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STONE SOUP – ‘Sopa de Pedra’

Story inspiration for the Lisbon MS festival 2022–2023

A poor friar, while on a pilgrimage, arrived one day in the city of Almeirim, Portugal. Being too proud to beg for food, he asked the locals if they could lend him a pot so that he could prepare his Stone Soup. The villagers were curious to see how he made the stone soup and he pulled out a beautiful, smooth, well-washed stone from his pouch.

The friar then said that he needed a wood fire and the villagers helped him gather some wood to start a fire. He then asked if someone could let him borrow a large kettle with water to make his stone soup, and one of the villagers went home, brought back a kettle with water, and set it over the fire. The friar gently placed the stone in the pot and added the boiling water, he tasted it and said that the soup needed to be seasoned with a little salt.

One of the villagers offered to go home and get some salt for seasoning, but the friar suggested that it would taste even better if it was a chouriço (sausage) or touçinho (bacon). The villager went home and brought back the chouriço and touçinho and the friar added it to the pot.

The friar then asked if someone had anything to thicken the soup, like potatoes, beans, or other vegetables, and several of the villagers went home to gather more ingredients for the soup. A short time later a delicious soup was ready to be eaten and the friar invited the villagers to join him in eating the soup together.

They all ate the soup and there was even enough to share with the rest of the village. After they were done the friar removed the stone from the pot, washed it, and carefully placed it back in his pouch ready for the next soup.

Story text edited and adapted from:

Cordeiro, Kevin. "Stone Soup - a Monk, a Stone, and a Very Compassionate Village." *Everyday Portuguese*, Everyday Portuguese, 24 Oct. 2019, <https://everydayportuguese.com/blogs/news/stone-soup-a-monk-a-stone-and-a-very-compassionate-village/>.

"Sopa Da Pedra (Portuguese Stone Soup)." *Feel Portugal Magazine*, 18 Jan. 2022, <https://feelportugal.com/2022/01/09/sopa-da-pedra-portuguese-stone-soup/>.