

U.S. Senate Bean Soup with Ham

1 pound dry white beans, soaked overnight
 1 meaty ham bone or 2 ham hocks 3 quarts water
 (12 cups)

3 onions, finely chopped

3 cloves garlic , finely chopped

4 stalks celery with leaves, finely chopped

1/4 cup parsley, finely chopped

1 cup mashed potatoes

salt & pepper, to taste

Garnishes: chopped green onions and chives presented
 in separate bowls

1. Strain the water from the soaked beans and place them in a large kettle with 3 quarts of fresh water and the ham bone or ham hocks. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 2 hours.
2. Stir the chopped vegetables, herbs and mashed potatoes into the kettle and cook over low heat for another hour--until the beans are nicely tender.
3. Remove the bones from the pot--cut off the meat into small bits and return the meat to the pot, discarding the bones.
4. Heat through, ladle into soup bowls and serve with garnishes to the side.

Note -- this is similar to the recipe in Joy of Cooking, but with some variations.