

Cactus Soup with Oyster Mushrooms - *Sopa de nopales con setas*

Ingredients

4 cups	cooked paddle cactus, cut into strips (from fresh, or rinsed and drained from jar)
½ cup	white onion; peeled and chopped
1-2	serrano or jalapeño peppers; washed, stems removed and chopped
1 medium	tomato; washed, stem spot removed and cut into halves
1 cup	oyster mushrooms; brushed clean and coarsely sliced
2 cloves	garlic; peeled and minced
1 bunch	cilantro; washed
1 tbsp	<i>epazote</i> (if available or omit); washed and chopped
6 cups	hot water
2 tbsp	oil
1 tsp	salt, or to taste
½ tsp	ground black pepper, or to taste

To serve: warm corn tortillas and lime wedges



Warm up oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add onions and peppers, stirring to coat with oil; sauté for a couple of minutes until the onion becomes translucent. Add cactus strips and continue cooking and stirring for a couple of minutes. Place tomato halves on top of the veggies, cut side down; cover the pot, and allow to cook until the tomato skins may be pinched and removed easily. Discard tomato skins, then add minced garlic and stir in, breaking up the tomato into smaller chunks. Add the oyster mushrooms, half the cilantro, and the epazote, if using. Pour in hot water, seasoning with salt and pepper, to taste. Bring soup to a boil, then reduce to a simmer until serving time. Serve hot, sprinkling some of the reserved cilantro on top, and offer warm corn tortillas and lime wedges on the side.