

## Chicken Taco Soup



Delicious taco spices, chicken and tortilla chips combine to make this soup irresistible to all. Garnish with avocado, low-fat sour cream and grated cheese to make it an even healthier, heartier meal. Chilly days mean big pots of soup around these parts. This one combines the flavor of a chicken taco in one warm bowl. Bake up a batch of cornbread to go with this and you're good to go.

**Hands-On Time: 5 minutes**

**Ready In: 20-25 minutes**

**Yield: 6 servings**

### **Ingredients**

1 pound boneless skinless chicken, cooked and shredded

2 cups cooked kidney beans

2 cups prepared salsa

6 cups chicken stock

1 packet taco seasoning

2 cups tortilla chips, crushed

### **Directions**

Combine chicken, beans, salsa, stock and seasoning in a 2-quart soup pot.

Bring to a boil and reduce heat until soup is simmering.

Let cook for 15 to 20 minutes so flavors blend well.

Top each bowl of soup with crushed tortilla chips.

### **Note**

Switch the beans to pinto if you like and add sour cream and a sprinkling of cheddar cheese to each bowl for a change of pace.

## Midwinter Vegetable Soup



Bursting with both flavour and nutrients, this healthy soup makes full use of whatever vegetables you have on hand. Let the kids add cheese and crusty croutons for a thoroughly nourishing meal. You can prep the veggies in order as the soup cooks, and if you don't have any stale bread to add, you can do without -- but it does lend the soup a satisfying robustness. Let your kids add their own cheese and a splash of olive oil from a small pitcher: they'll love feeling involved in their dinner.

**Hands-On Time: 30 minutes**

**Ready In: 1 hour**

**Yield: 8-10 servings**

## **Ingredients**

2 tablespoons olive oil, plus additional for drizzling

1 medium onion, chopped

salt

1 large bunch chard, washed well

2 large garlic cloves, finely chopped

1/2 pound potatoes, diced (peel them if you like)

1/2 pound carrots, peeled and diced

1 small green cabbage, quartered, cored, and shredded

2 teaspoons sweet paprika

1 (28-ounce) can chopped tomatoes with their liquid

2 14-ounce cans of chickpeas with their liquid

6 cups water

4 or 5 1/2-inch slices of baguette (or the equivalent amount of another crusty bread)

1 tablespoon sherry vinegar

Freshly grated parmesan cheese

## **Directions**

In a large, heavy soup pot over medium heat, heat the olive oil. Add the onions and 1 teaspoon of salt and sauté, stirring, while you prepare the chard.

Pull the leaves off the stems, finely slice the stems and add them, along with the garlic, to the pot. Stack and bunch the leaves, sliver them into fine ribbons, and set them aside.

Prepare the remaining vegetables in order -- potatoes, carrots, cabbage -- adding each to the pot and continuing to sauté them as you go.

Add the chard last, and when all the vegetables are wilted in the pot, add the paprika and stir for a minute or so.

Now add the tomatoes with their liquid, the chickpeas with their liquid, the water, and another 2 teaspoons of salt and turn up the heat. When the pot boils, turn the heat down and simmer the soup gently for 40 minutes.

Meanwhile, toast the bread in a 350°F oven for 10 minutes, until it is dry to the touch. Tear the bread into small pieces and sprinkle the vinegar over it.

After the soup has cooked, stir in the bread (reserve some for garnish if you like), turn off the heat, and leave it for 15 minutes.

Stir again, taste for salt, and serve with a drizzle of olive oil and a grating of fresh parmesan.