

Traditions of the Senate

Senate Bean Soup

The Senate has a tradition of having Bean Soup on the menu every day! Learn more about the Senate's Bean Soup and make your own senatorial soup at home.

Words to Know

Tradition: a belief, principle, or way of acting that a group has continued to follow for a long time.

Nutrition: the substances that you take into your body as food and the way that they influence your health.

Fact: What's in a name? The navy bean got its current popular name because it was a staple food of the United States Navy in the early 20th century. It is also known as a haricot, boston bean, or pea bean.



<https://bit.ly/2WbXp9n> 

100 Years of Tradition

There are many stories about how this tradition began. One story is that Senator Fred Dubois (1851-1930) of Idaho requested the soup be put on the menu. Another story is that it was Senator Knute Nelson (1843-1923) of Minnesota who requested the soup. Both senators thought that the soup was nutritious and filling. Either way, the soup has been on the menu for over 100 years!

Lunch Break!

A nutritious and filling lunch is important for senators. Sometimes debates and votes last for hours! Senators also get to eat together in their very own Senate Dining Room. The Dining Room is one of the many places to eat instead the United States Capitol. Eating together allows senators to continue important conversations, enjoy time together, and relax.



Make Your Own Bean Soup

Step 1: Soak your beans overnight and then transfer them to a large pot.

Step 2: Add ham and pour in the water. Bring to a simmer over medium heat, and then reduce the heat to low and cook for about one 1 hour.

Step 3: Add diced potatoes to the soup. Continue to simmer until beans and potato are soft. Then, remove ham and let it cool slightly. Chop ham meat and remove the bones before adding the ham back in the soup.

Step 4: Melt butter in a large skillet and add onion, celery, and garlic. Cook until the vegetables are soft. Add the vegetables to the soup.

Step 5: Simmer for 1 more hour, then season with salt and pepper.

Ingredients:

- 1 lb navy beans
- 1 lb smoked ham
- 10 cups water
- potato
- 2 tablespoons butter
- onion
- 1 stalk celery
- 1-2 cloves garlic
- salt & pepper

What would you add to the Senate's lunch menu? While your soup cooks, draw a picture of your new menu item below.

Substitutions & Additions

Instead of navy beans: Use any beans you have or a mixture of different beans.

For a vegetarian soup: Use any vegetables you have like carrot, broccoli or cauliflower instead of the ham.

For extra flavor: Use spices like crushed red pepper, thyme, or bay leaf.

For topping: Let each member of your family top their own soup with cooked and crumbled bacon, chopped herbs, green onion, parmesan cheese, or a splash of cream or plain Greek yogurt.



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