



Bajan Corn Soup

Hearty corn soup is popular in many parts of the Caribbean, including Jamaica, Trinidad and Barbados ... this is my version of the Bajan (Barbadian) version inspired by one Paul Carmichael told me about; I enjoy the three different textures of corn. Bajan corn soup often contains pumpkin or sweet potato, which I find a little too sweet with the already deliciously sweet corn, so I've swapped it out for potatoes ... but feel free to experiment to suit your taste. Like all good soups, it's even better the next day; add a little water if it's become too thick.

Serves 8 as an entrée

INGREDIENTS

- 4 cobs corn, husked
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 1 large brown onion, finely diced
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 carrot, finely diced
- 1 stalk celery, finely diced
- 1 small habanero, seeded and very finely diced
- 3 sprigs thyme, leaved picked
- Salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- ½ cup yellow split peas
- 400g floury potatoes, peeled and diced
- 270ml coconut milk
- 1 litre chicken stock or water
- ¼ cup finely sliced flat-leaf parsley leaves and fine stems
- 1½ tablespoons sliced coriander leaves
- 1½ tablespoons finely sliced chives

METHOD

1. Cut 1 cob of corn into chunks (a cleaver is best for this). Remove the kernels from the remainder and puree half of them. Set all aside separately.
2. Heat oil in a large saucepan.
3. Stir in onion, garlic, carrot, celery, habanero, thyme and a good pinch of salt and cook over medium-high heat, stirring often, for 10-15 minutes until starting to colour.
4. Add the split peas, potato, coconut milk, chicken stock, chopped corn, corn kernels, salt and pepper and bring to the boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 45 minutes.
5. Add the pureed corn and simmer for a further 12 minutes or so, until corn is just tender.
6. Stir in parsley, coriander and chives and cook for a further couple of minutes.
7. Taste, add more salt and pepper if needed and serve.