

Emerald Buddha Soup

Soups | October 2005



One of Jackie Bergman's signature soup recipes, this vegan stew is speckled with barley and beans and fragranced with flavors from the spice trade. Top it with mint pesto made from 1 cup fresh mint pureed (in the food processor or blender) with 1 tablespoon each of olive oil and garlic, or use purchased pesto.

- 2/3 CUP DRIED PINTO AND/OR KIDNEY BEANS**
- 1 TSP. SALT**
- 2 CUPS CHOPPED ONIONS**
- 1 TBSP. OLIVE OIL**
- 5 CUPS VEGETABLE STOCK OR BROTH**
- 2/3 CUP FRENCH GREEN LENTILS, RINSED AND DRAINED**
- 2/3 CUP PEARL BARLEY**
- 1 TBSP. MINCED GARLIC (6 CLOVES)**
- 1/2 TSP. GROUND TURMERIC**
- 1/8 TSP. GROUND CUMIN**
- 1 15-OZ. CAN GARBANZO BEANS, RINSED AND DRAINED**
- 1 TSP. SALT**
- 1/4 TSP. GROUND BLACK PEPPER**
- 4 CUPS BABY SPINACH (OR 1/2 OF A 10-OZ. PKG. FROZEN CHOPPED SPINACH, THAWED AND WELL-DRAINED)**
- PESTO (OPTIONAL) (SEE NOTE, ABOVE)**

Rinse and drain pinto beans. Place in a large saucepan with 4 cups water. Cover and let stand overnight. (Or, bring to boiling; reduce heat. Simmer, uncovered, for 2 minutes. Remove from heat. Cover; let stand 1 hour.) Drain and rinse beans. Add 4 cups fresh water. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Cover and simmer for 1^{1/2} hours. Add 1 teaspoon salt and cook 30 minutes more.

Meanwhile, in a Dutch oven cook onions in hot oil until golden. Add stock, lentils, barley, garlic, turmeric, and cumin. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Cover; simmer for 1^{1/2} hours. Stir in garbanzo beans, 1 teaspoon salt, and black pepper. Cover; cook 30 minutes more.

Stir cooked pinto bean mixture into lentil mixture. Cool slightly. Add spinach at last moment to just wilt. Add additional water, if necessary, to desired consistency. Serve with pesto, if desired. Makes 8 servings.

MAKE-AHEAD DIRECTIONS: Make the soup up to 3 days ahead, leaving out the spinach until ready to serve. Cook and stir over low heat until heated through. Stir in spinach.