**CHEROKEE POTATO SOUP**

5 cups water

5 medium Russet potatoes

½ cup-1 cup of diced onions (any kind)

Salt to taste

Peel potatoes, cut them up, throw them in water over medium heat. Cut onions up and put them into water with the potatoes. Boil until potatoes and onion are tender. Mash them all up together. Add salt to taste.

***Notes from Sharon:***  Cherokee Potato Soup consists mainly of potatoes, onions and water.  The potatoes and onions were peeled, cut up and cooked in water until tender. Then the potatoes and onions were mashed in the water, making a thick soup. Salt can be added for flavor, and sometimes I add a little milk and butter. Potatoes used by the Eastern Woodland Cherokee were not the Irish potato we use now, but was something called the Spanish potato, and the onions were wild onions.

The main staple of the Cherokee diet is corn (*selu*) and is used in many dishes.  They also used many wild plants, berries and nuts to supplement their diet along with beans and squash.  For meat, they hunted deer (*awi*), rabbit (*jestu*), bear (*yona*) and sometimes buffalo (*ya na si*).**FRIED RICE**

*This is nothing like the Asian Fried Rice we enjoy at Chinese restaurants. The rice kernels are fried before, not after, it is steamed, lending the rice a fluffy texture and enabling it to more completely absorb the flavors.*

2 cups long grained white rice

3 tbsp vegetable oil

½ cup green chilis, diced (may be canned)

4 cups vegetable or chicken stock

¼ cup fresh cilantro

½ tsp oregano

4 tsp salt (if stock is unsalted)

Heat vegetable oil in a 2 quart sauce pan over medium heat and toss rice in. Stir frequently to toast rice evenly. All rice should be lightly browned before going to next step. Stir in chopped green chilis followed immediately by the vegetable/chicken stock. Finely chop the fresh cilantro and add it in along with the oregano and salt (optional). Giving one final stir, bring the rice to boil, cover and reduce heat to low. Cook for 15-20 minutes until all liquid is absorbed. Serves 6-8.**TEPARY BEANS**

2 cups tepary beans, soaked overnight

6 cups water

1 medium onion, chopped

2 medium carrots, diced

1 cup celery, diced

1 cup green pepper, diced

½ cup green chilies, diced (may be canned)

1 clove garlic, diced

2 tbsp vegetable oil

3 cups tomatoes w/juice (may be canned)

½ tsp oregano

1 tsp salt

Drain the soaked beans and put them in a large pot with the 6 cups of water. Bring it to a boil and let cook at medium heat for about 1 hour. When the beans are tender, in a separate pan, sauté the onion, carrots, celery, peppers, green chilies, and garlic in the vegetable oil until they are tender. Add the tomatoes, oregano, and salt to the mix. Let simmer for 8-10 minutes. Add to the beans. Cook for 1 more hour. Serves 6-8.**CANYON RANCH BROWN TEPARY BEAN DIP**

*Courtesy of Canyon Ranch* (from www.tocaonline.org)

4 cups dried brown tepary beans

3 quarts water

1 tsp salt

1 tsp black peppercorns

1 tablespoon whole cumin seeds

1 tablespoon whole coriander seeds

1/4 cup olive oil

2 tsp salt

1 fresh lime, juiced

In a stockpot, cook beans with 3 quarts of water and 1 teaspoon of salt for 2-3 hours until tender. Preheat oven to 400º F.

Roast black peppercorns, cumin, and coriander seeds on a small baking sheet for 5 minutes. Grind toasted seeds in a spice grinder or clean coffee grinder.

Drain beans and reserve cooking water. Combine cooked beans, 2 cups of reserved water, olive oil, 2 teaspoons of salt and fresh lime juice. Puree until smooth. Makes 10 cups.**HOMEMADE FRYBREAD**

1 cup of bleached flour

1 tsp powdered milk

1 tsp baking powder

1/2 cup of water

Vegetable oil for cooking

extra flour for your hands

Mix flour, milk, baking powder and water all at once in a small bowl.  Mix with fork into a sticky ball.  Flour hands very well. Mix the dough with your hands to form a ball.  Do NOT knead the dough, it will make it tough.

Cut the ball of dough into 4 equal pieces.  With your hands and fingers, press each piece into a circle about 6" in diameter.  Don't worry about it being perfectly circular, it won't taste any different.

Pour oil at least 1-inch deep into a deep heavy pot or skillet, heat it to about 350 degrees.  Take the formed dough and gently place it into the oil, being careful not to splatter the hot oil.  Fry until golden brown, about 2-3 minutes on each side.  Place the cooked fry bread on a paper towel to absorb excess oil.

Fry bread is delicious whether eaten plain, as the natives did, or topped with a variety of toppings.  It is also great to make Indian tacos with a topping of taco meat, tomatoes, lettuce, and taco sauce, and I have to add sour cream.  My husband's favorite meal.

Fry bread can be kept warm in a 200 degree F. oven for up to 1 hour.  They also refrigerate well and can be reheated on a 350 degree F. oven for 10-15 minutes before serving.

Makes 4 pieces**SOUTHWEST INDIAN FRYBREAD**

4 cups flour

2 tsp. salt

2 tsp baking powder

4 Tbsp shortening

2 cups ice-cold water (approx.)

Vegetable oil for cooking

extra flour for your hands and surface

Sift all dry ingredients together. Cut in shortening. Add water a little at a time while combining ingredients. Depending on heat and humidity, you may need a little more water or a little less. Roll dough out onto a floured surface and knead it gently until all dry and wet ingredients are well combined and a fairly soft dough has formed. Cover and let dough rest for 30 minutes to 1 hour.

Lightly flour a clean surface and roll out the dough into a rectangle about 15” x 10” x ¼” thick. With a sharp knife cut the dough into 4” x 3” rectangles. Stack the rectangles on top of each other between sheets of parchment paper and let rest for 15-30 minutes.

Meantime, heat up oil in a deep skillet or fryer to 375 degrees F. Gently drop the rolled out rectangles into the hot oil one at a time. The dough will puff up and float as it cooks. Roll them over in the hot oil so that they cook on each side. Gently remove when lightly golden (about 1 minute on each side). Place the frybread on a paper towel-covered plate to absorb excess oil.

Cut the frybread open on 3 sides and fill with sweet or savory filling of your choice.

Serves 6-8

**NOTES ABOUT FRYBREAD**

***Notes from Sharon:*** I have some misgivings about sharing and demonstrating frybread. It is not a traditional Cherokee dish. Instead, we made cornbread.  It is a cornbread dough that was often rolled, floured and placed in the ashes of the fire to cook, or it could be cooked in a skillet.  A little different than the cornbread we are used to today.  But then I thought I would go ahead with the frybread, because I love it, and because it is made today by Cherokee.

The frybread mix I use most often comes from the Wooden Knife Frybread Company, 601 SD Highway 44, Interior, SD 57750.  Phone: 1-605-433-5463.

They can also be accessed at [www.woodenknife.com](http://www.woodenknife.com).

***Notes from Danira:*** There are so many different recipes for frybread and most of them using the same basic ingredients. Among Southwestern Indians frybread as we know it today wasn’t a part of our culture until the government subsidies of white flour, shortening, and baking powder were made available to the poor in the cities and on the reservations. Sharon’s frybread is soft and fluffy. My frybread is hard and puffy. Neither one is particularly healthy, but they both taste oh, so good. I recommend you use frybread sparingly as it is very high in calories and has almost no nutritionally redeeming qualities.

**4**

**TOMATO, CUCUMBER, PURSLANE SALAD**

2 medium cucumbers, chopped & seeded (may also be peeled)

4 medium tomatoes, chopped & seeded

1 cup purslane, stemmed & chopped

1 serrano pepper, seeded & minced

1 large lemon, or 2 small limes

Salt to taste

Place all ingredients in a bowl. Mix and refrigerate for about 1 hour. Serve cold. Serves 6-8

**PURSLANE POTATO SALAD**

6 medium potatoes, baked or boiled, & diced

2 cups purslane, stemmed and chopped

4 green onions, sliced

1 celery stalk, sliced

1 cup mayonnaise

Mix together all ingredients. Serve chilled.

Serves 6-8

### Notes on Purslane, Potatoes & Corn

### Purslane grows wild in many backyards and is considered a weed by many (if not most) Midwestern gardeners. It frequently grows between the tiles of backyard patios or as unwanted groundcover under shrubs and in flower beds. It is self-seeding, grows best in sun, but will also do well in shade as well as in drier, drought conditions. This makes it hard to eradicate from well maintained gardens, but also a wonderful crop to forage. Some Mexican grocery stores sell fresh purslane in their produce section.

**Potatoes:** One traditional way of baking potatoes is to dig a shallow hole, line it with rocks, put the potatoes in the hole, and build a small fire on top of the potatoes. In about an hour, after the fire dies down and the embers have cooled, remove the coal, embers, and ashes and remove the potatoes. They will be black with inedible skins, but the insides will be tender and retain a smoky flavor.

**Corn:** A similar method may be used for steaming corn. Take fresh corn, pull down, but do not completely remove, the husks to expose the silk. Detach and discard the silk, then pull the husks over the ears of corn again. Soak the corn in water and place it on top of the rocks lining the hole. Pour water over the corn, lay fresh corn husks on top of the ears of corn to cover them completely, then cover with sand and build a fire on top of it all. After the “bonfire,” around which you play games, sing songs, and tell stories, dig out the corn, break open the husks and feast on it seasoning with salt and chili.