




EASY MINISTRONE SOUP

 45 minutes



4 people as a main meal or 8 mugs if you are sitting around an open fire or couch

INGREDIENTS

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil (I like Cobram Classic)

1 brown onion, finely chopped

2 carrots, peeled and finely chopped

2 sticks celery, finely chopped

5 cups chicken stock, hot (homemade or I like Massel Chicken Style Stock Cubes)

1 thick rind of parmigiano reggiano or pecorino pepato cheese (if you can get it)

400g canned diced tomatoes (I like Mutti Polpa)

400g canned cannellini beans, rinsed and drained

50g dried macaroni (I like Barilla Ditalini)

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

4 tablespoons continental parsley, finely chopped

75g parmigiano reggiano or pecorino pepato cheese, freshly grated

Extra virgin olive oil, for drizzling on top



EASY MINESTRONE SOUP

INGREDIENTS

- Heat the olive oil in a medium 25 cm saucepan. Add the onion and saute over a medium to low heat for 5 minutes or until the onions soften (do not let the onion burn). Then, add the carrot and celery and saute gently for 10 minutes. You may like to pop a lid on at this stage (for just a little while) to allow the carrot and celery to sweat a little. Stir occasionally. Make sure these three ingredients do not burn as the burnt flavour will permeate through the soup. This is the most important step. If you give this step the love it deserves, it will really enhance the flavour of the minestrone.
- When the onion, carrots and celery are cooked well, add the hot chicken stock, thick rind of Parmigiano Reggiano or Pecorino Pepato, canned tomatoes and drained cannellini beans. Mix well with a wooden spoon.
- Bring the minestrone to a boil and then gently reduce the heat to a simmer, with the saucepan lid ajar, to allow the soup to develop its flavours. Stir occasionally and taste as you go along to make sure that the soup doesn't taste 'raw' and is really developing a lovely depth of flavour. This will take approximately 30 minutes. Once you are happy, remove the cheese rind, if you can find it! If you can't, that means that the cheese has melted really nicely in the soup and will help with the thickness and flavour.
- Add the macaroni and cook over medium heat for approximately 8-10 minutes (read the packet instructions) or until the pasta is almost cooked. The pasta will continue to cook once you take it off the heat. Season with a little bit of salt and cracked pepper to taste.
- Serve in warm soup bowls or mugs with a sprinkle of freshly chopped parsley, grated cheese and a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil.

Note - Save up your Parmesan or pecorino rinds and pop in the freezer, then you can just grab one whenever making Minestrone!

