

Pasta & Bean Soup

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Servings: 6

Preparation Time: 20 minutes

Start to Finish Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

1 1/4 cups dried Great Northern or cannellini beans

pinch baking soda

1/4 cup olive oil

2 cloves garlic, crushed

8 cups vegetable or chicken broth

1 cup short pasta (such as tubettini)

4 medium fresh tomatoes (or 3 cups diced canned tomatoes), peeled, seeded and coarsely chopped

1/4 cup parsley, chopped

freshly ground black pepper (to taste)

salt (preferably sea salt) (optional)

olive oil (for drizzling)

Put the beans in a bowl and add water to cover by three inches. Add baking soda. Let soak overnight. Drain just before using.

Place the drained beans in a 4- to 6-quart pot. Add the olive oil, garlic and seven cups of the broth. Bring to a boil.

Reduce the heat and simmer, partially covered, for 1 hour or until the beans are tender. Cool slightly.

Using a slotted spoon, transfer about 3/4 of the beans to a blender or food processor. Add about 1/2 cup of liquid from the pot. Blend until smooth.

Return the bean puree to the pot. Add the remaining one cup of the broth and bring to a boil. Add the pasta and simmer for 15 minutes or until the pasta is tender. (Add about one cup of water if the soup seems too thick.)

Remove from the heat. Stir in the tomatoes and parsley.

Season with the pepper and add salt if needed.

Ladle into warm serving bowls and drizzle with olive oil, if desired.

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 82 Calories; 9g Fat (97.0% calories from fat); trace Protein; trace Carbohydrate; trace Dietary Fiber; 0mg Cholesterol; 2mg Sodium. Exchanges: 0 Vegetable; 2 Fat.