

Mexico chilies, which are also called California or Anaheim chilies. If making ahead, cover and refrigerate chilies up to 2 days; freeze to store longer.

Makes: About 1½ cups

1. Rinse about 1½ pounds **fresh poblano chilies** and pat dry. Lay in single layer on a 10- by 15-inch pan. Broil 3 to 4 inches from heat, turning as needed to char skin on all sides, about 10 minutes. Let stand until cool.

2. Pull off chili skins and discard. Remove and discard stems and seeds. Chop chilies.

Per ½ cup: 44 cal., 4.1% (1.8 cal.) from fat; 2.2 g protein; 0.2 g fat (0 g sat.); 10 g carbo (1.6 g fiber); 7.7 mg sodium; 0 mg chol.

Black Bean Soup

Prep and cook time: About 2 hours

Notes: If making soup up to 3 days ahead, cool, cover, and chill. Or make weeks ahead and freeze. The soup thickens, so thin with more broth or water when reheating. Offer sour cream and hot sauce as accompaniments.

Makes: 11 to 12 cups

- 2 tablespoons **olive oil**
- 3 cups chopped **onions**
- 1 **green bell pepper** (½ lb.), stemmed, seeded, and chopped
- 1 cup chopped **celery**, including leaves
- 4 cloves **garlic**, minced
- ¼ teaspoons **dried thyme**
- 1 **dried bay leaf**
- 1 pound **dried black beans**
- 1 can (49 oz.) or 6 cups **reduced-sodium chicken broth**
- 1 **smoked ham hock** (about 1¼ lb.), cut in half lengthwise
- ⅓ cup **medium-dry madeira** or dry sherry
- ¾ teaspoon **pepper**
- Salt**

1. In a 6- to 8-quart pan over medium heat, combine oil, onions, green pepper, celery, garlic, thyme, and bay leaf. Cover and stir occasionally until vegetables are limp, about 10 minutes.

2. Sort through the beans and discard

debris. Rinse and drain beans.

3. Add beans, broth, 3 cups water, and ham hock to pan. Bring to a boil over high heat.

4. Turn heat to low. Cover and simmer, stirring often, until ham hock is very tender when pierced, about 1½ hours.

5. With a slotted spoon, lift out hock. Let stand until cool enough to touch. If beans are soft when pressed, remove from heat. If not, cover and continue to simmer until they are. Pull meat off the hock, discarding bones and skin. Chop meat and return to soup.

6. Add madeira to soup and stir over medium heat until steaming. Discard bay leaf. Add pepper and salt to taste.

7. For a thicker soup, purée up to half of it in a blender or food processor, then return to pan and stir. Serve hot.

Per ½ cup: 109 cal., 18% (20 cal.) from fat; 6.1 g protein; 2.2 g fat (0.4 g sat.); 15 g carbo (3.1 g fiber); 340 mg sodium; 3.6 mg chol.

Apricot, Cherry, and Green Chili Chutney

Prep and cook time: About 1 hour

Notes: If making up to 1 month ahead, cool, cover, and chill.

Makes: About 4 cups

- 2½ cups **dried apricots**, coarsely chopped
- 1½ cups **cider vinegar**
- 1½ cups **sugar**
- 1 cup chopped **roasted poblano chilies** (directions precede) or canned green chilies
- ½ cup **dried sweet cherries**, chopped
- ½ cup chopped **red onion**
- 1 **cinnamon stick** (3 in.)
- 1½ teaspoons **mustard seed**
- ¾ teaspoon **salt**

1. In a 3- to 4-quart pan over high heat, combine apricots, vinegar, sugar, chilies, cherries, onion, cinnamon, mustard seed, and salt.

2. Bring to a boil. Turn heat to low. Cover and simmer, stirring occasionally, until apricots are soft when pierced, 20 to 25 minutes. Uncover and simmer until most of the liquid evaporates, about 5 minutes longer.

3. Let cool, discard cinnamon, and serve chutney, or cover and chill.

Per 2 tablespoons: 73 cal., 1.2% (0.9 cal.) from fat; 0.7 g protein; 0.1 g fat (0 g sat.); 19 g carbo (1 g fiber); 54 mg sodium; 0 mg chol.

Season black bean soup with liquid fire selected from the hot-sauce bar.



NOEL BARNHURST