

SAVORY OATMEAL WITH BACON, SCALLIONS, AND CHEDDAR

(published with permission from Sarah Di Gregorio)

1 cup uncooked steel-cut oats

Kosher salt

1/2 pound thick-cut bacon

5 scallions, trimmed, light green and white parts thinly sliced

8 ounces sharp cheddar, grated (about 2 heaping cups)

Freshly ground black pepper

Fried or poached eggs, for topping (1 per person)

Generously butter a 5- to 7-quart slow cooker. Add the oats, 4 cups water, and 1 teaspoon salt. Cook until the oatmeal is thick and tender: on LOW for 4 hours or on LOW for 2 hours followed by WARM for 6 to 7 hours.

Put the bacon into a cold large skillet and bring the heat to medium. Cook, flipping a couple of times, until the bacon has rendered a lot of its fat and is deeply browned and crisp, about 10 minutes. Drain on paper towels, then coarsely chop. You can do this right before serving the oatmeal or the day before, in which case store the crisped bacon in an airtight container in the refrigerator and bring it to room temperature before using.

When the oatmeal is done, stir in the bacon, white and light green scallion slices, and about three-quarters of the cheese (about 6 ounces). Taste for seasoning and add more salt if necessary and a few grinds of pepper. Serve in bowls topped with the remaining cheese, the dark green sliced scallions, and eggs, if you like.