

Tuscan-style Vegetable and Bean Soup, a version of “Ribollita”



Ingredients:

3 T. Olive oil (divided)

3 C. Onions, chopped

2-3 Garlic cloves, finely minced (about 1 T.)

2 C. Carrots, chopped

2 C. Celery, chopped

1 bu. Kale, ribs and stems removed and julienned into bite-sized pieces; may substitute cabbage, also thinly sliced (as for cole slaw but in shorter strands)

1 T. Apple cider or rice vinegar (optional)

1 ½ - 2 C. Potatoes, organic, scrubbed and cut into ½ inch dice (about 3 small potatoes)

6 - 8 C. Water or vegetable stock

1 Parmesan cheese rind (optional)

3 springs fresh thyme or ¼ tsp. dried thyme

¼ tsp. Chili flakes

1 ea. Bay leaf

3 – 3 ½ C. Cranberry beans, cooked (aka cannellini beans) or 2 ea. 14.5 oz. canned beans (cannellini, white or Great Northern white) rinsed and strained well. If cooking the beans from scratch, reserve the cooking water (and use as part of the measurement of water above)

Salt (we use Kosher salt) and ground black pepper

Optional garnishes: 1 T. chopped parsley, grated Parmesan cheese. Serve with grilled slices of toasted or grilled baguette, ciabatta or croutons

Method:

Heat a soup pot large enough to hold 8-10 C. of ingredients over medium heat until hot. Add 2 T. of olive oil and when the oil is hot (it will shimmer across the bottom of the pot), lower the heat and add the onions and season with a pinch of salt and stir. When the onions are translucent, add the garlic, carrots and celery. Add another pinch of salt and stir together. Cook until the vegetables have softened, about 5-7 minutes. Add the kale and stir together again, season with several grinds of black pepper (or ¼ tsp), thyme, and chili flakes. Raise the heat to medium and continue cooking until the kale has softened. If the vegetables begin to stick to the bottom of the pan, add the optional vinegar or a little water. Do not scorch the vegetables.

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When the kale has softened, add 6 C. of bean cooking water/water and add the bay leaf, optional Parmesan rind, drained beans and potatoes and season with 1 tsp. of salt. The water should cover the other ingredients by about two inches. Raise the heat to medium high and bring to a soft boil (not rolling bubbles). Add additional liquid as needed, the soup should be thick, not watery. Test the potatoes for doneness with a fork and when tender, the soup is finished. Taste and adjust seasoning with salt, pepper, and chili flakes

Pull out the bay leaf and Parmesan rind and garnish with chopped parsley. Drizzle the remaining 1T of olive oil over each serving and pass grated Parmesan cheese and serve the grilled bread or toast

Culinary Note

The Italian soup, “Ribollita” means “reboiled,” as the soup was a thin vegetable soup reheated in its second incarnation with pieces of stale bread added to thicken the soup. It’s a great reason to make a big pot of soup and reheat with additional vegetables to serve again with different flavors and texture.