

# COOKING WITH CHERYL

By Cheryl Radkiewicz

With cold weather approaching there's nothing cozier than "main course soups". They're fast, easy, comforting and perfect for taking the chill out of the air.

Whoever arrives home first in your house can start the soup, or, if culinarily challenged, can gather the ingredients on the kitchen counter and set the table. Believe me, considerate gestures are always appreciated by the "frazzled" cook. The soups can be made earlier and frozen, if desired, and are perfect for busy couples and families.

## SANTA FE SOUP

2 lbs. ground beef or turkey  
1 onion, chopped  
1-1.0 oz. pkg. ranch-style dressing mix  
2-1 1/4 oz. pkgs. taco seasoning mix  
1-16 oz. can black beans, undrained  
1-16 oz. can kidney beans, undrained  
1-16 oz. can pinto beans, undrained  
1-16 oz. can diced tomatoes with chilis, undrained  
1-16 oz. can tomato wedges or chunks, undrained  
2-16 oz. cans white corn, undrained  
2 cups water  
Garnish: sour cream, shredded cheddar cheese, sliced green onions, tortilla chips

Cook meat and onions together in large soup pot until meat is browned. Stir ranch-style dressing mix and taco seasoning mix into meat. Add remaining ingredients with juices. Add water. Simmer for 2 hours. If mixture is too thick, add more water. Top each serving with above garnishes, if desired. Serve with tortilla chips. Makes 4 quarts. Suitable for freezing.

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## VENUS DE MILO SOUP

1-16 oz can tomatoes, cut up  
4 cans water  
2 envelopes dry onion soup mix  
1-20 oz. pkg. frozen mixed vegetables  
1 lb. ground beef, browned and drained

**1/2 cup orzo**  
**Parmesan cheese**

Place tomatoes and water in large soup pot. Bring to boil. Add onion soup mix, vegetables and ground beef; simmer for 20 minutes. Cook orzo according to package directions. Add to soup mixture and simmer for an additional 10 minutes. Top with Parmesan cheese, if desired. Serves 8-10.

**Note:** You can also use Italian sausage, browned and drained, or a combination of both ground beef and sausage.

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### **BEEF AND BARLEY SOUP**

**1 lb. stew meat**  
**1 medium onion**  
**2 cloves garlic, minced**  
**1 can (14 oz.) stewed tomatoes**  
**1/2 cup red wine**  
**3 Tbsp. olive oil**  
**1 beef bouillon cube**  
**1 lb. fresh mushrooms, sliced**  
**1/2 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce**  
**Salt, to taste**  
**5 cups water**  
**4 oz. pearl barley**

Brown meat and onion in olive oil. Add garlic and wine and cook for 1 minute. Add sliced mushrooms and cook for 1 minute. Rinse barley and stir into mixture with water, tomatoes, bouillon cube, salt and Worcestershire. Bring to boil, cover and simmer for 1 1/2 hours, stirring often. Serves 6.