

Minestrone

Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 onions, chopped
- 2 cups chopped celery
- 5 carrots, sliced
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 2 cups tomato sauce
- 1 can Italian crushed tomatoes
- 1/2 cup red wine (optional)
- 1 cup canned red kidney beans, drained OR 1 can cannellini beans (white kidney beans) drained
- 1 (15 ounce) can green beans
- 2 cups baby spinach, rinsed
- 3 zucchinis, quartered and sliced
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup seashell pasta OR Ditalini pasta (hard to find around here)
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese for topping
- 1 tablespoon olive oil

Directions

1. In a large stock pot, over medium-low heat, heat olive oil and saute garlic for 2 to 3 minutes. Add onion and saute for 4 to 5 minutes. Add celery and carrots, saute for 1 to 2 minutes.
2. Add chicken broth crushed tomatoes and tomato sauce, bring to boil, stirring frequently. If desired add red wine at this point. Reduce heat to low and add kidney beans, green beans, spinach leaves, zucchini, oregano, basil, salt and pepper. Simmer for 30 to 40 minutes, the longer the better.
3. Fill a medium saucepan with water and bring to a boil. Add pasta and cook until tender. Drain water and set aside.
4. Once pasta is cooked and soup is heated through place 2 tablespoons cooked pasta into individual serving bowls. Ladle soup on top of pasta and sprinkle Parmesan cheese on top. Spray with olive oil and serve.

Sue Kerrigan – February 2011