

Minestrone

Yields 4 servings

Ingredients

1/2 pound dried white beans, picked over and rinsed
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup chopped Roma tomatoes
1/3 cup olive oil
1 onion, chopped
1 large carrot, cut into 1/2-inch dice
1 rib of celery, cut into 1/2-inch dice
3 garlic cloves, chopped fine
2 zucchini, scrubbed and cut into 1/2-inch dice
24 oz V-8 juice
Freshly grated Parmesan
Garlic bruschetta



Instructions

1. In a large bowl, let the white beans soak in enough water to cover them by 2 inches overnight or quick-soak them.
2. Drain the white beans, in a saucepan combine them with enough water to cover them by 2 inches, and simmer them, uncovered, adding more water if necessary to keep them barely covered, for 45 minutes to 1 hour, or until they are tender.
3. Add the salt and simmer the white beans for 5 minutes more. Remove the pan from the heat and let the white beans stand, uncovered.
4. In a heavy kettle, heat the oil over moderate heat, add the onion, and cook, stirring, until the onion is softened. Add the carrots, the celery, and the garlic and cook the mixture, stirring, for 4 minutes. Add the zucchini, stirring, for 4 minutes. Cabbage is wilted. Add the tomatoes and the V-8 juice and simmer the soup, covered, for 1 hour.
5. Drain the white beans, reserving the liquid, in a blender or food processor. Purée half of them with 1 cup of the reserved liquid, and stir the purée and the remaining white beans into the soup.
6. Simmer the soup, uncovered, for 15 minutes, thin it if desired with some of the remaining reserve liquid, and season it with salt and pepper.

Note: The soup may be made 3 days in advance and kept covered and chilled. Reheat the soup, thinning it with water as desired. Serve the soup with the Parmesan and the bruschetta.

