

Quick & Easy Refried Bean Soup – Comfort du Jour

This is not an all-day-simmer kind of soup; rather, it leverages the already developed flavors of two key ingredients—jarred salsa and canned refried beans. Add some fresh onions, some veggie broth and your choice of chili beans and dinner is served. The soup is every bit as comforting as any other homemade soup, but only takes 20 minutes, start to finish, which just happens to be the exact amount of time you need to throw a batch of Jiffy corn muffins into the oven (they're perfect on the side).

INGREDIENTS

1 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped
1/2 bell pepper (any color), chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
Cumin, salt and pepper
1 cup prepared salsa from a jar* (see notes)
2 cans beans (mix and match; pinto, black, kidney, navy are all good here)
2 cups low-sodium vegetable (or chicken) broth
1 can refried beans
corn muffins for serving (optional, but yummy)

*NOTES

Use any kind of savory salsa you have on hand, and any heat level you like. It can be mild or spicy, green or red, thick or thin. You can also substitute a can of Rotel tomatoes, if you have one in the cabinet.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Get your corn muffins in the oven, if you're making them. This soup can be made while they are baking.
2. Drain and rinse the canned beans.
3. Heat olive oil over medium heat in a soup pot. Sauté onion and pepper until softened. Add garlic and sauté another minute or two. Season with cumin, salt and pepper.
4. Increase heat to medium-high. Add canned beans, salsa and broth, and stir to combine. When mixture begins to boil, reduce heat to medium. Stir in the can of refried beans, taking time to swirl and blend it into the broth. Adjust seasonings to taste. Simmer until ready to serve.

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