

Nancy's Page

As Wine Society members who receive our wines every month, you are a very elite group. November is one of the months that you are the only people who receive a shipment of our wine. On this page I like to share some of my very favorite recipes. As the fall days bring cooler weather, I love to make soup on a regular basis. This last week I made a minestrone soup that was easy, delicious and a meal in itself. Buon Appetito!

Minestrone Soup

The original recipe called for a pound of Swiss chard which was an ingredient I omitted. If you don't have fresh rosemary, the dried style works well. I had a hard time finding low sodium beef broth in cans so I used a carton which, even though it was slightly larger, was great. If you don't have an Italian market for pancetta, Trader Joe's has it in stock in most stores.

2 tablespoons olive oil	1 onion, chopped
2 carrots, peeled, chopped	2 celery stalks, chopped
3 oz thinly sliced pancetta, coarsely chopped	2 garlic cloves, minced
1 Russet potato, peeled, cubed	1 (14 oz) can diced tomatoes
1 (14 ½ oz) can cannellini beans, drained and rinsed	1 fresh rosemary sprig
2 (14 oz) cans low sodium beef broth	1 oz piece Parmesan cheese rind
2 tablespoons chopped fresh Italian parsley	Salt and pepper

Heat the oil in a heavy large pot over medium heat. Add the onion, carrots, celery, pancetta and garlic. Saute until the onion is translucent, about 10 minutes. Add the potato; sauté for about 2 minutes. Add the tomatoes (Italian style if you like) and rosemary sprig. Simmer until the tomatoes break down, about 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, blend $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of the beans with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the broth in a processor until almost smooth. Add the pureed bean mixture, remaining broth and Parmesan cheese rind to the vegetable mixture. Simmer until the potato pieces are tender, stirring occasionally, about 15 minutes. Stir in the whole beans and parsley. Simmer until the beans are heated through and the soup is thick, about 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Discard Parmesan rind and rosemary sprig (the leaves will have fallen off of the stem).

Ladle the soup into bowls and serve. Garnish with extra grated Parmesan cheese, if desired. Toasted garlic bread is also a tasty accompaniment.

Serves 4