



Minestrone Soup

Serves 8

Ingredients

- ½ medium yellow onion, peeled and diced ½ inch
- 3 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 small yellow zucchini, diced ½ inch
- 2 large carrots, peeled and sliced ¼ inch
- 1 small parsnip, peeled and sliced ¼ inch
- 2 celery, sliced ½ inch
- 1 cup cabbage, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup fennel root, diced ¼ inch
- 1 medium yukon gold potato, peeled and cubed ½ inch pieces
- 1 ear corn, kernels cut from the cob
- 8 cups chicken broth (or water)
- 2 cups fresh spinach, chiffonaded
- 1 Tbsp tomato paste
- ½ cup frozen or fresh shelled peas
- ½ cup orzo pasta uncooked
- ½ cup cooked fresh beans if available, or canned beans (I often use garbanzo beans or white beans)
- Parmigiano-Reggiano

Instructions

In a large, heavy pot, sauté onion until soft and translucent, about 5 minutes. Add the rest of the vegetables (except spinach, peas and beans) and sauté an additional 5 minutes.

Add broth or water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and cook 15 minutes.

Add spinach, tomato pasta, peas, pasta and beans.

Cook briefly until orzo is done. Serve with fresh grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese on top and some slivers of fresh basil (if it is summer).

A couple of cook's notes:

- I often add a bit of tomato paste to soups to deepen the flavor and so I buy a tube of tomato paste at the supermarket in lieu of a can. Napoleon makes a fairly generic version.
- Sautéing the vegetables rather than just simmering them raw imparts a deep, sweet flavor.
- Feel free to add vegetables such as green beans or parsnips when they are in season.