



**Peas Porridge hot,  
Peas Porridge cold,  
Peas Porridge in the pot  
Nine days old!**

**Remember the old nursery rhyme about peas porridge? What exactly is peas porridge?** In the days of pioneers when fireplaces were used for more than just warmth, a large pot of whatever the family had available would be cooked over an open flame and re-warmed later with additional ingredients. This could go on for nine days just like the rhyme says.

Today, we would not be likely to reheat soup for that many days, although many people agree that soup is better the second time around. Soups play an important role in a well balanced diet and can include many food groups. They can help with weight control because they make you feel full with fewer calories. If you tend to eat your meals very quickly, your body does not have enough time to signal to your brain that you are full and to stop eating. Eating very hot soup at the beginning of a meal forces you to slow down and relax. The little bit of time it takes to eat a cup of soup is often enough to ensure that you don't overeat the main dish.

Soups are very versatile and can either be a great start for a meal or a hearty entrée. They can be a great way to clean the limp vegetables out of your refrigerator, or use leftover bits of meat. Coupled with hot bread and a crisp salad, they become a complete meal. Here are some soup recipes to help warm your insides this winter. These recipes work well on top of the stove or in a crock-pot.

## Bean Soup

1 jar	Great Northern Beans
1 pkg	dry onion soup mix
Any amt	ham cubes (optional)

Place beans into a cooking pot. Put dry onion soup mix into the empty bean jar. Fill the jar almost to the top with water, replace jar lid and shake until thoroughly blended. Pour onion soup and water mixture into cooking pot with beans. Place ham cubes into the pot, and simmer for 30 minutes.

## Vegetable Soup

- 2 stalks celery, diced
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 potatoes, cubed
- 1 12–14 oz. can diced tomatoes
- 1 14 oz. beef, chicken or vegetable broth
- 3-4 carrots, diced
- ½ C. fresh or frozen corn
- ½ C. green beans
- ¼ t ground black pepper
- bay leaves
- salt to taste

Chop onion, celery, carrot and potato. Place them in soup pot. Add spices and broth. Bring to a boil. Add corn and green beans, and simmer for 1–2 hours.

## Black Bean Soup

- 2 14 oz. cans black beans
- 1 14 oz. can chicken broth
- 1 large onion chopped
- 1 green pepper, chopped
- ¼. cumin
- ¼ t crushed red pepper flakes
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 t liquid smoke seasoning
- 2 T lemon juice
- ½ t minced garlic

In a large pot, pour chicken broth. Add onion and green pepper and sauté until tender. Add remaining ingredients. Cover and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer 1–2 hours stirring occasionally. Before serving, discard bay leaves. If a thicker soup is desired, add third can of black beans to food processor or blender. Process until smooth and transfer back to the soup. Serve with grated reduced-fat cheddar cheese or sour cream.

## Easy Minestrone Soup

1–2 cups spaghetti sauce with meat (leftover sauce works well)

1 14 oz. can kidney beans, rinsed

1 14 oz can beef broth

1 14oz can water

1 14oz can diced tomatoes

1 Cup frozen mixed vegetables

1 Small onion chopped

1 tsp oregano

2 Bay leaves

¼ t minced garlic

¼ t ground black pepper

1 C macaroni noodles, cooked

Combine all ingredients except macaroni noodles and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes. Stir in macaroni noodles just before serving.