

VEGETARIAN SPLIT PEA SOUP

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ cups split green peas, sorted and rinsed
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large onion, diced
- 2 large cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 teaspoon dried marjoram
- 1 teaspoon fresh or dried, chopped rosemary
- 1 teaspoon paprika (optional)
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 ½ teaspoons salt
- 2 quarts of water or vegetable broth

Servings: Makes 5 - 12 oz. servings

Steps:

Cover peas with water and set aside. Heat the oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add onion and carrots and sauté until the onion has some color, about 10 minutes. Add the garlic, herbs, paprika and plenty of pepper. Cook a few minutes more. Drain the peas and add them to the pot along with the bay leaves, thyme, salt and stock. Stir frequently at first to keep the peas from sticking to the bottom. Once the soup comes to a boil, lower the heat and simmer, partially covered, until the peas have completely broken down, about an hour or more. Add extra water if the soup is too thick. Remove the bay leaves. Puree in a blender or use an immersion stick blender.

Creamed version: add a cup of half and half or milk after the soup is pureed and heat through.

Spinach version: Remove the stems and chop a small bunch of spinach. Add it to the finished soup and heat the soup until the spinach wilts.