

THIS IS WHAT WE ATE

IOWA WRITERS WORKSHOP SPRING 2013

GREER



Alice Waters' Spicy Cauliflower Soup



Recipe courtesy of Alice Waters' *The Art of Simple Food* (\$20 at [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)).

This is an unusually spicy and full-flavored cauliflower soup; if necessary, adjust the pungent spices to your comfort level.

SERVINGS

Makes 2 quarts; 4 to 6 servings

INGREDIENTS

1/4 cup olive oil

1 onion, peeled and diced

1 carrot, peeled and diced

1 teaspoon coriander seeds, crushed

1 teaspoon cumin seeds, crushed

1 teaspoon chile powder

1/4 teaspoon turmeric

1/4 teaspoon dried chile flakes

Salt

Fresh-ground black pepper

6 cilantro sprigs, coarsely chopped

1 large head of cauliflower, trimmed of green leaves and coarsely chopped
(about 6 cups)

3 cups chicken broth
3 cups water

For garnish:

Yogurt

Chopped cilantro or mint

A squeeze of lime juice

PREPARATION

1. Heat the olive oil in a heavy-bottomed soup pot. Add the onion, carrot, coriander seeds, cumin seeds, chile powder, turmeric, chile flakes, salt, and pepper and cook, stirring often, over medium heat.
2. When very soft but not browned, add the cilantro sprigs, cauliflower, chicken broth, and water. Raise the heat and bring to a boil, stirring occasionally. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook until the cauliflower is very tender, about 30 minutes.
3. Stir vigorously with a spoon or whisk to coarsely purée the soup. You may need to add more broth or water to thin the soup if it is too thick.
4. Taste, adjust the seasoning if necessary, and serve hot. Garnish each serving with yogurt, cilantro or mint, and a squeeze of lime juice.

VARIATIONS

For a richer soup, use all chicken broth.

For a lighter, vegetarian soup, use all water.

COOK'S

ILLUSTRATED

BORSCHT

From The Best Soups and Stews.

Serves 6 to 8.

WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:

For our best borscht recipe, we used our standard beef stock recipe, first browning the meat and then simmering it in water until we were left with a rich and flavorful stock. Next, we tackled the beets. We felt that raw beets did the best job of flavoring and coloring the stock. We also found that beets grated on the large holes of a box grater or with the shredding disk of a food processor blended more easily with the other ingredients in our borscht recipe.

This hearty, thick, ruby-red soup gets its color from beets. It is known for its characteristic sweet-sour flavor. The sour comes from the addition of vinegar, which also helps to preserve the soup, giving it a long shelf life. It benefits from being made at least a day before eating and will still be excellent five days after it is made. Hold off boiling the potatoes until you are serving the soup. Serve with the traditional accompaniment of sour, dark Russian bread or black bread. Note that the cabbage and beets will rise to the surface of the stock when first added to the pot. As they cook, the vegetables will release their water and sink down.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1 medium onion , chopped medium
- 2 medium carrots , chopped medium
- 2 medium garlic cloves , minced
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 2 quarts homemade beef stock , strained and skimmed of fat, (see related link)
- 2 cups meat from stock, shredded into bite-sized pieces
- 1/2 small head cabbage , green or red, shredded (about 5 cups)
- 1 3/4 pounds beets , peeled and grated (about 5 cups)
- 5 - 6 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 4 tablespoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 bay leaf
- 3/4 pound small red potatoes (each 1 to 1 1/4 inches in diameter), scrubbed
- Ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup fresh dill , chopped
- 1 cup sour cream



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the butter in a large stockpot or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the onion and carrots and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened but not browned, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and cook until aromatic, about 30 seconds.
2. Add the tomato paste and stir in 1/2 cup of the stock to dissolve the tomato paste. Add the remaining stock, cabbage, beets, 4 tablespoons vinegar, sugar, 2 teaspoons salt, and the bay leaf. Bring to a boil, lower the heat, and simmer until the vegetables are soft and tender, 40 to 45 minutes. (The soup can be cooled and refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 5 days.)
3. Meanwhile, place the potatoes in a medium saucepan, cover with cold water, and add the remaining 1 teaspoon salt. Bring to a boil, lower the heat, cover, and simmer, stirring once or twice to ensure even cooking. Cook until a thin-bladed paring knife or metal cake tester inserted into a potato can be removed with no resistance, 10 to 12 minutes. Drain the potatoes, cool slightly, and cut into quarters.
4. Stir the meat into the pot and remove the bay leaf. Taste and adjust the seasonings, adding the remaining 1 to 2 tablespoons of vinegar, pepper to taste, and 1/4 cup dill. Place 4 potato quarters in each individual soup bowl and ladle some soup over the potatoes. Top with 2 more pieces of potato, a generous dollop of sour cream, and a generous sprinkling of dill. Serve immediately.

TECHNIQUE

Scrubbing Potatoes

Recipes in which potatoes are not peeled usually instruct the cook to "scrub" the potatoes. We like to use a rough-textured "bathing" or "exfoliating" glove for this task. The glove cleans away dirt but is relatively gentle and won't scrub away the potato skin. We keep a glove in the kitchen especially for cleaning potatoes, turnips, carrots, beets, and other root vegetables.

STEP-BY-STEP

Shredding Cabbage





1. Cut the cabbage into quarters, then trim and discard the hard core.
2. Separate the cabbage into small stacks of leaves that flatten when pressed.
- 3A. Use a chef's knife to cut each stack of cabbage leaves into thin shreds.



3B. Alternatively, fold the stack of leaves to fit into the feed tube of a food processor fitted with the slicing disk and shred.

TECHNIQUE

Handling Beets



1. Beets can stain counters, cutting boards, and clothes. To minimize the mess, wear tight-fitting surgical gloves and peel the beets over newspaper. Once the beets have been peeled, they can be grated by hand, or in a food processor.

2b. To grate beets in a food processor, cut the beets as necessary to fit in the feed tube of a food processor fitted with the shredding disk. If shredding both cabbage and beets in the food processor, shred the cabbage first, wipe the workbowl clean, and then shred the beets.

Celeriac Soup



Additional information on this Recipe from Food Network Canada

Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons butter
- 2 leeks, green top removed, roughly chopped
- 1 onion, roughly diced
- 2 bay leaves
- 3 sprigs thyme
- 1/2 cup white wine
- 1 celeriac, peeled, roughly diced
- 1 potato, peeled, roughly diced
- 6 cups vegetable stock
- 1 cup 35% cream
- pinch fresh nutmeg
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1 tablespoon black sesame seeds for garnish
- salt and pepper

Directions

1. Place 2 tablespoons of butter in a pot over medium heat.
2. Once butter has melted, place leeks, onion, bay leaves and thyme in pot, stir until onions are translucent.
3. Add white wine and reduce liquid by $\frac{2}{3}$.
4. Add celeriac and potato, stir.
5. Add vegetable stock, bring up to a boil then reduce heat to a simmer.
6. Cook until celeriac is tender, approximately 35-40 minutes.
7. Transfer mixture into a food processor, puree until smooth.
8. Stir in cream and remaining tablespoon of butter.
9. Season with salt, pepper, and nutmeg.
10. To serve, garnish with sour cream and black sesame seeds.

Creamless Creamy Tomato Soup (Cooks Illustrated)



Minutes to Prepare: 5
Minutes to Cook: 25
Number of Servings: 8

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 1 medium Onion, chopped medium (~1 cup)
- 3 medium Garlic Cloves, minced (~1 Tbsp)
- pinch hot red pepper flakes
- 1 Bay Leaf
- 2 (28-ounce) cans whole Tomatoes packed in juice
- 1 Tbsp Brown Sugar
- 3 large slices good-quality sandwich bread, crusts removed, torn into 1-inch pieces
- 2 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- Table Salt and Ground Black Pepper (to taste)
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh chives

Directions

Makes ~8, 1-cup servings

1. Heat 2 Tbsp oil in dutch oven over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add onion, garlic, red pepper flakes (if using), and bay leaf. Cook, stirring frequently, until onion is translucent, 3 to 5 minutes. Stir in tomatoes and their juice. Using potato masher, mash until no pieces bigger than 2 inches remain. Stir in sugar and bread; bring soup to boil. Reduce heat to medium and cook, stirring occasionally, until bread is completely saturated and starts to break down, about 5 minutes. Remove and discard bay leaf.
2. Transfer half of soup to blender. Add 1 Tbsp oil and process until soup is smooth and creamy, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl and repeat with remaining soup and oil. Rinse out dutch oven and return soup to pot. Stir in chicken broth. Return soup to boil and season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve soup in individual bowls. Sprinkle each portion with pepper and chives.

Number of Servings: 8

Gumbo z'Herbes



CONTRIBUTED BY DAVID KINCH

ACTIVE: 1 HR

TOTAL TIME: 3 HRS

SERVINGS: 8 TO 10

MAKE-AHEAD

STAFF-FAVORITE

New Orleans cooks traditionally make this smothered greens dish without meat for Good Friday. David Kinch, however, prepares his version with a generous amount of pork, as well as eight different kinds of greens, including carrot tops.

- . 1/2 pound mustard greens, stemmed
- . 1/2 pound collard greens, stemmed
- . 1/2 pound turnip greens or kale, stemmed
- . 1/2 pound spinach, stemmed
- . 1 cup carrot-top greens
- . 1 bunch watercress
- . 1/4 head iceberg lettuce
- . 3/4 pound green cabbage
- . 1 medium white onion, chopped
- . 6 garlic cloves, chopped
- . 4 scallions, chopped
- . 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- . 1 1/2 pounds trimmed boneless pork shoulder, cut into 1-inch pieces
- . Salt

- . Freshly ground pepper
 - . Cayenne pepper
 - . 1 pound hot andouille sausage, cut into 1/2-inch rounds
 - . 1/2 pound smoked ham, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
 - . 1 1/2 teaspoons chopped thyme
 - . 1 1/2 teaspoons filé powder (see Note)
 - . Hot sauce and cider vinegar, for serving
1. Coarsely chop all of the greens and add to a very large pot, along with the onion, garlic and scallions. Add 2 quarts of water and bring to a boil. Cover partially and simmer over moderate heat until the greens are very tender and lose their bright color, about 30 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, scoop the greens into a food processor, along with the flour, and coarsely puree.
 2. Return the broth in the pot to a boil and add the pork. Season with salt and pepper and cayenne. Simmer over low heat, partially covered, for 30 minutes. Add the andouille, ham, thyme and greens and simmer, partially covered, for 1 hour. Stir in the filé powder and serve with hot sauce and vinegar.

MAKE AHEAD

The gumbo can be refrigerated for up to 5 days.

NOTES

Filé powder (also called gumbo filé) is made from ground sassafras. It's available at [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

SUGGESTED PAIRING

Full-bodied Cabernet Franc often has an herbal edge, which helps it pair well with greens, like those in this substantial gumbo. Try one from southern France or California.

Slow Poached Eggs

Slow poaching eggs is easy. Take a giant pot of water and put on the stove. Put a steamer rack in it so the eggs aren't close to the element. Pop a thermometer in and bring the water up to 140°F and hold it there. Drop the eggs in their bath and let them soak for about 40-45 minutes. Done!

By the way, Chang says that 140°F is “the temperature of a very hot bath.” I stuck my finger in water as suggested and all I have to say is this: David Chang, you take hot baths!



Kimchi Jigae



- 1/3 lbs pork belly sliced very thin
- 1/2 small onion sliced
- 1 1/2 C loosely packed kimchi
- 4 cloves of garlic minced
- 1/2 C kimchi juice
- 2 C water
- 1/2 tsp dried ginger
- 1 Tbs cooking wine (such as mirin or shaoxing)
- 2 tsp gochujang (Korean chili paste)
- 2 tsp miso or dengjang
- 2 tsp Korean soup soy sauce (or light soy sauce)
- 2 Tbs gochugaru (Korean dried chili flakes) optional
- 8 oz silken tofu sliced into cubes
- 2 green onions thinly sliced
- 1 tbs butter

Heat a small enameled cast iron pot (like a Le Creuset) until hot, then add the pork belly and onion. Allow some of the fat to render out of the pork belly,

then add the kimchi and garlic. Saute until the mixture is very fragrant, then add the kimchi juice, water, ginger, cooking wine, gochujang, miso and soy sauce, stirring everything together to combine.

Bring to a boil and taste for spiciness. Add as much gochugaru to taste until it's pleasantly tingly (I usually add about 2 Tbs, but this may be way to much for some people). Add the tofu, turn down the heat to a simmer and let it cook for 15-20 minutes, or until the pork and kimchi are tender.

When you're ready to serve, add the green onions and butter and give it a quick stir to incorporate. Put a trivet on the table and serve it straight out of the pot along with a bowl of rice.

Minestrone Alla Romagna

from Marcella Hazan's Essentials of Italian Cooking



Minestrone is a great way to use up leftover vegetables. Substitute what is available for the vegetables in the recipe.

Submitted by jmalin

Updated: January 27, 2008

ingredients

- 1 lb. fresh zucchini
- 1/2 c. extra virgin olive oil
- 3 T. butter
- 1 cup onion sliced very thin
- 1 cup diced carrots
- 1 cup diced celery
- 2 cups peeled, diced potatoes
- 1/4 pound fresh or frozen green beans
- 3 cups shredded Savoy cabbage or regular cabbage
- 1 1/2 cups drained cannellini beans
- 6 cups meat broth or 2 cups canned beef broth + 4 cups water
- Optional: crust from 1- to 2-pound piece of parmigiano-reggiano cheese
- 2/3 cup canned imported Italian plum tomatoes, with their juice
- Salt
- 1/3 cup freshly grated parmigiano-reggiano cheese

preparation

Soak zucchini in cold water for 20 minutes. Dice fine. Soak green beans and snip ends and dice them.

Cook onion in butter and oil until it wilts and becomes a pale gold in a large stockpot. Add diced carrots and cook for 2-3 minutes longer. Add celery and potatoes in turn repeating same procedure. Add green beans and zucchini.

After a few minutes add shredded cabbage and continue cooking another 5-6 minutes.

Add broth and optional cheese crust, tomatoes with juice and sprinkling of salt. Cover, lower heat and simmer 2 1/2 hours. Add cannellini beans and cook for at least another 30 minutes. Cook until consistence is fairly dense. It should not be watery.

When soup is done, remove the cheese crust, correct for salt and swirl in parmesan cheese.

Variations - Add in frozen peas or pasta at the end.

Seafood Paella



Another item that was on the menu for Father's Day was seafood paella. My father and I share a deep love for this Spanish dish, sparked by a family vacation through the beautiful country many years ago. We sampled Valencian paella and rich sangria in the Spanish capital and versions across the southern coastline of Adalucia. The flavors have always stuck with us after having immediately developed a fondness for them. Taberna Del Alabardero is a traditional Spanish restaurant in D.C. and they serve incredible paella, but being able to make it at home is something I've always wanted to conquer. I perused many recipes (including those from a paella cookbook my close friend gave me) and even watched some instructional videos online. I found Cook's Illustrated (and America's Test Kitchen) version very helpful. They are protective of their material if you are not a member, but you can find the recipe published [here](#). I really liked their idea of using a dutch oven as most people (my father aside) don't own a paella pan. In the end, I couldn't find a recipe that I wanted to follow precisely, but I used the template from Cook's Illustrated and created my own version with seafood and some shortcuts. It came out beautifully. I have no idea why paella has somewhat of a reputation for being difficult; it was not at all as complex as I was expecting. Here is what I did:

Prepped almost 2 lbs of seafood. I used shrimp, lobster (tails), calamari steaks and scallops. I was tempted to also use mussels, but we were serving mussels as the first course. We washed, dried, chopped (except the shrimp), salt and peppered them. Harris Teeter has the best quality for the price, I find. Example: lobster tails at Whole Foods: \$12.99 each. at Harris Teeter: \$4.99 each.

I heated some butter and 4 cloves of chopped garlic in a dutch oven
Sauteed all the seafood together and removed after about 3 minutes (when seafood was almost, but not quite yet done), set aside in a bowl, covered with foil

Preheated the oven to 300 degrees

I added some olive oil to the dutch oven, threw in a small chopped white onion

4 more cloves of chopped garlic

I then added some spices to jazz it up and this is totally optional (the paella tasted nothing but authentic) ground cumin, coriander, red chili and tumeric, 2 cloves and 2 cardamom pods

1 chopped red bell pepper

1 can diced tomatoes

1/3 cup white wine, salt, pepper

I let this cook down for a few minutes, and then added a bay leaf

I then added 2 cups Arborio rice

3 cups chicken broth

I then added the saffron. I used about a teaspoon or so and I buy my saffron from Trader Joe's because it's the greatest bargain: a small jar for \$5.99. I grinded the saffron up, which I read releases more flavor, poured a little boiling water over it in a small bowl and let it sit for a while

Stir the pot, and let it all come to a boil

I then placed the pot (covered) in the oven, for 15 minutes

I removed the pot and threw in all the seafood, 1/3 cup frozen peas, 1/3 cup freshly chopped cilantro, and some fried onions (another Indian addition I love in rice dishes, but totally optional)

I then placed the pot back in the oven for another 10 minutes and it was done

Scandinavian Mushroom Soup



admin

Ingredients:

2 whole cloves of garlic

8 cups mixed mushrooms (reserve ½ cup for garnish)

2 large white onions

1 slice of celeriac (celery root), diced or 3 stalks of celery diced.

salt and pepper

olive oil

butter

1 bay leaf

1 tablespoon fresh thyme

8 cups chicken stock

¾ cup heavy cream

3 tablespoons tamari sauce or soy sauce

1 bunch fresh basil

Lemon juice

Directions:

Clean and mince garlic. Roast minced garlic on the stove top in 1 tablespoon olive oil over a LOW heat for 10-15 minutes.

Thinly slice onions or dice and cook over medium heat in 2 tablespoons olive oil until mushy but not caramelized (approx. 15 minutes). Add celery root and cook 5 additional minutes.

To the onion and celery root mixture, now add the roasted garlic and mushrooms and cook until the mushrooms are soft. Add fresh thyme, and season to taste. Add stock, bay leaf and cover and simmer for 30 minutes over a low medium heat. Add heavy cream, tamari sauce and 1 teaspoon lemon juice and cook for 5 minutes more.

Place the ½ cup mushrooms that have been reserved and fry in 1 tablespoon butter until mushrooms nicely browned. Set aside for garnish. The soup can be left as is for a more rustic presentation or pureed.

Ladle soup into bowls and garnish with chopped basil, fried mushrooms and a piece of rye toast.

Shiitake-and-Swiss-Chard Soup with Hand-Cut Noodles



© Con Poulos

CONTRIBUTED BY DAVID CHANG

ACTIVE: 30 MIN

TOTAL TIME: 1 HR 30 MIN

SERVINGS: 8

HEALTHY

STAFF-FAVORITE

VEGETARIAN

David Chang flavors this fabulous broth with dried shiitakes; fresh shiitakes intensify the flavor. The highlight: simple noodles thrown in at the end.

"They're based on the udon I learned to make in Tokyo," Chang says.

MORE v

- . One 1-ounce sheet of dried kombu (see Note)
- . 3 ounces dried shiitake mushrooms, finely ground in a food processor
- . 2 cups all-purpose flour
- . 3/4 cup water
- . 1/2 cup soy sauce
- . 1/4 cup mirin

- . 6 ounces fresh shiitake mushrooms, stemmed and caps thinly sliced
 - . 1 pound Swiss chard—stems finely chopped, leaves coarsely chopped
 - . Kimchi and honey, for serving (optional)
1. In a large pot, combine the kombu with 14 cups of water and bring to a simmer. Cook over low heat, without boiling, for 30 minutes. Discard the kombu and bring the cooking broth to a boil. Add the ground mushrooms and return to a boil. Remove from the heat, cover and let steep for 30 minutes.
 2. In the bowl of a standing electric mixer fitted with the dough hook, mix the flour and water at medium speed just until the flour is moistened. Increase the speed to medium high and beat until a smooth, firm, elastic dough forms, 8 to 10 minutes. Wrap the dough in plastic; let stand for 30 minutes.
 3. Strain the broth into a heatproof bowl. Wipe out the pot and return the broth to it. Add the soy sauce and mirin and bring to a boil. Add the sliced shiitakes and Swiss chard and cook just until tender, 2 minutes; keep warm.
 4. On a lightly floured surface, roll the dough out 1/8 inch thick. Using a pastry wheel, slice the dough into uneven strips. Bring the broth back to a boil and add the noodles. Cook, stirring, until tender and the soup is slightly thickened, 5 minutes. Ladle the soup into bowls and garnish with kimchi and a little honey.

NOTES Kombu, a type of kelp often used to flavor Japanese soups, is available at Japanese markets and at some supermarkets and health-food stores.

Silky Tortilla Soup



© Con Poulos

CONTRIBUTED BY RENE ORTIZ

TOTAL TIME: 1 HR

SERVINGS: 6 TO 8

FAST

MAKE-AHEAD

STAFF-FAVORITE

Chef Rene Ortiz serves modernist Mexican dishes at La Condesa in Austin. His smoky, tomatoey tortilla soup is a bit simpler and more classic than many of his recipes, but it still has an innovative touch: It's enriched with butter, not tortillas.

- . 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- . 1 large white onion, thinly sliced
- . 5 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- . Kosher salt
- . 1 1/2 pounds plum tomatoes, halved
- . 4 chipotle chiles in adobo sauce, seeded and coarsely chopped
- . 8 cups chicken stock
- . Canola oil, for frying

- . 6 corn tortillas, halved and thinly sliced
 - . 1 stick unsalted butter, diced
 - . 4 cups shredded chicken, from one 2 1/4-pound rotisserie chicken
 - . Crumbled queso fresco, dried chile and cilantro leaves, for garnish
1. In a saucepan, heat the olive oil until shimmering. Add the onion, garlic and a generous pinch of salt and cook over moderate heat, stirring, until softened and starting to brown, 8 minutes. Stir in the tomatoes, chipotle chiles and stock and bring to a boil. Simmer over moderately low heat, stirring occasionally, until the tomatoes are very soft, 30 minutes.
 2. Meanwhile, in a skillet, heat 1/4 inch of canola oil. Add half of the tortilla strips and fry over moderate heat, stirring, until crisp, 2 to 3 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the strips to paper towels. Season with salt. Repeat with the remaining strips.
 3. Carefully ladle half of the soup into a blender and add half of the butter. Puree until smooth. Pour the pureed soup into a large saucepan. Repeat with the remaining soup and butter. Stir in the shredded chicken and gently reheat the soup. Season with salt.
 4. Serve the soup in bowls, garnishing with queso fresco, chile, cilantro and tortilla strips.

SUGGESTED PAIRING

Not all soups call for a wine pairing, but this smooth, buttery one is sensational with a lively, full-bodied white wine, like Chardonnay made with little to no oak. Try one from France or northern California.

Split Pea and Ham Soup



INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 large onion , chopped fine (about 1 1/2 cups)
- Table salt
- 2 medium garlic cloves , minced or pressed through garlic press (about 2 teaspoons)
- 7 cups water
- 1 ham steak (about 1 pound), skin removed, cut into quarters
- 3 slices thick-cut bacon (about 4 ounces) (see note)
- 1 pound green split peas (about 2 cups), picked through and rinsed
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 medium carrots , peeled and cut into 1/2-inch pieces (about 1 cup)
- 1 medium celery rib , cut into 1/2-inch pieces (about 1 cup)
- Ground black pepper

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat butter in large Dutch oven over medium-high heat. When foaming subsides, add onion and 1/2 teaspoon salt; cook, stirring frequently, until softened, about 3 to 4 minutes. Add garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add water, ham steak, bacon, peas, thyme, and bay leaves. Increase heat to high and bring to simmer, stirring frequently to keep peas from sticking to bottom. Reduce heat to

low, cover, and simmer until peas are tender but not falling apart, about 45 minutes.

2

2. Remove ham steak, cover with foil or plastic wrap to prevent drying out, and set aside. Stir in carrots and celery; continue to simmer, covered, until vegetables are tender and peas have almost completely broken down, about 30 minutes longer.

3

3. When cool enough to handle, shred ham into small bite-size pieces with two forks. Remove and discard thyme sprigs, bay leaves, and bacon slices. Stir ham back into soup and return to simmer. Season to taste with salt and pepper; serve.

4

(note: if the soup is too thin at the end of step 3, increase the heat and simmer, uncovered, until the desired consistency is reached. If it is too thick, thin it with a little water.

NOTES

Four ounces of regular sliced bacon can be used, but the thinner slices are a little harder to remove from the soup. The soup can be made up to 3 days in advance. If necessary, thin it with water when reheating.

Source: Cook's Illustrated