Beef Goulash Soup

ACTIVE: 10 MIN; TOTAL: 40 MIN

6 SERVINGS

To speed up this brothy goulash soup, Grace uses quick-cooking ground beef instead of the more traditional chunks of beef chuck.

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ¼ cup sweet Hungarian paprika
- 2 teaspoons caraway seeds, chopped
- 1 pound ground beef sirloin
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- One 14-ounce can diced tomatoes
- 1 cup thinly sliced roasted red peppers
- 1 quart low-sodium beef broth
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 4 ounces wide egg noodles (2 cups)
- Crème fraîche or sour cream, for serving

1. In a large Dutch oven or pot, heat the oil. Add the onion and garlic and cook over moderate heat until softened. Add the paprika and caraway and cook for 1 minute. Add the beef and cook, breaking up the meat, until no longer pink, 3 minutes. Add the tomato paste, diced tomatoes with their juices, red peppers, broth and 1 cup of water. Season with salt and pepper and bring to boil. Cover partially and simmer for 25 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, in a saucepan of salted boiling water, cook the noodles until al dente. Drain.

3. Add the noodles to the soup and cook for 2 minutes. Ladle the soup into bowls and garnish with a dollop of crème fraîche.

WINE *Rich, spicy Italian red: 2009 Cantina del Taburno Aglianico.*

Root-Vegetable Minestrone

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ACTIVE: 20 MIN; TOTAL: 40 MIN

6 SERVINGS

- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 small rosemary sprig
- 2 carrots, sliced ¼ inch thick
- 2 parsnips, sliced ¼ inch thick
- 3 broccoli stems or 1 kohlrabi, peeled and sliced ¼ inch thick
- 1 pound cubed peeled butternut squash, cut into ¾-inch dice (3 cups)
- 6 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 4 ounces angel hair pasta, broken into 1-inch lengths
- 1 cup frozen baby lima beans
- ½ cup freshly grated pecorino cheese, plus more for serving

1. In a large Dutch oven or pot, heat 2 tablespoons of the olive oil. Add the onion, garlic and rosemary and cook over moderate heat until the onion is softened. Add the carrots, parsnips, broccoli stems and squash and cook for 1 minute. Add the broth, season with salt and pepper and simmer until the vegetables are nearly tender, about 15 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, in a medium skillet, heat the remaining 2 tablespoons of olive oil. Add the pasta and cook over moderately high heat, stirring frequently, until it is deeply golden, about 4 minutes.

3. Add the toasted pasta and the lima beans to the soup; cook until the pasta and vegetables are tender, 5 to 6 minutes. Discard the rosemary. Stir the cheese into the soup and serve, passing extra cheese at the table. ●