

SWISS CHARD AND POTATO SOUP

From the New York Times

Time: 1 hour

- 1/2 lb. Slab bacon, diced
- 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 large onion, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 1/2 lbs. Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and sliced 1/2" thick
- salt
- 6 eggs, optional
- 1 3/4 cups cooked chickpeas or 1 can, drained
- 5 cups, packed, very finely shredded Swiss chard leaves
(about 1 bunch)
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tbsp. chopped cilantro leaves

1. Place bacon in a heavy 4-qt. Saucepan. Add 1/3 cup water, and cook over medium heat until water evaporated. Add 2 tbsp. Oil. Sauté until lightly browned. Drain, leaving 2 tbsp. Fat in pan.
2. Add onion and garlic to oil in pan and sauté over low heat until soft and barely golden. Add potatoes and 8 cups water. Bring to a boil, season with salt, and cook until potatoes are soft, about 15 minutes.
3. If using the eggs, poach them, drain, trim any ragged edges, and set aside.
4. Remove potatoes with a slotted spoon to a large mixing bowl, and roughly mash them with a fork or a potato masher. Return potatoes to liquid in pot and stir to dissolve them.
5. Add chickpeas, reserved bacon, chard leaves and 2 tbsp. olive oil. Bring to a simmer, and cook for about 5 minutes, until leaves wilt. Season with salt and pepper. Transfer to warm soup plates. If using the eggs, add one to each plate. Top with chopped cilantro and a drizzle of the remaining olive oil.

Yield: 6 servings