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Zuppa di Verza e Ceci

Cabbage and Bean Soup

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 medium head Savoy Cabbage (see Tips)
- 2 cans (15 Oz) chick peas/garbanzo beans
- 2 medium size carrots, diced
- 1 celery stalk, diced
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 TBSP tomato paste
- 4 TBSPs Olive Oil
- 1 1/2 quart vegetable soup/stock
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Fresh rosemary and/or sage as needed

NONNA'S TIPS

- Savoy cabbage is the curly kind of cabbage. I prefer it because it has a milder flavor and pretty appearance (the curly strips almost look like pasta) but you can use any type of cabbage you like for this recipe.
- I used chick peas but you can substitute them for any bean you prefer. To make it easier for you, I recommend canned beans, but if you like to cook your own, feel free to do that.
- You can substitute tomato paste with 1/2 cup chopped or crushed tomatoes. If you use chopped, allow 5 extra minutes for tomatoes to reduce a bit. Also, if you can't find fresh herbs, use dry ones.
- If you're not a vegetarian and want deeper flavor, use chicken, beef or turkey stock instead of vegetable one.

DIRECTIONS

- Clean cabbage by removing outer leaves first.
- Slice it into strips, after removing the core, and rinse in colander under running water.
- Set aside.
- Place olive oil in a soup pot.
- Heat it on medium and add chopped onion, chopped garlic, diced carrots, diced celery and fresh herbs.
- Stir often until veggies are wilted.
- Add tomato paste and stir until veggies are coated.
- Add vegetable soup and stir well.
- When soup comes to a boil, add cabbage strips.
- Adjust seasoning with salt and pepper to taste.
- Stir and simmer on low heat for about 15-20 minutes or until cabbage is soft (but not mushy!).
- Remove herbs.
- Add drained beans and stir.
- Simmer on low for 10 more minutes.
- Remove from heat and let soup sit a few minutes before serving.
- You can serve this soup with a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil and crostini (croutons).
- Makes 4 servings.

