

Vegan Sopa de Maní (Bolivian Peanut Soup)

Recipe from [Patrick Oropeza](#)

Adapted by [Ligaya Mishan](#)

Time 1½ hours

1

Rating 4 ★★★★★ (95)

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Chris Simpson for The New York Times. Food stylist: Maggie Ruggiero. Prop stylist: Sophia Pappas.

This vegan version of a traditional Bolivian soup is made with a base of puréed peanuts but has none of the heaviness of peanut butter. Instead, it's creamy yet delicate, hearty without heft.

Patrick Oropeza, the chef of [Bolivian Llama Party](#) in Sunnyside, Queens, primes the stock with a powder of locoto chiles, gutsier than jalapeños, and quilquiña, an herb that delivers the sunny grassiness of cilantro, with a sly kick. (Both may be found at Latin markets and specialty grocers online.) Then he drops in potatoes, and tubes of penne that are toasted first in a dry pan to draw out their nuttiness and change their texture just enough that they hold firm in the soup. In Bolivia, a bowl of sopa de maní typically comes topped with thick wedges of fried potato, like steak fries. Mr. Oropeza uses matchsticks instead, which fry faster and stay crispy. —[Ligaya Mishan](#)

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INGREDIENTS

PREPARATION

Yield: 4 to 6 servings (about 3½ quarts)

For the Toasted Noodles

½ cup/about 2 ounces penne rigate or any thin, tube-shaped pasta

For the Peanut Purée

2 cups/9 ounces blanched raw peanuts

For the Soup

2 tablespoons olive oil
2 medium carrots, diced
2 celery stalks, diced
1 medium yellow onion, diced
1 small green bell pepper, diced
1 dried bay leaf
6½ cups water or vegetable stock (store-bought or homemade), plus more if necessary
3 garlic cloves
1 small serrano chile, minced
2 (9-gram) cubes vegan “chicken” bouillon (such as Edward & Sons Not-Chick’n Bouillon)
2 (10-gram) cubes vegetable bouillon (such as Knorr Vegetarian Vegetable Bouillon)
1½ teaspoons coarse kosher salt

Step 1

Prepare the noodles: Toast the penne in a dry, shallow pan, without oil, over medium heat. (Be careful not to overcrowd the pan, or the noodles won’t toast evenly; separate into batches if necessary.) Using a spatula or tongs, move the penne back and forth so they toast on all sides, until they are just a shade shy of golden, 4 to 6 minutes. Remove from the heat and keep stirring as the noodles continue to darken. Set aside.

Step 2

Make the peanut purée: In a blender, purée the peanuts and 1½ cups water, starting on low speed and increasing the speed as needed. Add another 1 cup water and blend until creamy. Set aside.

Step 3

Prepare the soup: Heat the oil in a 6-quart (or larger), heavy-bottomed pot over medium. Add the carrots, celery, onion, green bell pepper and bay leaf and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is translucent, 5 to 10 minutes.

Step 4

Add the water or stock, peanut purée, garlic, serrano chile, both types of bouillon cubes, salt, cumin, dried quilquiña, locoto powder (if using) and nutritional yeast, plus half the parsley and half the cilantro. Stir until well mixed.

Step 5

Bring to a low boil while stirring constantly, so the peanut purée doesn’t stick to the bottom of the pot. Continue to cook at a low boil, stirring frequently, for 7 minutes. (Keep an eye on the pot, as the soup can boil over quickly.) Add the potato and the

1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon dried quilquiña
(see Tip) or dried cilantro
1 teaspoon locoto powder
(optional; see Tip)
¼ teaspoon nutritional yeast
1 lightly packed cup flat-leaf
parsley leaves, finely
chopped, plus more for
garnish
1 packed cup cilantro leaves
and tender stems, finely
chopped
1 medium Yukon Gold potato,
diced
5 ounces fresh or frozen green
peas (rinsed if frozen)
Homemade or store-bought
fried matchstick potatoes
(optional; see Tip), for garnish

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toasted pasta then reduce the heat and let simmer until the potato is cooked through and the pasta is just tender, 10 to 12 minutes, stirring in the peas and the remaining parsley and cilantro halfway through. (The soup should have some body, but should not be as thick as a chowder. If necessary, add a little more water or vegetable stock to thin it to the desired consistency.) Discard the bay leaf.

Step 6

Serve the soup in bowls and top with the matchstick potatoes, if using, and parsley to taste, for a touch of brightness and color.

Tips

Quilquiña (also known as Bolivian coriander and papalo) is an aromatic herb with a taste akin to cilantro, but stronger. Locoto (also known as rocoto) powder is made from locoto chiles, which are fruity and more potent than jalapeños, ranging in heat level from cayenne to habanero. Quilquiña and locoto powder can be found in Latin markets or ordered from specialty grocers online.

To make matchstick potatoes, julienne 1 peeled russet potato and fry in ½ inch neutral oil over medium-high heat until golden brown and crisp, turning occasionally, 3 to 4 minutes. Dust with salt.

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