



Minestrone Soup (Italian Vegetable and Pasta)

This is a classic Italian soup with big flavors. Get out the Dutch oven and prepare this comforting and delicious soup. Feel free to use leftover veggies in the fridge and experiment with different beans and veggies you like. This is one recipe you will never make the same way twice!

Ingredients

- 3 oz pancetta (Italian bacon-not smoked)
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 diced onion
- 1 cup diced celery
- 4 minced garlic cloves
- 4 cups vegetable or chicken broth
- 1 (28-oz) can plum tomatoes, crushed fine (Diced tomatoes also work fine)
- 2 cups water, plus more as needed
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 tsp dried Italian herb blend (a combination of thyme, oregano, rosemary, basil is great)
- red pepper flakes to taste
- 1 cup freshly shucked cranberry beans (aka shelling beans)
2 or 3 cups chopped cabbage
- 1 (15-oz) can garbanzo beans, drained
- 1 bunch Swiss chard, chopped
- 2/3 cup raw ditalini pasta
- extra virgin olive oil, Parmigiano-Reggiano, and fresh Italian parsley to garnish the top

Preparation instructions

- Sauté the pancetta in the olive oil until not quite brown
- Add the onion and diced celery. Cook for about 4 minutes.
- Add minced garlic cloves. Stir in and cook for a minute
- Add the chicken or vegetable broth.
- Crush the plum tomatoes with your hand and add to the pot.
- Add the water. Bring to a simmer.
- Remove cranberry beans (shelling beans) from the pods.
- Add the beans and chopped cabbage.
- Add the Italian herb blend and red pepper flakes.
- Add drained and rinsed garbanzo beans
- Turn heat to lower. Cook until beans are tender, about 45 minutes.
- Rinse the Swiss chard well. Slice and dice it.
- Add more water if needed, since adding the pasta is coming next and you want enough water to cook it properly.
- Test the beans to make sure they are tender.
- Add the Swiss chard. Simmer for 15 minutes.
- Adjust the seasoning, adding pepper or salt before adding pasta
- Add the ditalini pasta, which are small tubes. Turn heat to medium high and cook for 15 minutes until pasta is cooked.

Ladle the soup into large bowls. Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil and Parmigiano-Reggiano. Top with parsley.

Serve hot with bread. Adding a salad makes for a delicious meal.

Bonus Items

If you want to watch the video again, click [here](#).

If you can't find the pasta at your local store, click [here](#) to find it online.