

Scandinavian Smoky Pea Soup

Sheila Lukins

Servings: 6



Fresh ginger, the secret ingredient, distinguishes Scandinavia's dried pea soup from others, such as "potage Saint-Germain". I've resisted adding anything other than the basic ingredients—a smoky ham hock, onions, garlic, and carrots—to present this soothing winter soup in its purest state. To prevent the soup from tasting too salty, I've boiled the ham hock first to remove some of the salt. Serve this soup hot with buttered black pumpernickel topped with a thin slice of roast beef for a perfect winter Sunday supper.

Ingredients

12 ounces meaty smoked ham hock
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 cups chopped onions
3 small carrots, peeled and finely chopped
2 tablespoons minced garlic
1 pound yellow split peas, picked over and rinsed
12 cups defatted Chicken Broth
1 piece fresh ginger (1 inch), peeled and lightly crushed
4 fresh dill sprigs
2 flat-leaf parsley sprigs
1 teaspoon ground allspice
½ teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper
Coarse salt, to taste
2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill, for garnish

Cooking Method

Place the ham hock in a medium-size saucepan and cover with cold water.

1. Bring to a boil and continue to gently boil for 15 minutes.
2. Drain and rinse under cold water.
3. Pat dry.

Heat the oil in a heavy soup pot over low heat.

1. Add the onions and carrots and cook, stirring, until the onions are wilted, about 10 minutes.
2. Add the garlic and cook 1 minute longer.
3. Add the ham hock, peas, chicken broth, ginger, dill and parsley sprigs, allspice, and pepper.
4. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to low, and simmer, partially covered, for 1¼ hours, stirring constantly.
5. Remove the ham hock and cool slightly.
6. Shred the meat from the bone and return it to the soup.
7. Remove the ginger and dill and parsley sprigs and discard.
8. Adjust the seasonings, adding salt if needed, and serve piping hot, garnished with the chopped dill.