

Pasta Fagioli



Ingredients:

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
3 ribs celery, chopped
1 small onion, chopped
3 - 4 medium-sized garlic cloves, finely minced
4 cups chicken stock, preferably homemade, divided
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 teaspoon dried basil (1 tablespoon fresh)
3 sprigs fresh rosemary, finely chopped (or 1 teaspoon dried)
Pinch crushed red pepper flakes (optional)
3 medium tomatoes, finely chopped seeds and pulp removed
2 medium tomatoes, seeds and pulp removed, pureed
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups uncooked Ditalini or elbow pasta
1 can cannellini beans with liquid
Salt and pepper, to taste

Optional Garnish:

Fresh Basil Pesto

Directions:

In a heavy bottomed pan, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add celery and onions and sauté until tender, but not mushy. Add garlic and cook for 30 seconds to one minute. Do not brown.

Add 2½ cups of chicken broth to pot. Season with oregano, basil, rosemary and crushed red pepper flakes, if desired. Sprinkle with salt and pepper.

Add chopped and pureed tomatoes to pot. Simmer on low for 20 – 25 minutes. Add uncooked pasta and cook until tender. Approximately 10 minutes.

Add beans and reserved liquids to pot and heat through. Ladle into bowls and tops with a dollop of fresh pesto, if desired.

Serve with freshly grated or shaved Parmesan cheese and crusty Italian bread.