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Reduced Sodium Robillita (Classic Tuscan Soup)

Serves 8

Ingredients:

1¼ cups dried cannellini (white kidney beans; about 8oz)
12 large fresh sage leaves
2 thick Canadian bacon slices, large dice
8 garlic cloves; 5 sliced; 3 chopped
1 tsp (or less) fine sea salt, divided
6 TBSP extra-virgin olive oil, divided, plus additional for drizzling
1 large onion, chopped
2 large celery stalks, diced
2 medium zucchini, chopped
1 medium carrot, chopped
1 large unpeeled Yukon Gold potato, scrubbed, cut into ½-inch cubes
1 small fennel bulb, trimmed, quartered through core, sliced crosswise
1 tsp oregano
1 large pinch of dried thyme
1 small bunch (about 6 cups) black kale, cut crosswise into 1-inch ribbons (known as Tuscan, lacinato, or dinosaur kale)
1 small bunch (about 6 cups) green chard (about 4 large leaves), center stem removed, cut crosswise into 1-inch ribbons
4 cups thinly sliced savoy cabbage (optional)
5 large plum tomatoes, chopped
½-inch square Parmesan cheese rind
pinch of dried crushed red pepper
5 cups (or more) reduced sodium vegetable broth
1 handful green beans, cut into 1-inch pieces,
6 (½ -inch) thick slices country white bread, coarsely torn with crusts

Preparation:

1. Combine 8 cups water, beans, sage, and sliced garlic in large saucepan. Bring to boil; reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer until beans are tender, about 2 to 2½ hours, stirring occasionally and adding more water by ¼ cups to keep beans submerged. Add ½ teaspoon sea salt; simmer 10 minutes. Uncover and cool beans in liquid.

2. Heat 3 tablespoons oil in large pot over medium heat. Add Canadian bacon and sear for a few minutes. Then add onion, whole sage leaves; sprinkle ½ teaspoon of sea salt. Cook until onion is translucent, stirring often, about 5 minutes. Add chopped garlic; stir 2 minutes. Add celery, carrot, potato, fennel, and thyme, oregano; cook until vegetables are tender and begin to turn brown in spots, stirring often, 15 to 18 minutes. Add kale, chard, cabbage, tomatoes, Parmesan rind, broth. Bring to boil; reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer until vegetables are very tender, about 1½ hours. Add cut green beans and beans with cooking liquid and crushed red pepper. Season with a little salt and generous amount of pepper. Add bread to soup and simmer, stirring often to break up bread into smaller pieces and adding more broth by 1/2 cups to thin, if desired.



Food Fairy Note: DO AHEAD: Beans can be cooked 1 day ahead. Cover and chill in cooking liquid.

Adapted from: *Robillita*, Anna Thomas, Bon Appetit, February 2010

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