

QUICK MINESTRONE SOUP

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 10 MIN START TO FINISH: 30 MIN

Here's a hearty vegetable soup that doesn't take as long to make as the classic but is much better than what you'll find in a can.

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 small onion, coarsely chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, crushed in a garlic press
- 4 oz prewashed and cut kale (6 cups)
- 1 (1-lb) bag frozen mixed Italian vegetables such as zucchini, green beans, cauliflower, and broccoli
- 1 (14½-oz) can "petite" diced tomatoes in juice
- 1 cup *ditalini* pasta or small elbow macaroni
- 5¼ cups reduced-sodium chicken broth (42 fl oz)
- 2 cups water
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 (19-oz) can cannellini beans, rinsed and drained

ACCOMPANIMENT: grated parmesan

► Heat oil in a 5- to 6-quart heavy pot over moderately high heat until hot but not smoking, then cook onion and garlic, stirring occasionally, until golden, about

3 minutes. Add kale and sauté, stirring, 1 minute. Add frozen vegetables, tomatoes with juice, pasta, broth, water, salt, and pepper and simmer, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are tender and pasta is al dente, about 10 minutes.

► Meanwhile, transfer half of beans to a wide shallow bowl and coarsely mash with a fork or a potato masher, then stir mashed and whole beans into soup and simmer, stirring occasionally, until soup is slightly thickened, about 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

FOUR-CHEESE RAVIOLI WITH MUSHROOMS

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 10 MIN START TO FINISH: 30 MIN

It's worth seeking out fresh cheese ravioli. They will make this meal special.

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ½ stick (¼ cup) unsalted butter
- 2 medium shallots, thinly sliced crosswise
- 8 oz presliced fresh cremini mushrooms
- 5 oz presliced fresh shiitake caps
- ½ cup dry white wine

- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ cup coarsely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 1 (16- to 20-oz) package fresh or frozen four-cheese ravioli

► Heat oil and 2 tablespoons butter in a 12-inch heavy skillet over moderately high heat until foam subsides, then cook shallots, stirring, until golden, about 2 minutes.

► Add mushrooms and increase heat to high, then sauté, stirring, until liquid mushrooms give off is evaporated and mushrooms are golden, about 4 minutes. Add wine and boil until liquid is evaporated and mushrooms are tender, about 2 minutes. Stir in salt, pepper, parsley, and remaining 2 tablespoons butter until butter is melted.

► While mushrooms are sautéing, cook ravioli in a large pot of boiling salted water (see Tips, page 235), stirring occasionally, until ravioli are al dente. Drain in a colander.

► Return drained ravioli to large pot and add mushroom mixture, stirring gently until combined.

For more TEN-MINUTE MAINS recipes, see page 178.

Minestrone literally means "big soup." On a cool fall night, this robust version, rich with vegetables, beans, and pasta, certainly fills the bill.



10 min