

ITALIAN VEGETABLE SOUP

I came up with this recipe after finding one for a soup called Ribollita, which is largely made up of bread. We were trying to stay away from bread at the time so I made a few modifications and this is the result. This is NOT a vegetarian soup.

2 15 oz cans Cannellini beans
Kosher salt
¼ cup good quality olive oil
¼ pound diced pancetta
2 cups chopped yellow onions (2 onions)
1 cup chopped carrots (3 carrots)
1 cup chopped celery (3 stalks)
3 TBS minced garlic (6 cloves)
1 tsp freshly ground pepper
¼ tsp crushed red pepper flakes
1 28 oz can Italian Plum tomatoes in puree, chopped (puree reserved)
4 cups coarsely chopped or shredded savoy cabbage
4 cups coarsely chopped kale
½ cup basil leaves
6 cups chicken stock
½ cup freshly grated Parmesan, for serving

Heat oil in a large stockpot. Add the pancetta and onions and cook over medium-low heat for 7-10 minutes, until the onions are translucent. Add the carrots, celery, garlic, 1 tsp of salt, pepper and the pepper flakes. Cook over medium low heat for 7 to 10 minutes until the vegetables are tender. Add the tomatoes with their puree, cabbage, kale and basil and cook over medium-low heat stirring constantly for another 7-10 minutes.

Drain the beans, reserving their liquid. In the bowl of a food processor fitted with a steel blade, puree half of the beans with enough of their liquid to help. Pour up to two cups of the remaining bean liquid into a large measuring cup and add six cups of chicken stock. You want a total of 8 cups combined liquid, so if you're short, add more of the bean liquid if you have it, or water. Add to the soup and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer low for 20 minutes.

Serve in large bowls, top with a grated cheese and a drizzle of olive oil.