

Lime Soup

Sopa de Lima

Limes are abundant in Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula, home of the ancient Mayan civilization. Mexican limes have a distinctive, sweet-and-sour flavor, rather like that of Key limes grown in Florida. But even if specialty varieties are not available, the juice of common limes lends a sprightly note to this soup.

1. Place chicken in a large pot and fill with water to cover. Add onion and peppercorns. Bring to boil over high heat, lower heat and simmer, covered, for 1½ hours.
2. While the soup is cooking, heat the oil in a small frying pan and fry tortilla strips until crisp. Set aside to drain on paper towels.
3. Remove the soup from the heat. Remove the skin from chicken, shred chicken-breast meat, and set aside. Remove the remaining chicken from the broth, and refrigerate or freeze for another use.
4. Strain the broth through a sieve. Return strained broth to the pot and warm over low heat. Skim off fat.
5. To serve, ladle broth into four individual bowls. Evenly distribute shredded chicken among bowls. Garnish each with tomato, avocado, coriander, and lime wedge. Squeeze remaining lime wedges, one per bowl, over each bowl. Sprinkle fried tortilla strips on top. Dip chili pepper in each bowl of soup until desired heat is achieved, and remove from the bowl.

Note: Tortilla strips may be fried using flavored oils, such as garlic oil. For a more substantial meal, add cooked rice to the broth before serving.

**Available at specialty food markets and some supermarkets.*

servings: 4

- 1 (3-pound) chicken, cut into 8 pieces, plus 2 extra legs
- 1 medium yellow onion, peeled and quartered
- 5 to 10 whole peppercorns, or to taste
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 5 fresh corn tortillas, cut into strips
- 3 plum tomatoes, diced, for garnish
- 1 medium avocado, peeled and diced, for garnish
- ½ cup finely chopped coriander, for garnish
- 2 limes, quartered
- 1 fresh or dried habanero or Scotch bonnet chili pepper
- Salt to taste