



THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES

A FOOD BLOG

Pasta e Fagioli (from Cooks Illustrated)

I added 2 cups less water than the recipe calls for. I'm sure the original recipe is fine too; I was just in the mood for something thicker. If you do this, make sure you decrease the salt to ½ teaspoon.

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling
3 ounces pancetta or bacon, chopped fine
1 medium onion, chopped fine
1 celery rib, chopped fine
4 medium garlic cloves, minced or pressed through garlic press
1 teaspoon dried oregano
¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes
3 anchovy fillets, minced to paste
1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes with liquid
1 piece Parmesan cheese rind, about 5 inches by 2 inches
2 (15½-ounce) cans cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
3½ cups homemade or low-sodium chicken broth
2½ cups water
salt
8 ounces small pasta
¼ cup chopped fresh parsley leaves
ground black pepper
2 ounces (1 cup) grated Parmesan cheese

1. Heat the oil in a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat until shimmering but not smoking, about 2 minutes. Add the pancetta and cook, stirring occasionally, until it's beginning to brown, 3 to 5 minutes. Add the onion and celery; cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are softened, 5 to 7 minutes. Add the garlic, oregano, red pepper flakes and anchovies; cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add the tomatoes, scraping up any browned bits from bottom of the pan. Add the cheese rind and beans; bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to low and simmer to blend the flavors, 10 minutes.

2. Add chicken the broth, water and 1 teaspoon salt; increase the heat to high and bring to a boil. Add the pasta and cook until tender, about 10 minutes (refer to package instructions to better estimate pasta cooking time).

3. Discard the cheese rind. Off the heat, stir in 3 tablespoons of the parsley; adjust the seasoning with salt and pepper. Ladle the soup into individual bowls; drizzle each serving with olive oil and sprinkle with a portion of the remaining parsley. Serve immediately, passing the grated parmesan separately.