

Black Bean Pumpkin Soup

3 15 1/2 oz. cans black beans (about 4 1/2 cups), rinsed and drained

1 cup canned tomatoes, drained, chopped

11/4 cups onion, chopped 1/2 cup shallot, minced

4 garlic cloves, minced

1 tablespoon + ground cumin

2 teaspoons

1 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1/2 stick unsalted butter

(1/4 cup)

4 cups beef broth

16-ounce can pumpkin purée

(about 11/2 cups)

1/2 cup dry Sherry

1/2 pound cooked ham,

cut into 1/8-inch dice

3 to 4 Sherry vinegar

tablespoons

Sour cream (garnish)

Pumpkin seeds, lightly toasted, coarsely chopped (garnish)

Yields 9 cups

In a food processor, coarsely purée beans and tomatoes.

In a 6-quart heavy kettle, cook onion, shallot, garlic, cumin, salt and pepper in butter over moderate heat, stirring, until onion is softened and beginning to brown.

Stir in bean purée.

Stir in broth, pumpkin and Sherry until combined and simmer, uncovered, stirring occasionally, 25 minutes, or until thick enough to coat the back of a spoon.

Just before serving, add ham and vinegar and simmer soup, stirring, until heated through. Season soup with salt and pepper.

Serve soup garnished with sour cream and toasted pumpkin seeds.

This recipe originally appeared in Gourmet, November 1996.