

Tinky's Tortilla Soup

from In Our Grandmothers' Kitchens

Ingredients:

for the soup:

extra-virgin olive oil as needed for frying the vegetables
1 onion, roughly chopped
2 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
1 bell pepper, seeded and roughly chopped
6 small (6-inch) corn tortillas
2 teaspoons chili powder
1-1/2 teaspoons cumin (ground or seeds)
1 quart chicken stock
1 teaspoon salt
1 can (10 ounces) tomatoes with green chiles
1 chipotle in adobo (more if you like), roughly chopped
canola or grapeseed oil as needed for frying tortilla strips
2 cups cooked chicken in strips or chunks (optional but good)
2 cups cooked corn kernels (optional but good)

for garnish:

corn tortilla strips made from 3 of the tortillas
cilantro leaves (optional)
sour cream (optional)
shredded cheddar cheese or queso fresco (optional)
lime wedges to squeeze for juice

Instructions:

In a 4-quart pot or Dutch oven heat a little olive oil. Add the onions, the garlic, and the green pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are tender (5 minutes or so).

Cut the tortillas into strips. Add the strips from 3 tortillas to the vegetable mixture (set the others aside), along with the chili powder and the cumin. Cook, stirring occasionally, for another minute. Add the chicken stock, salt, tomatoes, and chipotle, and bring the mixture to a boil. Turn down the heat and simmer the soup, almost covered, for 25 minutes.

While the soup is simmering, use the remaining tortilla strips to make a garnish of fried yumminess. Let them sit on paper towels for at least 15 minutes to dry out; then fry them in oil until they are crispy. Set them aside to drain on the paper towels.

Remove the soup from the heat, and puree it with an immersion blender. (You may also use a regular blender as long as you blend carefully in batches.) Stir in the chicken and the corn, if you are using them, and return the soup to the boil. Ladle into bowls.

Garnish the soup with your homemade tortilla strips plus any other garnish of your choice.
Serves 4.

