

Chicken Tortilla Soup

Makes 5 large servings

4 cups Mexican beans, recipe follows
2 cans (14 ½ oz each) vegetable or chicken broth
1 ¼ tsp sugar
2 cups cooked chicken, or whatever you prefer
1 tbsp lime juice
2 ½ cups crushed tortilla chips
5 tbsp shredded Mexican-blend cheese (or your preference, for topping)
Velveeta or other good melt-y cheese, like quesada fresca. (optional)
Avocado (for topping, optional)

1. Place broth and sugar in a large stockpot or dutch oven over med-high heat. Bring to boil.
2. Add beans and chicken, being careful not to mash beans (or not, whatever works). Return to boil, then reduce heat to med-low.
3. Stir in lime juice and Velveeta or quesada fresca, if using. Let it melt.
4. Crunch up chips and put in bottom of soup bowls. Ladle soup over chips and sprinkle with shredded cheese and avocado, if using. ENJOY!

Mexican Beans

1 tsp. vegetable oil
1 cup chopped onion
1 can (15 oz) red beans
1 can (15 oz) white beans
1 can (15 oz) black beans
1 can (15 oz) pinto beans
2 cans (14.5 oz each) diced tomatoes with garlic and onions
2 tsp minced garlic (or 2 crushed cloves. Or more. I like more)
1 ½ cups corn kernels
1 ½ tsp chili powder
1 ½ tsp ground cumin

1. Heat oil in stockpot or large, deep skillet. Add chopped onion.
2. While onion cooks, rinse and drain red beans and white beans and add to skillet. Add black beans with juice, tomatoes and garlic. Add corn, chili powder and cumin. Stir.
3. Reduce heat to low and simmer 2 min or until heated through.
4. Can be refrigerated for up to three days or cooled and frozen for future use.

Note: This recipe is very forgiving. You can add all kinds of things and make substitutions if necessary and it will still come out tasting yummy. It can easily be vegetarian by omitting the chicken and substituting vegetarian broth for the chicken. The recipe for the South of the Border beans makes enough for at least two recipes of soup, so if you are serving a crowd you will use the entire recipe.

