RECIPE

Pasta e fagioli

A one-pot Italian lunch soup of white beans, toasted whole-wheat pasta and chard, with a spoonful of Parmesan over each bowl.

MAKES

5 servings US Metric

TOTAL

1 h

Ingredients

- [ ] 2 tbsp olive oil, divided
- [ ] 1 cup whole-wheat elbow macaroni, dry
- [ ] 1 medium onion, diced
- [ ] 2 medium carrots, diced
- [ ] 2 medium celery stalks, diced
- [ ] 1 tsp garlic powder
- [ ] 2 tbsp no-salt-added tomato paste
- [ ] 1 tsp dried oregano
- [ ] 1 tsp dried thyme leaves
- [ ] ¼ tsp red pepper flakes
- [ ] ½ tsp black pepper
- [ ] 1 can (14.5 oz) no-salt-added diced tomatoes, with their juice
- [ ] 3 cups no-salt-added cannellini beans (two 15 oz cans), drained and rinsed
- [ ] 5 cups water

Method

1. Heat 1 tbsp of the oil in a big heavy pot over medium heat. Add the dry pasta and stir for 2 to 3 minutes, until it smells nutty and a few pieces turn golden. Scoop it into a bowl and set aside.

2. Pour the other tablespoon of oil into the same pot. Cook the onion, carrots and celery for 8 minutes, stirring, until the onion looks glassy.

3. Stir in the garlic powder, tomato paste, oregano, thyme, red pepper flakes and black pepper. Cook for 1 minute, until the paste darkens a shade.

4. Add the tomatoes with their juice, the beans and the water. Scrape up anything stuck to the bottom. Bring to a boil, then turn the heat down to a steady simmer.

- [ ] ¾ tsp salt
- [ ] 5 cups loosely packed chopped Swiss chard (about 5 leaves), stems trimmed
- [ ] 2 tbsp grated Parmesan (for a vegetarian dish, use a parmesan-style cheese made with microbial rennet)
- [ ] 1 tbsp red wine vinegar

5. Simmer, partly covered, for 20 minutes. At 5,300 ft water boils near 203 °F, so the carrots need the full time to turn soft; go by a fork, not the clock.

6. Stir in the toasted pasta and the salt. Simmer for 10 to 12 minutes, stirring often so it does not stick, until the pasta is tender with a little chew. Whole-wheat pasta takes a few minutes longer than the package says up here.

7. Add the chard and cook 2 to 3 minutes, until it is soft and bright. Off the heat, stir in the vinegar. If it is too thick, stir in a splash of water; the pasta keeps drinking as it sits.

8. Ladle into bowls and sprinkle each with a little of the Parmesan, about 1 tsp a bowl.

9. Cool in shallow containers within 2 hours, then refrigerate. Reheat leftovers to a boil, stirring, adding a splash of water. Freezes in 2-cup tubs for 3 months; thaw overnight in the fridge.