

Ribollita (Tuscan Vegetable Soup)

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Chock full of seasonal produce, this tasty Tuscan soup is very dense; traditionalists say it should be eaten with a fork, not a spoon. As the flavors continue to blend, this comforting soup only gets tastier over a couple of days, making ribollita the perfect weekday dinner(s)!

Calling a soup made from scratch "ribollita" is a bit of a misnomer. The word means "reboiled," indicating a leftover soup thickened with day-old bread. This kind of dish is typical to la cucina povera, a traditional style of Italian cuisine that literally translates to "poor cooking." Cucina povera was developed by frugal Italian cooks who made the most with what they had. Centuries of transforming simple, readily-available ingredients into products that will last through a long winter resulted in iconic products like prosciutto; stretching a loaf of bread over a few days led to delicious dishes like this ribollita.

COURSE Primo piatto



DIFFICULTY Easy

PREPARATION TIME 1 hour

Yield: 8 servings

1 bunch Tuscan kale, cut into 2-inch ribbons
1 head savory cabbage, cut into 2-inch ribbons
1 bunch Swiss chard, cut into 2-inch ribbons
2 russet potatoes, peeled and diced
3 large carrots, peeled and diced
2 cups canned whole peeled tomatoes
2 zucchini, diced
1 rib celery, diced
2 leeks (white parts only), sliced
2 cloves garlic, sliced
2 cups cooked cannellini beans, half pureed
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, plus more for finishing
½ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
1 bay leaf
Leaves of 1 sprig thyme
Fine sea salt, to taste
1 to 2 cups (2-inch) cubes stale bread

Place the olive oil, leeks, and garlic in a large pot over low heat. Cook, stirring frequently, until the leeks and garlic are soft but not browned, about 5 minutes. Add the carrots and celery, and cook, stirring frequently, until the vegetables have softened but not browned, about 8 minutes. Add the potatoes and zucchini and cook, stirring, until softened, about 8 more minutes. At this stage, add the kale, cabbage, and chard, and cook – always stirring! – until the greens are very soft, about 8 minutes. Stir in the red pepper flakes.

Add the tomatoes and their juice, squeezing the tomatoes between your fingers to break them up. Add 2 quarts of water, the bay leaf, the thyme, and all of the beans. Season to taste with salt.

Bring to a boil, and then reduce the heat to a simmer. Cook until the vegetables are very tender, about 30 minutes. Remove and discard the bay leaf.

Add the bread cubes to the soup, and simmer until the bread is breaking apart and the soup is very thick, about 10 minutes. Let the soup rest off the heat for several minutes, and then ladle into warmed bowls. Drizzle a generous amount of extra virgin olive oil over each portion before serving.

Buon appetito!

This recipe was first published courtesy of [Eataly Magazine](#) [2].

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