

## Sweetened Red Bean Soup

*Hoong Dui Sah*

Sweetened Red Bean Soup (*Hoong Dul Soh*) is recommended in the winter, when the weather is cold, to warm the body. Some people will also drink this chilled in the summer, but it is more popular in cold weather. The soup is reminiscent of lentil soup in texture. The brown candy (*peen tong*) must always be added when the soup is at a rolling boil or, it is believed, the sugar can cause fainting. Note these red beans are different from the elongated adzuki beans; choose the small, ¼-inch round red beans sold in Chinese supermarkets. (See "Foods with Medicinal Attributes" in the photo insert). Chinese pearl tapioca is available in Chinatown.

1 1/3 cups small dried red beans (*hoong dui*) about 4 ounces  
1 piece dried tangerine peel (*guo pay*) about 3 inches wide  
¼ cup lotus seeds with skin, rinsed  
¼ cup Chinese pearl tapioca  
1 slab brown candy (*peen tong*), about 2 ounces

**Rinse** the red beans in several changes of cold water, and cover with at least 2 inches of cold water to soak overnight. Drain the soaked beans and discard the water.

**In** a small bowl, soak the tangerine peel in ¼ cup cold water for 30 minutes. Discard the water.

**In** a 2-quart saucepan, bring the beans, 1 quart cold water, and tangerine peel to a boil over high heat. Cover, reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer until very soft, about 1 hour. Drain and reserve the water. Place the drained beans and tangerine peel in a food processor and process until as smooth as possible.

**Return** the bean paste to the saucepan with the reserved cooking water. Add the lotus seeds to the saucepan, and bring to a boil over high heat, stirring constantly. Cover, reduce heat to low, and simmer until the lotus seeds are tender, about 30 minutes.

**Meanwhile**, in a small bowl, combine the pearl tapioca and ½ cup cold water and set aside to soak for 10 minutes. Cut the brown candy into smaller pieces. Return mixture to a boil over high heat. Add the softened tapioca and brown candy, reduce heat to medium, and cook, stirring constantly, until tapioca is translucent and sugar dissolves, about 10 minutes. Serve piping hot (no more than 1½ cups per person).

**Makes 6 servings as a tonic.**