

Redolent of smoked ham, this soup is a staple in Jurançon and makes a robust midday meal for even the heartiest appetite.

GARBURE

Cabbage and White Bean Soup

SERVES 4 TO 6 (MAIN COURSE)

Active time: 30 min

Start to finish: 10½ hr (includes soaking beans)

Don't be misled by the plain-looking appearance of this classic Basque soup; it is thoroughly satisfying and delicious.

- 1 cup dried white beans such as Great Northern, navy, or cannellini (7 oz), picked over and rinsed
- 1 whole clove
- 1 medium onion, peeled and left whole
- 2½ lb smoked ham hocks
- 3 qt water
- 6 fresh parsley sprigs
- 1 Turkish or ½ California bay leaf
- 1 fresh thyme sprig
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 lb yellow-fleshed potatoes such as Yukon Gold (3 to 4 medium)
- 1 lb cabbage, cored and cut into ½-inch pieces (6 cups)
- ½ stick (¼ cup) unsalted butter, softened
- 12 (½-inch-thick) slices from a baguette

► Soak beans in cold water to cover by 2 inches at room temperature at least 8 hours, or quick-soak (see cooks' note, below). Drain in a colander.

► Stick clove into onion. Bring ham

hocks and 3 quarts water to a boil in a wide 6- to 7-quart heavy pot, skimming off any froth, then reduce heat and simmer, covered, 1 hour. Add beans, onion, parsley, bay leaf, thyme, and garlic and simmer, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until beans are almost tender, 40 to 50 minutes.

► When beans are almost done, peel potatoes and cut into 1-inch pieces. Add potatoes and cabbage to beans, then simmer, uncovered, until vegetables are very tender, 20 to 25 minutes.

► Remove ham hocks. When ham hocks are cool enough to handle, discard skin and bones, then cut meat into bite-size pieces. Stir into soup with salt and pepper to

taste. Discard bay leaf and onion.

► Spread butter on both sides of bread, then toast in a 12-inch heavy skillet over moderate heat, turning over once, until golden, about 2 minutes total.

► Serve soup with toasts.

Cooks' notes:

- Beans can be soaked up to 12 hours, chilled.
- To quick-soak beans: Cover beans with cold water by 2 inches in a 5- to 6-quart pot and bring to a boil, uncovered. Boil beans, uncovered, 2 minutes, then remove from heat and let stand, uncovered, 1 hour.
- Soup improves in flavor if made 1 day ahead, cooled completely, uncovered, then chilled, covered. Remove any solidified fat and reheat, thinning with water if necessary.

