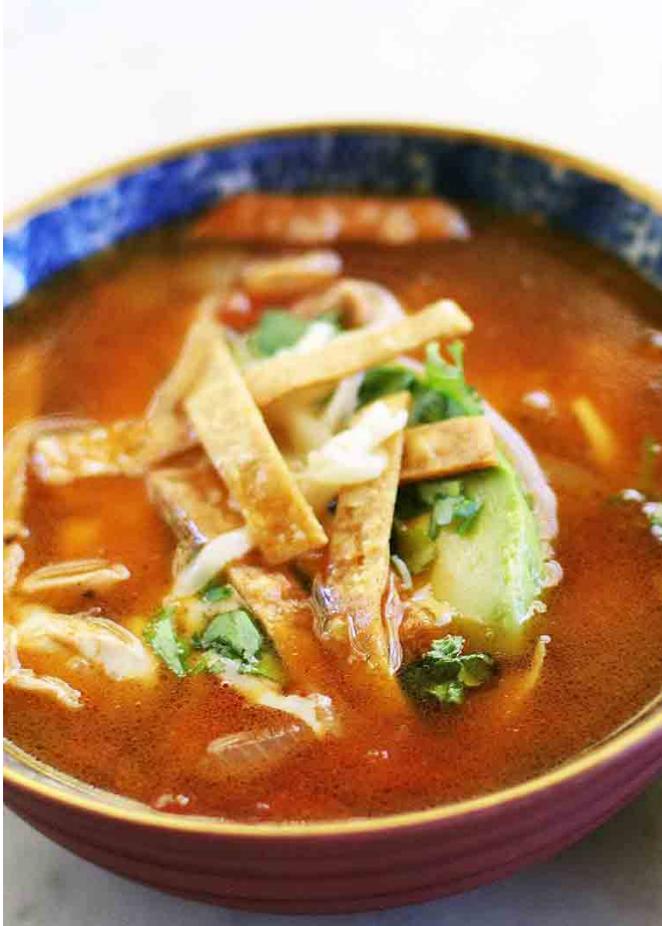


Chicken Tortilla Soup

YIELD: 6-8 SERVINGS



Ingredients:

- 6 tablespoons cooking oil
 - 8 6-inch corn tortillas, halved and cut crosswise into 1/4-inch strips
 - 1 large onion, chopped
 - ½ cup chopped celery
 - ½ cup **finely** chopped carrot
 - 4 large cloves garlic, smashed
 - 1 tablespoon paprika
 - 2 teaspoons ground cumin
 - 1 teaspoon ground coriander
 - 1 teaspoon chili powder
 - 1/4 teaspoon cayenne
 - 1 1/2 quarts low-sodium chicken broth or homemade stock
 - 3 cups canned crushed tomatoes in thick puree (one 28-ounce can)
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- 2 bay leaves
 - 2 1/2 teaspoons salt
 - 1/4 cup lightly-packed cilantro (save a few leaves for garnish)
 - 1 ½ pounds cooked chicken breasts, cut into 1/4-inch pieces
 - ½ avocado, cut into 1/4-inch dice for topping finished bowl
 - cheddar, grated for topping finished bowls
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- Lime wedges, for serving

How to Make It

Step 1

In a large heavy pot, heat the oil over moderately high heat. Add half the tortilla strips and cook, stirring, until pale golden, about 1 minute. Remove with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels. Repeat with the remaining tortilla strips.

Step 2

Reduce the heat to moderately low. Add the onion, garlic, and spices; cook, stirring, for 5 minutes. Add the broth, tomatoes, bay leaves, salt, cilantro leaves, and one-third of the tortilla strips. Bring to a simmer. Cook, uncovered, for 30 minutes; remove the bay leaves.

Step 3

With an immersion blender, half puree the soup, leaving it lightly chunky. Add the chicken, bring the soup back to a simmer, and simmer until just cooked through, about 1 minute.

To serve, ladle soup into bowls and top with remaining tortilla strips, cheese, chopped cilantro, and avocado. Serve with the lime wedges.