

## Black Bean Soup

2 cups dried black beans  
1/4 cup olive oil  
1/2 cup diced ham or bacon  
1 cup chopped yellow onions  
1 tablespoon diced jalapeno  
2 tablespoons minced garlic  
1 1/2 tsp. cumin  
1 tsp. dried oregano  
3 bay leaves  
1 tsp. crumbled dried thyme  
6 cups canned chicken broth (low salt), diluted with 6 cups water  
1/2 cup tomato puree (optional)  
salt & pepper to taste

Rinse beans, cover with cold water and soak overnight. Drain and set aside.

In soup pot, heat oil over med-high heat. Add the onions, ham or bacon, garlic and Jalapeno, saute until soft, about 5 minutes. Add the oregano, thyme and cumin, saute 1 minute longer. Add the beans, bay leaves, broth and water, bring mixture to a boil.

Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 1 1/2 hours.

Stir the tomato puree into the mixture, season to taste with salt and pepper. Cover and simmer until beans begin to fall apart, about 1 1/2 hours longer. Add more liquid if necessary to keep beans covered during cooking.

Serves 4 to 6

Serve with Fox Run Vineyards Semi-dry Riesling

Served at 1999 Deck The Halls