



Donna's Mom's Minestrone Soup

Donna (Essad) Tantillo's mother. Rena (Rossetto) Essad was born and raised in Weed, CA. Her parents, Antonio Rossetto and Amalia (Silvestro) Rossetto were from Cavaso di Tomba near Venice.

Ingredients:

1 one pound bag of pinto beans
6 cups of water
8 cups of turkey or chicken broth plus 2 -4 cups more, if needed
2 - 3 stalks of celery, finely chopped
3 - 4 whole cloves of garlic, finely chopped
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 medium head of broccoli, cut into small flowers
¼ medium head of cauliflower, cut into small flowers
2 medium carrots, diced small
2 medium zucchini, diced small
1 ear of corn (cut kernels off the cob or use 1 cup of frozen corn
Handful of green beans, snapped in half or cut into 10 pieces **OR**
Any vegetables you prefer **OR** two one pound packages of frozen mixed vegetables
Salt, pepper, onion powder to taste
2 - 3 dashes of Lea & Perrins Worcestershire sauce
¼ cup of pasta, small shells, ditilini, whatever you prefer

If you want, you can also add meat (cooked, shredded turkey or chicken) to the soup when you add the vegetables.

Soak beans overnight in 6 cups of water in a soup pot or Dutch oven. Drain the beans. Put the soaked beans back into the pot and add the broth. Simmer for about 2 hours or until beans are very soft. Spoon some of the beans and broth into a blender or food processor and blend until almost smooth. You might have to do this in small batches **OR** use an immersion blender right in the soup pot.*

In a sauce pan heat the extra virgin olive oil. Sauté onions and celery until translucent. Then add the garlic. Bring broth and beans to a simmer over medium heat very slowly because of the thickness of the mixture. If the thickened broth mixture looks too thick you can add another 2 - 4 cups of broth. Add the vegetables, meat (if using), pasta and seasonings to the thickened broth. Simmer about 30 minutes or until vegetables and pasta are cooked.

* (Nonnie and my Mom, would scoop the beans by spoonfuls into a strainer. She held the strainer over the pot of broth. Then, with the back of a spoon, pressed the beans through the strainer removing the hull from the beans and throwing the hulls away. The meat of the beans would go back into the broth. This gives the soup a heavier body).

