
Tuscan White Bean Stew with Garlic Croutons

A hearty, fiber-rich Tuscan bean stew that keeps blood sugar stable. Creamy cannellini beans, aromatic vegetables, and crispy whole-grain croutons unite in comfort.

Prep: 20 min

Cook: 90 min

Total: 110 min

Servings: 6

GL 5.7 / GI 26

Ingredients

for garlic-infused croutons extra-virgin olive oil for croutons

for infusing oil garlic cloves, quartered

approximately 1 slice whole-grain bread, cut into 1/2-inch cubes

about 1 pound dried, picked over and rinsed dried cannellini beans, soaked overnight

6 cups water for cooking beans

divided into two portions salt, divided

bay leaf

for sautéing vegetables olive oil for vegetables

yellow onion, coarsely chopped

carrots, peeled and coarsely chopped

for the stew garlic cloves, chopped

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freshly ground black pepper

plus 6 sprigs for garnish fresh rosemary, chopped, plus sprigs for garnish

1.5 cups vegetable stock or broth

Instructions

Step 1

Warm 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the quartered garlic cloves and cook for 1 minute until fragrant. Remove from heat and let the garlic infuse the oil for 10 minutes, then discard the garlic pieces. Return the pan to medium heat, add the whole-grain bread cubes, and toast until golden brown, stirring frequently, about 3-5 minutes. Transfer croutons to a bowl and set aside.

Step 2

Place the soaked and drained cannellini beans in a large soup pot with 6 cups water, 1/4 teaspoon salt, and the bay leaf. Bring to a vigorous boil over high heat, then reduce to a gentle simmer. Cover partially and cook until the beans are completely tender and creamy, 60-75 minutes. Check occasionally and add water if needed to keep beans submerged.

Step 3

When beans are tender, drain them and reserve 1/2 cup of the cooking liquid. Discard the bay leaf. Transfer the cooked beans to a large bowl. In a small bowl, combine the reserved cooking liquid with 1/2 cup of the cooked beans and mash thoroughly with a fork to create a thick, creamy paste. Stir this paste back into the whole beans to create a rich, velvety texture.

Step 4

Heat 2 tablespoons olive oil in the same soup pot over medium-high heat. Add the chopped onion and carrots, sautéing until the carrots are tender-crisp and the onion is translucent, about 6-7 minutes. Add the chopped garlic and cook until softened and aromatic, about 1 minute longer, stirring constantly to prevent burning.

Step 5

Add the bean mixture, remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt, black pepper, chopped rosemary, and vegetable stock to the pot with the vegetables. Stir everything together thoroughly and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer gently until the stew is heated through and the flavors have melded, about 5 minutes.

Step 6

Ladle the hot stew into warmed serving bowls. Top each portion with garlic-infused croutons and garnish with a fresh rosemary sprig. Serve immediately while hot, ideally after starting your meal with a large mixed green salad to optimize blood sugar response.