

Now that we are in the New Year and most of the celebrations are behind us (along with all the sweets), you might be craving simpler, more hardy meals. This week, we will feature some cozy winter soups that are perfect for a MN winter!

Simple Taco Soup

*Prep: 5 min.
Cook: 20 min.
Servings: 8*

2 lbs. ground beef
1 envelope taco seasoning
1-1/2 C. water
1 can (16 oz.) mild chili beans, undrained
1 can (15-1/4 oz.) whole kernel corn, drained
1 can (15 oz.) pinto beans, rinsed and drained
1 can (14-1/2 oz.) stewed tomatoes
1 can (10 oz.) diced tomato with green chiles
1 can (4 oz.) chopped green chiles, optional
1 envelope ranch salad dressing mix
Sour cream and green onions, optional

In a Dutch oven, cook beef over medium heat until no longer pink, breaking it into crumbles; drain. Add taco seasoning and mix well. Stir in the remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 15 min. or until heated through, stirring occasionally. If desired, garnish with sour cream and green onion.

Beef Noodle Soup

*Prep: 15 min.
Cook: 10 min.
Servings: 8*

1 lb. ground beef
1/2 C. chopped onion
2 cans (14-1/2 oz. each) Italian stewed tomatoes
2 cans (10-1/2 oz. each) beef broth
2 C. frozen mixed vegetables or 1 can (15 oz.) mixed vegetables
1 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper
1 C. uncooked medium egg noodles

In a Dutch oven, cook beef and onion over medium heat until meat is no longer pink, 5-7 min., crumbling beef; drain. Add the tomatoes, broth, vegetables and seasonings. Bring to a boil; add noodles. Reduce heat to medium-low; cover and cook until noodles are tender, 10-15 min.

Chicken Potpie Soup

*Prep: 20 min.
Cook: 20 min.
Servings: 6*

2 C. all-purpose flour
1-1/4 tsp. salt
2/3 C. shortening
5 to 6 T. 2% milk

Soup:

2 T. butter
1 C. cubed peeled potatoes
1 C. chopped sweet onion
2 celery ribs, chopped
2 med. carrots, chopped
1/2 C. all-purpose flour
1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper
3 cans (14-1/2 oz. each) chicken broth
2 C. shredded cooked chicken
1 C. frozen petite peas
1 C. frozen corn

In a large bowl, mix flour and salt; cut in shortening until crumbly. Gradually add milk, tossing with a fork until dough holds together when pressed. Shape into a disk, cover and refrigerate 30 min. or overnight.

Preheat oven to 425°F. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to 1/8-in. thickness. Using a floured 2-1/2-in. heart-shaped or round cutter, cut 18 shapes. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake for 8-11 min. or until golden brown. Cool on a wire rack.

Soup: Heat butter in a Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add the potatoes, onion, celery and carrots; cook and stir for 5-7 min. or until onion is tender.

Stir in the flour, salt and pepper until blended; gradually whisk in broth. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, 8-10 min. or until potatoes are tender. Stir in remaining ingredients; heat through. Serve with pie crust toppers.

Best Ever Potato Soup

Prep: 10 min.

Cook: 20 min.

Servings: 8

6 bacon strips, diced
3 C. cubed peeled potatoes
1 small carrot, grated
1/2 C. chopped onion
1 T. dried parsley flakes
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. pepper
1/2 tsp. celery seed
1 can (14-1/2 oz.) chicken broth
3 T. all-purpose flour
3 C. 2% milk
8 oz. Velveeta, cubed
2 green onions, thinly sliced, optional

In a large saucepan, cook bacon over medium heat until crisp, stirring occasionally; drain drippings and set bacon aside. Add vegetables, seasonings and broth; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, covered, until potatoes are tender, 10-15 min.

Mix flour and milk until smooth; stir into soup. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly; cook and stir until thickened, about 2 min. Stir in cheese and bacon until melted. If desired, top with green onions and additional bacon.

Slow-Cooker Corn Chowder

Prep: 10 min.

Cook: 6 hrs.

Servings: 8

2-1/2 C. 2% milk
1 can (14-3/4 oz.) cream-style corn
1 can (10-3/4 oz.) condensed cream of mushroom soup, undiluted
1-3/4 C. frozen corn
1 C. frozen shredded hash brown potatoes
1 C. cubed fully cooked ham
1 lg. onion, chopped
2 tsp. dried parsley flakes
2 T. butter
Salt and pepper to taste
Crumbled cooked bacon and minced parsley, optional

In a 3-qt. slow cooker, combine the first 10 ingredients. Cover and cook on low for 6 hours. Serve with toppings as desired.

Cauliflower Soup

Prep: 10 min.

Cook: 20 min.

Servings: 8

1 med. head cauliflower, broken into florets
1 med. carrot, shredded
1/4 C. chopped celery
2-1/2 C. water
2 tsp. chicken bouillon or 1 vegetable bouillon cube
3 T. butter
3 T. all-purpose flour
3/4 tsp. salt
1/8 tsp. pepper
2 C. 2% milk
1 C. shredded cheddar cheese
1/2-1 tsp. hot pepper sauce, optional

In a Dutch oven, combine the cauliflower, carrot, celery, water and bouillon. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 12-15 min. or until vegetables are tender (do not drain).

In a large saucepan, melt butter. Stir in the flour, salt and pepper until smooth. Gradually add milk. Bring to a boil over medium heat; cook and stir for 2 min. or until thickened. Reduce heat. Stir in the cheese until melted, adding hot pepper sauce if desired. Stir into the cauliflower mixture.

Million Dollar Soup

Prep: 20 min.

Cook: 3 hrs.

Servings: 8

2 T. olive oil
1 T. butter

2 med. sweet onions, thinly sliced
1 pinch salt

Parmesan Bread Crumbs:

1 C. panko bread crumbs
1/2 C. grated Parmesan cheese
3 T. butter, melted

Soup:

1 T. olive oil
1 T. butter
1 C. chopped celery
1/2 C. sliced fennel bulb
3 garlic cloves, minced
1/4 C. white wine
6 C. chicken stock
3 C. chopped fresh kale
1 C. crumbled cooked bacon, divided
1 T. soy sauce
1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. dried thyme
1/4 tsp. pepper
2 C. shredded cooked chicken breast
1 pkg. (8 oz.) potato gnocchi
2-1/2 C. shredded cheddar cheese
1 C. heavy whipping cream, warmed
1/4 tsp. cayenne pepper
3 T. cornstarch
3 T. cold water

To caramelize the onions, heat olive oil and butter in a large Dutch oven or soup pot over medium-high heat. Add onions; cook 4-5 min., stirring occasionally. Stir in salt. Reduce heat to low; cover. Cook until onions are soft, about 15 min., stirring occasionally. Remove the lid; cook another 20 min. or until very soft and browned, stirring occasionally. Transfer to a small bowl; set aside.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a 15x10x1-in. baking sheet with aluminum foil or parchment paper. To make the bread crumbs, in a small bowl, combine panko, Parmesan and melted butter. Spread in an even layer on the prepared baking sheet. Bake 10-12 min., stirring once, until golden brown. Remove; let cool.

Soup: Add olive oil and butter to the same Dutch oven or soup pot over medium heat. Add celery and fennel; cook until softened and beginning to brown, 7-8 min. Add garlic; cook until fragrant, 30-60 seconds. Add white wine; bring to a simmer, scraping the browned bits up from the bottom until mostly dissolved, 1-2 min.

Add caramelized onions, chicken stock, kale, 3/4 cup crumbled bacon, soy sauce, salt, thyme and pepper to the pot; bring to a boil. Reduce the heat. Cover; simmer for 10-15 min.

Remove lid; stir in shredded chicken and gnocchi. Simmer uncovered until gnocchi floats to the top, 2-3 min. Stir in shredded cheese. Place cream in a small bowl; add a small amount of hot soup broth to the bowl to temper it. Slowly pour the mixture into the soup, stirring constantly. Stir in cayenne pepper.

In a small bowl, whisk together cornstarch and water. Stir into the soup; simmer until thickened, 2-3 min.

Ladle soup into serving bowls. Top each with remaining crumbled bacon and Parmesan bread crumbs. Serve immediately.

Quick Ham and Bean Soup

Prep: 10 min.

Cook: 20 min.

Serving: 7

2 med. carrots, sliced
2 celery ribs, chopped
1/2 C. chopped onion
2 T. butter
4 cans (15-1/2 oz. each) great northern beans, rinsed and drained
4 C. chicken broth
2 C. cubed fully cooked ham
1 tsp. chili powder
1/2 tsp. minced garlic
1/4 tsp. pepper
1 bay leaf

In a large saucepan, sauté the carrots, celery and onion in butter until tender. Stir in the remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cook for 15 min. or until heated through. Discard bay leaf.

Quote of the Week:

“The new year stands before us, like a chapter in a book, waiting to be written. We can help write that story by setting goals.”

~ Melody Beattie