



Dehydrated Tomato & Bean Minestrone

Recipe by Helen McKerral of Slower Hiking



Servings: Makes 16 x 150g serves (2,700kJ/645cal per serve) and 24g protein per serve (with 10ml olive oil and 20g parmesan added).

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbspn olive oil
- 3 large onions diced
- 2 leeks sliced
- 3 large carrots finely diced
- 4 sticks celery finely diced
- 1 knob garlic chopped
- 200g mushrooms diced
- 1 large red capsicum diced
- 250g zucchini diced
- 6 chillies or to taste chopped (optional)
- 500g tomato paste (or 1.5-1.75 cups tomato powder mixed with water to paste consistency)
- 400 ml verjuice or dry white wine
- 1/4 cauliflower finely chopped
- 1/4 savoy cabbage finely sliced
- 160g green beans finely sliced
- 1 bunch tuscan black cabbage stripped and sliced (to give about 200g of leaf)
- 10g dried porcini or shittake mushrooms, soaked in boiling water to just cover
- 2 tbspn or to taste salt, msg or stock powder
- 1 1/2 tbspn dried oregano.
- 3 tbspn freshly ground black pepper
- 7 x 400g tins cannellini beans, drained and liquid reserved
- 1 kg smallish pasta or high protein pasta eg macaroni or ditalini
- 320g shelf stable parmesan
- 160ml olive oil extra, added in camp
- optional: parmesan rind

NOTES

The ingredient list might seem long, but you add almost everything into one big pot, a few items at a time - only the pasta cooks separately. Easy-peasy!



Sundays

with Lucie Cutting

on 936AM and the ABC listen app





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DIRECTIONS

1. Heat the 2 tbspn of oil in a large heavy-based pot over medium high heat and saute onions, leek, mushroom, garlic, chilli (if using), carrot and celery, stirring constantly and scraping the bottom until vegetables are slightly softened and onion is translucent.
2. Add capsicum and, continuing to stir, cook for ten minutes or until beginning to caramelise. If your pot is smallish, do this in batches because otherwise the vegetables boil instead of caramelise.
3. Lower heat to medium and add tomato paste, scraping the bottom so the paste doesn't catch too much. Continue to cook for another five minutes or until paste begins to darken and lose its rawness: cooked out paste should smell a bit like roasted tomato. Don't worry if there are dark brown bits caught on the bottom of the pot: these add flavour.
4. Add verjuice and soaked dried mushrooms with their water. Increase heat to medium high and stir well, scraping bottom of pan to loosen the caramelised bits
5. Add all remaining ingredients except pasta and cannellini beans.
6. Add reserved cannellini liquid to just cover all vegetables and stir well (top up with stock or water if necessary but add as little as possible). Bring to a boil, reduce heat, cover and simmer for 30 minutes or until vegetables are soft, stirring now and then.
7. Add cannellini beans, mix through gently, and cook another 10 minutes or until fully heated.
8. Place the vegetable mix into a large colander set over a wok or wide deep frypan and allow to drain, reserving liquid.
9. Transfer veg to a large bowl. Remove parmesan rind if used.



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DIRECTIONS (CONTINUED)

10. Meanwhile, cook pasta for about half the recommended cooking time. Drain immediately and mix with the drained vegetables in the large bowl.

11. If you want a serving size that's just right for you, place one serve in a bowl, weigh (Wet weight A), then spread that serve (or exactly two serves ie Wet Weight 2A) on a mesh dehydrator tray marked with a teaspoon. Spread the rest of the vegetables onto dehydrator trays, reserving one ladle of vegetables.

12. Using a stick blender, blend the ladle of vegetables into the liquid in the wok (the beans and fibre help the dried leather powder more easily). Place the wok or pan with the drained vegetable juices and, stirring the bottom constantly, reduce over high heat until it reaches a thick, saucy, spreading consistency.

13. Next, spread sauce thinly onto silicone- or baking paper-lined dehydrator trays.

14. Dehydrate everything at 57C (135F), regularly breaking up any vegetable clumps for even drying. When the vegetables are dry, remove your marked tray and weigh again. This will be Dry Weight B (or 2B if two serves). Place with all other dried vegetables in a large bowl ready for packaging.

15. Partway through drying, invert the sauce leather onto mesh and peel off the silicone or baking paper. Once dry, powder the leather in a spice grinder, spread powder on a silicone sheet and dry again for ten minutes to condition. Place powder in a bowl.



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PACKAGING DIRECTIONS

1. Into each freezer, ziploc or vac seal bag, place dry weight B (or 2B for two serves; two serves for us is about 260g plus 40g parmesan). Note: An alternative method is to portion up the meals by calories. The total calorie count for the full recipe (excluding the parmesan and the extra Olive oil) is 7,550. Divide the total by the number of calories you want per meal, remembering you'll be adding 10ml (or more) per serve of olive oil (ie an extra 80 calories per 10ml) and 20g per serve of parmesan in camp (92 calories), which both boost calories significantly.
2. Take your powdered sauce and distribute equally between your bags. Fold parmesan into greaseproof paper or a small ziploc and add it to your vac seal bag.
3. Vac and seal. Label with date, name, weight and number of serves.

IN CAMP

1. Slit open bag and remove parmesan pack. Although most of our meals for two are rehydrated in the vac seal bag in a cosy with a measured amount of water, because it is a soup this one works well with the ingredients topped with cold water in our 1300ml pot for two, brought to the boil and then left for twenty minutes to finish rehydration in the pot cosy. Don't dilute your soup too much: for us, about 1L per 260g vegetables (two serves) is about right.
2. Stir in olive oil (we use 10ml per serve), and sprinkle with parmesan. Bellissimo!



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