

Tuscan White Bean Soup

with Wilted Escarole



Whether cooking or selling real estate, the key to success is a skillful balance of local ingredients and expert preparation.





Tuscan White Bean Soup

Serves 8

Ingredients

2 cups dried cannellini, Great Northern, or borlotti beans, rinsed and picked over

8 cups spring water

1 tablespoon kosher salt

1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

3 garlic cloves, minced

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup diced pancetta (about 4 ounces)

1 tablespoon very finely chopped rosemary

2 medium yellow onions, diced

2 large leeks, white and pale green parts, diced

4 carrots, peeled and diced

4 cups wilted greens; use escarole, spinach, chard, or kale

Fruity green extra virgin olive oil

Method

Combine the beans and water in a large saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn off the heat and let the beans sit, uncovered, for 1 hour or soak overnight.

Skim off any beans that have floated to the top. Bring the beans to a simmer, add the salt, and let the beans simmer gently, partially covered, over low heat for 45 minutes, or until tender. Make sure that the beans remain covered with 2 inches of liquid at all times.

When the beans are almost tender, heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the garlic and cook for 45 seconds, until it just starts to turn a light golden brown. Toss in the pancetta, give it a stir (this will help prevent the garlic from burning), and cook, stirring occasionally, until the pancetta has rendered its fat and begun to brown. Add the rosemary and stir for 30 seconds, then add the onions and leeks and cook until they just become translucent, 8 to 10 minutes.

Add the carrots, the beans, and the bean cooking liquid to the pot and simmer for 20 minutes.

Place a mound of wilted greens in the bottom of each serving bowl. Ladle the soup over the greens, drizzle with a swirl of fruity olive oil, and serve.

