

Minestrone Soup

This hearty Minestrone Soup is packed with a variety of vegetables, including carrots, celery, zucchini, potatoes, green beans, corn, tomatoes, tofu, and chickpeas. Enhanced with Tri Pepper Chai tea and finished with a drizzle of basil oil, this soup offers a unique and spicy twist on a classic favorite.

PREP TIME: 20 minutes

COOK TIME: 60 minutes

1 med onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 med carrots, diced
2 stalks celery, diced
1 med zucchini, diced
1 med potato, diced
1 C green beans, chopped
1 C fresh corn off the cob
1 C heirloom grape or cherry tomatoes, halved
1 C firm tofu, cubed
1 can (15 oz) chickpeas, drained and rinsed

1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes
4 C vegetable broth
1/2 C small pasta (like ditalini or elbow)
1 T olive oil
1 † dried oregano
1 † dried basil
1/2 † dried thyme
1/2 † Old Bay seasoning
1/8 C Tri Pepper Chai tea (brewed and cooled)
Salt and pepper to taste
Basil oil (using safflower oil)

SAUTÉ THE AROMATICS: Heat olive oil in a large pot over med heat. Add onion and garlic, sauté until translucent.

ADD THE VEGETABLES: Add carrots, celery, zucchini, potato, green beans, corn, and tomatoes. Cook for 5-7 minutes until slightly tender.

ADD THE LIQUIDS: Stir in diced tomatoes, vegetable broth, and Tri Pepper Chai tea. Bring to a boil.

SIMMER THE SOUP: Add chickpeas, tofu, oregano, basil, thyme, and Old Bay seasoning. Reduce heat and simmer for 20-25 minutes.

COOK THE PASTA: Add the pasta and cook until al dente, about 10 minutes.

PREPARE THE BASIL OIL: In a blender or using an immersion blender, combine 1/2 C safflower oil with 1/4 C fresh basil leaves. Blend until the basil is finely chopped and the oil is emulsified.

FINISH AND SERVE: Drizzle with basil oil before serving. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve hot.