

Victoria's Tuscan Three Bean Soup

*1 tbsp. olive oil
2 med. onions, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 med. carrots, chopped
2 stalks celery, chopped
2 14.5 oz. cans low sod. chicken broth
1 28 oz. can crushed tomato
1 15.5 oz. can red kidney beans
1 15.5 oz. can cannellini beans
1 15.5 oz. can chickpeas
1-1/2 tsp. dried basil
1 tsp. dried oregano
black pepper to taste
parmesan cheese*

Heat oil in large Dutch oven over med. Add onion, garlic, carrot, & celery. Sauté 5 min. until soft. Add broth, tomato, basil, oregano & bring to boil. Reduce heat & simmer, partially covered, 10 min. Drain & rinse beans thoroughly to remove excess salt. Add to pot & simmer 10 min. Remove from heat. Serve w. cheese garnish.

Serves 6-8 @ calories 395, fat 4.2 g, saturated fat 0.6g, cholesterol 0, sodium 1600mg, carbohydrates 74mg, fiber 18mg, sugars 10mg, protein 21mg.

Comments: It doesn't get much easier than this. The recipe can be played with in many ways. You can add more vegetables -- a good way to use up leftovers. You can cut up cooked chicken or other meat or sausage and add that. You can add pasta or rice or orzo or whatever. You can change the seasonings. I'm not sure I agree with the sodium content. I guess it depends on how well you rinse the beans. Alternatively, you can get dried beans and soak them overnight which means a lower salt content. But other than that this is low fat, no cholesterol, and loaded with fiber. It's a real comfort food. You can also freeze it in 1 to 1 1/2 c. containers and reheat in a microwave or saucepan.