

Tuscan White Bean Soup with Rosemary and Kale

This recipe was adapted from The Rebar Cookbook by Audrey Alsterberg and Wanda Urbanowicz.

It is a flavorful soup with a hearty, smooth texture and the taste of fresh herbs, combined with the rich taste of tomatoes and garlic.

Serves 8

- 2 cups white beans, soaked overnight (what about if using canned?)
- 10 cups water
- 4 bay leaves
- 1 - 2 tablespoons sea salt
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 yellow onion, diced
- 8-10 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ teaspoon of red chili flakes
- 2 tablespoons minced rosemary
- 4 ripe roma tomatoes, seeded and diced
- 1 small bunch of fresh kale, thick stems removed
- 1 tablespoon of balsamic vinegar
- 1 teaspoon of fresh cracked black pepper

Soak the white beans in water overnight, minimum 8 hours. Drain and rinse the beans and place in a 4-quart pot with the bay leaves, 2 teaspoons of the minced rosemary and cold water. Bring the mixture to a boil and then reduce heat and let simmer for 15 minutes. Skim the top of the water and discard; add 1 tablespoon of olive oil and continue to simmer the remaining mixture for 45 minutes to an hour. Add 2 teaspoons of salt to the beans when finished cooking and tender.

Heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil in a separate pot and add the diced onion, 1 teaspoon of sea salt and the chili flakes. Sauté the mixture until the onions are golden and soft. Add the minced garlic cloves and the remaining rosemary and cook for 5-10 minutes on medium heat. Next, add the beans and their cooking liquid to the onion and garlic mixture. Begin to simmer all ingredients while adding tomatoes. The mixture should then simmer for 20 minutes.

While the mixture is simmering, wash and cut the stems off of the kale, tear the leaves into bite size pieces and add to soup within the last 5-10 minutes of cooking. Season the soup to taste with balsamic vinegar, cracked black pepper and remaining salt, if desired. Serve immediately.

Preparation time: 2 hours