

PASTA E FAGIOLI - ITALY

1 lb Great Northern or Navy beans
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 cup parsley, minced
2 cups uncooked macaroni
1 small can tomato paste
1 quart chicken stock
1 cup white wine (optional)
1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
Olive oil
Salt, pepper, red pepper, Italian seasoning, etc.

Sort and wash beans. Cover beans with cold water making sure there is 2-3" of water over top of beans. Soak overnight. Drain and rinse beans. In a large pot, cover beans with cold water. Bring beans to simmer, then reduce heat and cook uncovered for ½ hour. Do not boil beans. Then drain beans reserving cooking liquid.

Cook pasta al dente according to package directions. Drain pasta and set aside.

Heat a small amount of olive oil in large pan. Add minced parsley and garlic stirring until garlic is translucent. Add tomato paste and one cup of the bean cooking liquid stirring as you add the liquid.

Add the chicken stock, wine if desired, macaroni and cooked beans (1 cup beans to 2 cups macaroni). Fill up the pot with remaining pasta and beans, retaining pasta to bean ratio. Add seasonings and Parmesan cheese. After the Pasta Fagioli cools, it will thicken up as the pasta absorbs the liquid. Keep some pasta water for anti-thickening or can use more chicken stock.

Serves 8-10.