

## BLACK BEAN SOUP SANTA MONICA STYLE

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1½ cups black turtle beans
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon bacon fat or olive oil
- 6 fresh chiles, stems and seeds removed, chopped
- 1 large ham hock
- 3 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon crushed epazote (optional)
- 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- 6 to 8 cups chicken stock
- 1 cup cream or half-and-half
- 3 tablespoons tequila (optional)
- Crushed red chile
- Sour cream

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Cover the beans with water and soak overnight. Sauté the onion and garlic in bacon fat or oil until soft.

Combine beans, fresh chiles (use jalapenos for very spicy soup, Anaheims for mild spiciness), onion and garlic, ham hock, cumin, epazote, vinegar and stock. Bring to a boil and reduce heat. Simmer 3 to 3½ hours, or until beans are soft.

Remove ham hock, shred the meat and set aside. Puree the bean mixture until smooth. Strain if necessary to obtain smooth texture.

Return to the saucepan, stir in the cream, and heat. Remove from heat and stir in tequila. Ladle into bowls, stir in ham shreds, and garnish with crushed red chiles and a dollop of sour cream, if desired.

Serves 6 to 8.

**PER SERVING:** 269 calories, 15 g protein, 26 g carbohydrate, 13 g fat (7 g saturated), 51 mg cholesterol, 221 mg sodium, 8 g fiber.