

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 large yellow onion, chopped
- 1 large carrot, chopped
- 1 celery rib, chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 60 oz (4 cans) black beans, rinsed and drained
- 32 oz vegetable broth
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 bay leaf
- Kosher salt and black pepper, to taste
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
- ¼ cup chopped cilantro
- Garnish options: avocado, cilantro, shredded cheese, plain Greek yogurt or sour cream, sliced green onion

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a large pot, heat the olive oil over medium high heat. Add the onion, carrot, celery, and red pepper. Cook until vegetables are tender, stirring occasionally, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for 2 minutes.
2. Stir in the black beans, vegetable broth, cumin, oregano, bay leaf, salt, and pepper. Turn the soup to low and let simmer for 25 minutes.
3. Remove the bay leaf. If you want to thicken the soup, use an immersion blender to purée some of the soup for a thicker consistency but don't blend it completely, just a little to thicken it up. If you don't have an immersion blender, you can carefully transfer 2 to 3 cups of the soup to a blender and blend until smooth. Stir the pureed soup back into the pot.
4. Stir in the cilantro and fresh lime juice. Ladle the soup into bowls and serve warm with desired toppings.