

Minestrone Soup



Serves 8

Prep 20 mins

Cooking 1h

Easy

Ingredients

1 clove of garlic	½ teaspoon dried oregano
1 red onion	1 fresh bay leaf
2 carrots	2 x 400g tins of plum tomatoes
2 sticks of celery	1 litre organic vegetable stock
1 courgette	1 large handful of greens (savoy cabbage, curly kale, chard)
1 small leek	100 g wholemeal pasta
1 large potato	½ a bunch of fresh basil
1 x 400g tin of cannellini beans	Parmesan cheese
2 rashers of smoked streaky bacon	
olive oil	

1. Peel & finely chop the garlic & onion. Trim and roughly chop the carrots, celery and courgette, then add the vegetables to a large bowl. Cut the ends off the leek, quarter it lengthways, wash it under running water, then cut into 1cm slices. Add to the bowl. Scrub and dice the potato. Drain the cannellini beans, then set aside. Finely slice the bacon.
2. Heat 2 tbsp of oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat. Add the bacon & fry gently for 2 mins, or until golden. Add the garlic, onion, carrots, celery, courgette, leek, oregano & bay & cook slowly for about 15 mins, or until the vegetables have softened, stirring occasionally.
3. Add the potato, cannellini beans & plum tomatoes, then pour in the vegetable stock. Stir well, breaking up the tomatoes with the back of a spoon. Cover with a lid & bring everything slowly to the boil, then simmer for about 30 minutes, or until the potato is cooked through.
4. Remove and discard any tough stalks bits from the greens, then roughly chop.
5. Using a rolling pin, bash the pasta into pieces while it's still in the packet
6. To check the potato is cooked, pierce a chunk of it with a sharp knife – if it pierces easily, it's done. Add the greens & pasta to the pan, and cook for a further 10 mins, or until the pasta is al dente. Try some just before the time is up to make sure you cook it perfectly.
7. Add a splash more stock or water to loosen, if needed. Pick over the basil leaves and stir through. Season to taste with sea salt and black pepper, then serve with a grating of Parmesan and a slice of wholemeal bread.