



Community Gardens

Minestrone Soup

This is a go-to for me; it doesn't take long, and usually doesn't require a trip to the grocery store. You can be creative with what ingredients you have on hand.

Ingredients:

Veggies

This is more of a "kitchen sink" soup, so use what you like or what you got! I've found that anything from Brussels sprouts to kale to spinach to beets to peppers all tastes good and blends well. If you are worried about cooking times check out the Kitchn's guide to making soup with almost any vegetable:

<http://www.thekitchn.com/how-to-make-soup-from-almost-any-vegetable-cooking-lessons-from-the-kitchn-35301>

That said, pretty mandatory veggies for base –

1 large onion, chopped

3 cloves of garlic, chopped

Three cups diced tomatoes, canned or fresh (no need to de-seed fresh tomatoes)

2 large carrots, chopped

2 large or 3 medium potatoes, chopped

2-3 cans of beans, whichever you'd prefer (I generally use black, great northern, or whatever is in my pantry)

Broth –

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 32 oz. container of vegetable broth + water to dilute

1 – 3 tablespoons of vinegar - I prefer red wine vinegar, but rice vinegar works well too

A splash of red cooking wine

Spices —

I spice to taste; start with a dash or two, add more as you go

Salt

Pepper

Dried thyme

Dried oregano

Dried basil

A hint of cayenne

FRESH curly parsley – a large handful, chopped. You can be generous with this; I usually use the entirety of one produce bunch.

Grains -

1 bag of whichever noodle you like, I usually use macaroni, shell, or whatever is in my pantry so long as its bite-size, i.e., not spaghetti, angel hair, etc. Gluten free are fine too.

Directions:

Cook pasta in separate pot. Once pasta is cooked, drain and run under cold water until it is no longer steaming and set aside.

On medium-high heat sauté onions in olive oil until slightly tender in large stockpot. Add garlic and cook for an additional minute or until fragrant. Once sautéed, add carrots, potatoes and any other starchy or hardy veggie that needs time to cook. Once all veggies are tender, turn heat to medium and add tomatoes and beans and stir. Add all dried spices plus salt and pepper and bring mixture to a soft boil while stirring. Add liquid broth ingredients on medium heat; bring mixture to a soft boil once again. This is your time to add spices and liquids to your taste. If it's bland, add a pinch of salt, more herbs you desire, and a teaspoon or two of vinegar and wine. If it's too salty or strong, dilute with a cup of water. Repeat this process as necessary. *The beauty of this soup is that it is very forgiving. Once you've seasoned to taste, bring soup to a low simmer for 20 minutes. Stir in pasta and parsley five minutes before serving.

Optional garnishes-

A dollop of plain yogurt with a hint of fresh parsley sprinkled on top

A sprinkle of grated parmesan or asiago cheese

Makes 8 – 10 quarts