



Creamy White Bean Soup

From *Ceri Mauerwoman*

2 cups dry Great Northern beans
1-2 cups butternut squash, medium dice
Olive oil
2-3 cloves fresh garlic, minced
1 cup onions, diced
1-3 shitake mushrooms, soaked and sliced or diced
1 cup carrot, small dice
1 cup celery, small
½ tsp Basil
½ tsp Oregano
½ tsp Thyme

Soak two cups of beans in a bowl with water to cover the beans plus and additional two inches to account for expansion while soaking. Soaking time is overnight or eight hours.

Drain the beans once soaking time is complete. Discard soaking water.

Place beans in a pressure cooker with water to cover plus 1 ½ inches.

Bring to a boil.

Skim the foam.

Bring to pressure.

Cook 45 minutes.

Remove from pressure (quick method will allow beans to stay more intact; slow method will cook beans longer – can choose according to your personal preference)

Add ½ tsp of salt (taste the water – if it's salty then ½ tsp is enough; if the water doesn't taste salty then add another ½ tsp)

Simmer beans for twenty minutes stirring occasionally. Stirring will prevent the broken down beans from burning on the bottom.

While beans are cooking, in a separate saucepan, simmer the butternut squash with a pinch of salt in water to cover until very soft. Puree with a stick blender or food processor until smooth.

In a soup pot (larger pot with a wide bottom) saute in olive oil:

Garlic, onions, shitake carrot, and celery. The basil, oregano and thyme can be added after the garlic or after the celery. Add a small pinch of salt after the addition of each vegetable. Once vegetables have softened add 2 cups of water, the beans, and the pureed butternut squash. The cooking liquid of the beans may be reserved to thin the soup if it's too thick at this point or it can be used first then thinned with water. Test for saltiness. Simmer longer if you need to add more salt.