

MIRKWOOD DESIGNS presents...

## Savory Crock Pot Split Pea Soup With Ham

This is wonderfully warming on a cold winter day. Serve with a couple of slices of toasted, buttered baguette.

- 2 pounds dried split peas rinsed and picked over (to make sure there aren't any stones)
- 1 smoked ham hock
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- ½ teaspoon ground cayenne pepper
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 quarts chicken stock (plus more to thin, if necessary)
- 2 large yellow onions, diced fine
- 2 large carrots, diced fine
- 3 stalks celery, diced fine
- 4 cloves garlic, sliced
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 cups cooked, cubed ham

### Optional Garnish

- Sour cream or heavy cream
- Brandy or cognac

1. Put rinsed peas into the bowl of the crock pot. Add the ham hock, cloves, nutmeg, black pepper, cayenne, bay leaves, and chicken stock.
2. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large skillet and sauté onions, carrots, celery, and garlic until soft. Add sautéed vegetables to the crock pot.
3. Put the lid on and cook on high for 4 hours, or on low for 7 hours.
4. Remove the bay leaves and discard.
5. Remove the ham hock and carefully cut any meat from the bone (it'll be hot!). Cut the meat into small pieces and set aside.
6. Remove about half of the pea soup from the crock pot and blend it in a blender or food processor.  
**Caution:** Blend only a small amount at a time because the steam can cause the top to pop off the blender creating a potentially dangerous mess!
7. Add blended soup, the meat cut from the ham hock, and the cubed ham back to the crock pot. Cook for 1 hour longer, stirring occasionally.
8. If desired, garnish with a dollop of sour cream or heavy cream and/or a tablespoon of brandy or cognac.

Note: This soup freezes exceptionally well, but it gets thicker. When reheating, add more chicken stock to thin it out to desired consistency.



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