



# Butter bean soup



Alma Viviers, VISI's managing editor, is a passionate foodie who encourages her guests to interact with their food. She often serves Simon Hopkinson's butter-bean soup with rosemary and anchovy butter (passed on by good friend and chef Kobus van der Merwe) as a starter in small glasses, with the butter moulded onto the spoon. This earthy soup is bound to go down exceptionally well, especially served in a soup bowl by Hennie Meyer (R120).

## Ingredients:

- 75g butter
- 2 large onions, peeled and chopped
- 3 sticks celery, chopped
- 2 sprigs of rosemary
- 2 x 400g tins of butter beans
- 750ml chicken stock
- salt and pepper
- 150ml whipping cream

## For the rosemary and anchovy butter:

- 120g unsalted butter, softened
- 1 sprig of rosemary, leaves only finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, peeled and crushed
- 50g tin anchovies
- juice of ½ a small lemon

## Method:

In a roomy deep pan, melt the butter and fry the onions and celery until lightly coloured. Add the rosemary, stir around and allow their aroma to lift. Tip in the beans, juice and all, add the stock and bring to the boil. Remove any scum that forms and then allow to gently simmer for 20-30 minutes or until the beans are all but falling apart. Add plenty of pepper and check for salt – but don't add too much, as the butter will be fairly salty from the anchovies. Meanwhile, make the rosemary and anchovy butter by combining all the ingredients together in a food processor until very smooth. Spoon into a small bowl and leave at room temperature until the soup is to be served. Remove the rosemary sprigs from the soup and blend the soup with a stick blender or in a liquidiser until very smooth. Reheat gently in the pan and stir in the cream. The consistency should not be too thick; if it is, add a little water or maybe some milk. To serve, you can pour the soup into soup bowls and either drop a spoonful of the rosemary and anchovy butter into each or give each person an individual portion of the butter to add to their liking. Serve with croutons and extra wedges of lemon.