

SEASONAL FOOD

# Spring greens

A soup which can be a meal on its own.



**A** Canarian restaurant can normally offer you a **sopa**, a thin soup or stock normally with rice or pasta or a **potage**, a thick and very filling soup which can be a meal on its own.

This particular recipe makes use of a seasonal vegetable known in the UK as spring greens - coles. It's a plant which produces open cabbage leaves that never form a heart and which are low in calories but high in dietary fibre, calcium and vitamins A and C.

They are normally paired as in this recipe with bacon or fat pork, but if you prefer a dish with a good flavour and lower fat content you can substitute the smoked pork belly for smoked turkey meat and a chilli pepper. The beans used are brown and about the size and shape of a kidney bean. This dish also makes use of chayotes, also known as vegetable pears. They are a good source of amino acids and vitamin C and add juiciness to the finished potage.

## POTAGE DE COLES

### Ingredients

- 500g spring greens
- 500g beans

- 250g smoked pork belly
- 1 whole bulb of garlic
- 1 onion
- 2 tomatoes
- 1 green pepper
- 2 chayotes
- Oil
- Salt
- Hot paprika

### Preparation

**1. Soak the beans** overnight in three times the amount of water.

**2. To reduce the amount of fat** in the finished dish and give a better texture, chop the pork belly into inch square pieces and grill until crisped.

**3. Put beans** and meat in a large saucepan, cover well with water, bring to the boil and lower heat to simmer.

**4. Wash the spring greens** well, removing all thick stems. Peel and break the potatoes, inserting the knife and twisting rather than cutting. This way the potato releases more starch to thicken the potage.

**5. After the meat** and beans have been simmering about

40 minutes add the potatoes, chopped spring green leaves, finely chopped onion and green pepper and the peeled and chunked chayotes.

**6. Chop the tomatoes** and put to one side. If they are added to any dish containing beans (including chick peas) too early the acid will make the skins harden. It is for this reason too that salt is usually not added until the end of cooking time in any dish with beans, apart from the very small varieties.

**7. Peel the garlic cloves** and place in a mortar with a good pinch of sea salt, a teaspoon of paprika and about two tablespoons of olive oil. Mash them together with a pestle.

**8. About 50 minutes** into the cooking time add the tomatoes and garlic mash and leave to simmer for approximately 10 minutes more.

**9. The potage is cooked** when the beans will squash between your tongue and the roof of your mouth and the potatoes break when pricked with a fork.

**10. Like many thick soups**, this is better left to rest or even made 24 hours before eating, but as it contains tomatoes which are prone to fermentation, it must be refrigerated.

## Food Extra

### Ice cream

## DESSERT WINE

• **A company from Malaga is to launch a new wine ice cream using a D.O. (guaranteed quality) wine.**

They are currently in talks with the D.O. regulating council for a certificate to prove the ice cream's authentic origins. The same company already produce an ice cream for pets (Pets Ice Cream) recently highlighted on our pets' page and Vital Icecream, a "universal" ice cream that can be eaten by everybody no matter whether they are healthy or have diabetes, Celiac disease or a problem with obesity and are developing another for elite sportsmen and women (Evolution Sport Ice Cream).

Vital Icecream SL is a young company based on the experience of a family which dedicated itself to making delicious home-made and industrial style ice creams since the 1950s. The company now concentrate on ecological products and innovation and in particular the development of low calorie and low fat products, which have seen such a leap forward in demand all around the world over the last few more health-conscious years.

Information on distribution rights and licensing rights worldwide can be obtained by contacting [comercial@vital-icecream.com](mailto:comercial@vital-icecream.com).

### Internet education

## COOK ON LINE

• **The Caja de Canarias is offering new cookery courses on line until the end of April.**

This time the 12 new courses take in new offers including traditional Easter specialities, cooking with chocolate and a course for mentally handicapped children. Information and inscription is available via [www.lacajadecanarias.es/obs](http://www.lacajadecanarias.es/obs). In February and March the courses offered are buns and biscuits, an introduction to cooking, using the oven, cooking duck, Easter dishes and a child's introduction to cooking. During March and April you can learn passion for chocolate II, an introduction to cooking, Basque country cuisine, adapted cooking for mentally handicapped children, a child's introduction to cooking and creative Canarian cuisine.

### Nutrition

## BETTER BREAKFASTS

• **Forget eggs and bacon or beans and toast and get along to your nearest Iberostar hotel for a healthy breakfast.**

The hotel group has been working with the Institute of Alimentation in the University of Navarre to design a healthy family breakfast. They want to offer a tasty and healthy cuisine to their clients that will encourage good eating habits and they want to design a perfect healthy and balanced breakfast routine for all the family based on nutritional criteria and offering the top quality available.

The hotel chain want to offer their clients the ideal combination of a healthy start to the day with a balanced, tasty and attractive breakfast, based on the most healthy products of the Mediterranean diet. Together with the university they have developed seven healthy breakfast menus; traditional, rich in fibre, whimsical, rich in calcium, antioxidant, energy and protein rich. The first hotel in the group to offer the new menus will be the Hotel Anthelia in Tenerife and in addition to the menus, clients will also be able to acquire all the nutritional information about the various options if they desire.