestle called a *batan*. Avoid putting the blender on full blast - it makes the hotsauce foamy, which is not authentic. Serve llajua in dishes on the table for individuals to spoon into their soup as they like.

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8. After the peanut-broth has simmered for an hour, add 1 cup of rice. After the rice has cooked for about ten minutes, use cooking twine to tie a bouquet of celery leaves and parsley leaves together, and then steep the bouquet in the soup. Sprinkle dried oregano over top.

9. Now taste the soup. Add salt so that it tastes the best it can be. I added about 1 teaspoon. Take the meat out of the pot. Pull the meat off the bones, discard the bones, and put the meat back in soup.

10. Strain the potatoes. Pat them dry with paper towels. Heat a half-inch of oil in a large frying pan on medium high. Line a plate with paper towel. Once oil is hot, fry the potatoes in batches until they're golden brown. Let them cool/dry on the paper towel. (If the oil is smoking, turn the heat down. If the potatoes aren't bubbling when you put them in, turn the heat up). Sprinkle salt on the fried potatoes.

11. When the rice in the soup is cooked, add the peas. When the peas are cooked, serve the soup in shallow bowls. Garnish each bowl with a mound of fried potatoes in the center of each bowl and fresh herbs all over top. Serve with chunks of baguette and the llajua on the table.