

soups

words & photography by PAULETTE PHLIPOT



Embrace the cold winter days with these warm flavors. Light a fire, open a good bottle of wine, and invite friends over to enjoy these tasty soups.

COCOA-SPICED BEAN AND LENTIL SOUP

Nik Sharma, *Season*

I keep many different dried beans and lentils in my pantry, and this soup gives me a chance to mix up any stragglers in a single pot. Start it one day ahead to allow time for the beans to soak overnight.

Beans and lentils are comfort foods, mainly because of their creamy, soft textures once cooked. Just as cocoa adds depth to a mole sauce in Mexican cooking, it works wonders here, bringing complexity, color, and a pleasant, subtle bitterness. The heat of the ground chile and the fragrance of the mace add to the sensory delight of this soup. A cool garnish of creamy yogurt and fresh mint provides a welcome contrast.

SERVES 4

- ¾ c mixed dried beans (such as kidney, black, and cranberry), picked over for stones
- ¼ c mixed lentils and split peas, picked over for stones

- 1 tbsp ghee or extra virgin olive oil
- 1 c onion, finely diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- 1 tsp Kashmiri chile powder
- ½ tsp ground mace
- 1 14.5 oz can chopped tomatoes with juices
- 4 c water
- 1 tsp fine sea salt
- 10 fresh mint leaves
- ¼ c plain Greek yogurt

Rinse the beans in a fine-mesh strainer under cold running water and transfer to a medium bowl. Cover with 2 inches of water and soak overnight. The next day, rinse the beans and lentils in a fine-mesh strainer under cold running water and transfer to a small bowl. Cover with 2 inches of water and soak for at least one hour before cooking. Drain the beans and lentils.

Heat the ghee in a medium-sized Dutch oven or stockpot over medium-high heat. Sauté the onion until translucent, 4 to 5 minutes. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant, 30 to 45 seconds. Stir in the cocoa, coriander, chile, and mace and cook until aromatic, about 30 seconds. Pour in the tomatoes and their juices and cook for 3 to 4 minutes. Add the 4 cups water, beans, lentils, and salt and stir. Increase the heat to high and bring to a rolling

boil. Turn the heat to low, cover, and simmer gently until the beans and lentils are soft and tender, about 1 hour. Taste and adjust the seasoning, if necessary.

Meanwhile, stack the mint leaves, roll them into a tight cylinder, and cut into thin strips. Serve the soup hot, garnishing each bowl with Greek yogurt and a few ribbons of mint.



Reprinted from *Season* by Nik Sharma with permission from Chronicle Books, 2018.



CHIPOTLE TORTILLA SOUP

Melissa Coleman, *The Minimalist Kitchen*

I like to find ways to brighten up the flavor of winter. Adding a chipotle pepper to soup, or anything for that matter, will instantly boost the profile. This recipe is based off of a traditional chicken tortilla soup *sans* the chicken. With almost every ingredient sitting in the pantry, this soup comes together quickly for a weeknight. If you're pressed for time, add crushed tortilla chips instead of making the strips, but whatever you do, don't skip the squeeze of lime just before serving. It's just the touch of brightness winter (and this soup) needs.

SERVES 4

- 2 tsp olive oil
- 1 c sweet onion, finely chopped
- 1 c frozen corn
- ½ tsp kosher salt, divided

- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1½ tbsp puréed chipotle peppers in adobo sauce
- 1 tbsp tomato paste
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- 1 quart chicken stock
- 1 15-oz can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 tsp honey
- 1½ c sweet potato, cut into ½-in cubes

TORTILLA STRIPS

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 4 6-inch corn tortillas, cut into ¾-inch-thick strips
- Kosher salt to taste

GARNISH

- 1 avocado, diced
- 1 lime, cut into wedges
- ¼ c fresh cilantro, chopped
- Sprinkle of cotija

Preheat the oven to the 350°F.

Heat a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Once warm, add the oil, onion, and corn. Stir in ¼ tsp of the salt. Sauté for 4 minutes until lightly browned, stirring occasionally. Add in the garlic and toast for 30 seconds more. Stir in the chipotles, tomato paste, cumin, and remaining salt. Cook for about 1 minute to toast. Pour in the stock, beans, and honey. Bring to a simmer for 5 minutes. Add the sweet potatoes and cook for 6 to 9 minutes or until the sweet potatoes are just tender. Taste and adjust the salt and honey as necessary.

Meanwhile, heat a 10-inch cast-iron skillet over medi-

um-high. Once warm, add the oil. Toss in the tortilla strips and cook for about 10 minutes or until golden and crisp. Sprinkle with the salt to taste.

To serve, divide the soup evenly among 4 serving bowls. Top each serving with a handful of tortilla strips, diced avocado, a lime wedge, and a sprinkle of cilantro and cotija.



Excerpted from *The Minimalist Kitchen* by Melissa Coleman. ©2018 Oxmoor House. Reprinted with permission from Time Inc. Books, a division of Meredith Corporation, New York, New York. All rights reserved.



**TOM KHA KAI:
CHICKEN HOT AND
SOUR COCONUT SOUP**
Taveesak Chanthasuthi-
sombut, Owner of Dang's
Thai Cuisine, Hailey, Idaho
dangthaicuisine.com

"This is a popular and traditional dish of Thailand, and very popular in our Hailey, Idaho, restaurant. We want to give our customers authentic traditional Thai food and this soup fits the bill."

SERVES 4

- 6 thin slices of galangal (similar to ginger with a more citrusy and piney flavor)
- 1 large white onion, cut into thick wedges
- 2 stalks of lemongrass, smashed and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 6-10 Makrut lime leaves, torn
- 2 chicken breasts, 1-in slices
- 4 c coconut milk
- 2 c water
- 1 tbsp salt
- ½ tbsp brown sugar

- 2 tbsp tamarind concentrate
- 1-2 tbsp lime juice
- 2 handfuls mushrooms
- 1 large tomato, cut into thick wedges
- 6 Thai chilis, sliced
- 1 tbsp chili paste
- 1 small bunch cilantro

In a large pot, add 2 cups of coconut milk, 2 cups of water, Makrut lime leaves, onion, galangal, and lemongrass, and bring to boil at medium to medium-low heat, simmer about 5-8 minutes.

Add chicken and ½ tablespoon of salt. When the chicken is almost fully cooked, add 2 cups of coconut milk. Bring to boil, then add mushroom, tomatoes, sugar, chili, chili paste, tamarind concentrate, and ½ tablespoon of salt (or add more according to taste). Bring to gentle boil until all ingredients are fully cooked. Turn off the heat. Add lime juice. Serve and garnish with cilantro.

**WHITE BEAN AND KALE
SOUP WITH PISTOU**

This Provençal-inspired soup is a wonderful vehicle for the abundant varieties of kale from our hot springs garden. It is a quick, savory meal that gains most of its flavor from the essential pistou that is generously added just before a bowl is placed before you. Often called the French version of pesto, but without the nuts, this versatile sauce adds an elegant layer of flavor to any soup. It is a subtle sauce that can also be paired easily with grilled meats and vegetables.

SERVES 8

SOUP

- 12 tbsp olive oil
- 1 lb Italian sausage
- 1 large onion, diced
- 1 c white wine
- 8 c chicken stock
- 2 bay leaves
- 3 c cooked cannellini beans

- 1 bunch kale, stemmed and chopped

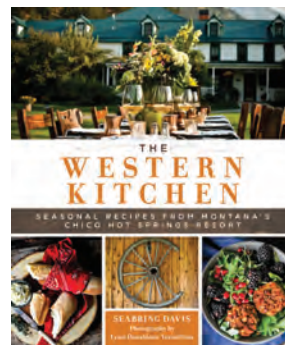
In a large saucepan on medium-low heat warm olive oil, add Italian sausage. Once sausage is cooked, add onion and cook until slightly caramelized. Deglaze with the wine, taking care to scrape up all the browned bits with a wooden spoon. Let wine reduce by half, then add stock and bay leaves. Simmer for 30 minutes, then add beans. Simmer for 10 more minutes, then add kale. When kale is cooked, but still slightly crunchy, season with salt and pepper.

PISTOU

- 2 c fresh basil
- 2/3 c Parmesan cheese, grated
- 4 garlic cloves
- ½ c olive oil
- Salt to taste

Process basil, cheese, and garlic in a food processor to make a paste. Using a

rubber spatula, scrape the mixture into a separate medium-sized bowl. Whisk the olive oil into the mixture and season with salt to taste. This can be made two days in advance; cover and refrigerate until ready to use. To serve, ladle soup into bowls and top with a dollop of pistou.



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SMOKED WINTER SQUASH SOUP WITH APPLE AND HALLOUMI
Eliza H. S. Gavin, Chef/Owner, 221 South Oak Bistro, Telluride, Colorado
221southoak.com

Influenced by her world travels, Gavin's cuisine is a melange of styles and influences. After graduating from Sewanee, The University of the South, in 1996, Gavin worked in famous New Orleans restaurants like Galatoire's and Mr. B's. Gavin attended Culinary Institute of America in Napa and Le Cordon Bleu in Paris. She has cooked (and eaten) all over the world, participated in *Top Chef* Season 10, and been the chef/owner of 221 South Oak Bistro since 2000.

I suggest acorn squash for this dish but you can use any kind. Roasting the squash gives it an extra sweet flavor by concentrating the natural sugars. Be sure to keep the seeds. Remove the membranes, rinse off, toss in olive oil, and roast at 350° for 10 minutes. Now there's a snack for the afternoon of soup production.

SERVES 6

- Olive oil
- 1 large onion, peeled and chopped
 - 1 leek, light green and white parts only, chopped
 - 5 garlic cloves, whole but no skin
 - 1 quart peeled and chopped winter squash
 - 1 c sherry
 - 1 can coconut milk
 - 1 apple, peeled and sliced
 - ½ c halloumi cheese, diced

Preheat the oven to 350°. Place a large shallow pot over high heat. When the pot is hot, add enough oil to cover the bottom of the pan. Reduce the heat to medium and add the onion with a generous dash of salt. The salt will ultimately flavor the soup but right now it's drawing the liquid out of the onion and speeding up the cooking time.

While the onion is cooking, toss the squash with a bit of olive oil and some salt.

Roast the squash until it is tender, about 30 minutes. When the squash is tender, use hickory chips to smoke the squash. You may use a smoker, a smoking gun, or at my restaurant, we put the squash in a high-sided pan with chips on one side and the squash on the other (1 c unsoaked chips and smoke for 20 minutes). We cover it with plastic wrap and use a blow torch under the wood chips to get the smoke going. This achieves a super smoky flavor and we get to use our blow torch...win-win.

Back to the pot on the stove. Add the leeks and garlic and stir to combine. There's no reason to bruise the garlic by smashing it. Use the whole cloves so they can cook slowly. Roasted whole garlic is a bit sweeter than smashed garlic.

Add the squash and sherry to the pot and bring to a boil. Add the coconut milk and bring to a boil. Working in batches, blend the soup until it is super smooth. Reheat the soup in a clean pot. Pour the soup into bowls and top with the diced halloumi and apple.

TRIO'S BLT SOUP
Paul Wireman and Will Bradof, Trio, An American Bistro—Jackson, Wyoming.
bistrotrio.com,
localjh.com

Trio is located in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and owned and operated by chefs with a passion for good food in an enjoyable, relaxed dining atmosphere. This soup is a play on the classic sandwich.

SERVES 6

- ½ lb bacon, diced
- 1 onion, diced
- ½ head of celery, diced
- 2 carrots, diced
- 2 tbsp diced garlic
- 1 large can crushed tomatoes
- 8 c brown chicken stock
- ½ lb butter
- 1 c white wine

Render the bacon in a stock pot. Add the mirepoix (onion, celery, carrots) and caramelize in the bacon fat. Add the garlic and brown. Add the

white wine. Add tomatoes and stock and simmer for 10-15 minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste. Use a blender to blend soup. Once blending, add the butter. Pass the soup through a china cap or fine-mesh strainer.

ARUGULA PESTO

- ¼ c pine nuts
- 1 tbsp garlic
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 1 blender full of baby arugula
- ½ c extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ c Parmesan cheese, grated

Place pine nuts, garlic, salt, and pepper in a blender, then fill with baby arugula, and pack down until very full. Pour oil over top and blend, adding the cheese at the end. Blend until smooth.

BACON CROUTONS

- 2 c crusty bread, cut into ½-inch cubes
 - 2 tbsp bacon fat
- Salt and pepper to taste



Use whatever crusty bread you like, dice in ½-inch squares, mix with bacon fat and salt and pepper. Bake on low until light brown.

Serve the soup in a large bowl, topped with the croutons and arugula pesto. Enjoy!

AN UNLIKELY INN

words by AMANDA M. FAISON



THE DISTILLERY INN IN CARBONDALE, COLORADO, IS THE WORLD'S ONLY BOUTIQUE HOTEL IN A WORKING DISTILLERY.

"Once you've settled in, come down for a cocktail on us," chirped a manager as my husband and I jostled our overnight bag up a set of wide stairs. And that was how our weekend visit to The Distillery Inn, a five-room boutique hotel perched above the award-winning Marble Distillery Co., in Carbondale, Colorado, began.

The staff encounter was by chance, as the check-in process is both paperless and people-less; instead, information is delivered via a series of pre-emailed instructions and entry codes. If that sounds efficient but cold, consider it a gentle reminder of co-founder and distiller

Connie Baker's larger mission of sustainability. Not having a staffed front desk for the five suites cuts down on needless man hours and electronic entry codes remove the need for plastic key cards (which, let's face it, usually leave with and are discarded by the guests).

And so, we unlocked our room, named "Yule" after the rare and glorious white marble that's quarried in the nearby town of Marble, and took inventory: Nespresso coffee maker! Stocked mini bar with samplers of all of the distillery's spirits! Envy-inducing marble bathroom complete with rain shower! We threw open the patio door and lounged on our pri-



TOP TO BOTTOM: A window in the tasting room offers a look at Hazel, the copper still named for a family member who drank a shot of vodka every day, well into her nineties; the exterior of Marble Distillery Co. in Carbondale, Colorado.



TOP: Connie Baker, head distiller and Queen Bee, stirs the mash. BOTTOM: One of the stills where much of the magic happens.

vate balcony before the temptation of a cocktail—especially a complimentary one—got the better of us.

On the way down to the tasting room, we stopped off at the rooftop deck, which Baker affectionately calls the “partio” because patrons often wander upstairs to sip their cocktails from stools overlooking Carbondale’s main drag. There is nothing quaint or bed-and-breakfast-y about The Distillery Inn or Marble Distilling Co.—and that’s a good thing. Instead, the design is a marvel of clean-lined minimalism that feels akin to a modern art museum. Wide panels of black recycled concrete line the building’s exterior and contrast with tall columns of chiseled Yule marble and windows showcasing the distillery’s Kentucky-made copper still. Over the building’s entrance, the sharp-peaked, double-embossed “M” that makes up the distillery’s logo also

nods to the surrounding West Elk Mountains. On this quiet stretch of Main Street at the edge of town, there is an undeniable sense that Marble Distilling Co. and the inn above it are both of this place (Carbondale has a thriving arts community) and forward-looking.

You can say the same for Baker and her husband and business partner, Carey Shanks. The two, who have called the valley home for a combined 54 years, are stretching what it means to be craft distillers—and that’s not just because they operate a tiny enterprise in an off-the-beaten-path mountain town, producing award-winning spirits. For one, Baker is one of just a few female head distillers in a heavily male-dominated industry. That’s a point of pride (further emphasized by naming the distillery’s copper still “Hazel”), but Baker and Shanks are even more focused on challenging



the industry's inherent wastefulness. "Our motto is 'drink sustainably,'" says Baker, who used to work in the pharmaceutical industry before she caught the distilling bug in 2010.

That ethos forms the foundation of the duo's approach to water and energy consumption. It's no secret that the industry is a huge user (and many would say, abuser) of water. Case in point, it takes an average of 30 bottles of clean water to make one bottle of vodka. But thanks to Shanks' background in building sustainability, he and a team of local engineers crafted a sophisticated thermal network that captures 100 percent of the distillery's process water. Since the distillery opened in June 2015, the system has effectively whittled away at waste (it takes just one bottle of water to create a bottle of Marble Distilling Co.'s vodka) while also maximizing energy. The closed-loop operation collects energy from the spent hot water and uses it to heat the building, including the inn above. When the water cools, it helps chill the distillery's mash and—during the summer months—cool the space. "We think of it as saving the planet one bottle of vodka at a time," Baker says.

To say the technology is revolutionary is an understatement. Marble Distillery Co. saves more than four

million gallons of water annually and recaptures enough energy to heat 20 homes for a year. And here's the kicker: rather than patenting the system, Baker and Shanks believe in making it available for all. "We don't want to own it, we want to share the technology," Baker says, noting that a handful of regional distilleries have already expressed interest.

Baker and Shanks have taken the same unconventional approach to the guest suites. As far as they know, The Distillery Inn is the world's only hotel housed in a working distillery. Although the concept initially generated eye rolls from banks and lenders ("They told us we were crazy and not focused enough," Baker laughs.), the inn has since become a convincing source of revenue. In fact, with its high occupancy rate, it's the inn that pays the mortgage each month. When the hotel won the 2017 Green Hotelier Award—and was the only North American property to garner the coveted accolade—it was a testament to Baker and Shanks' dedication to hard work and maverick thinking.

All of this becomes abundantly clear while sipping a cocktail at the tasting room's impressive marble-topped bar. The four-inch-thick, nine-ton slab, which was sourced 40 minutes up the road



FAR LEFT: The distillery is on a mission to define sustainability. Instead of 30 bottles of clean water to produce one bottle of vodka, it takes only one. LEFT: the Distillery Inn offers spacious and modern rooms.

from the quarry in Marble, serves as a subtle reminder of place and technique. The Marble-Rita, made with Gingercello (think limoncello but ginger) is a bestseller, as is the JJ Curley, an Old Fashioned with the distillery's Ragged Mtn Rye and a glug of Gingercello. No matter the spirit, all share in this: a combina-

tion of pristine water from the Crystal River and locally-grown grains (all of the distillery's spent mash returns to farms as chicken and hog feed) filtered through chunks of foraged Yule marble and coconut husks. The result is a flavor that's as clean-lined and flawless as the inn and distillery themselves. marbledistilling.com

MORE MARBLE?



If you're headed to Aspen, just 30 miles southwest of Carbondale, check out the year-old Marble Bar inside the Hyatt Residence Club at the base of Aspen Mountain. The cocktails are just as good, and another impressive slab of marble anchors the outpost. 415 E. Dean St, Aspen, 970.710.2485