

Matteo's Chickpea Soup



My son, Matteo, who lives in the northeastern Italian region called Friuli, was visiting us recently in our home in New Jersey. He is the son who loves to cook, so I asked him to suggest a recipe off the top of his head that I could develop for GI news.

Being a creative cook, Matteo just thinks in terms of good, fresh ingredients and then invents something scrumptious. So he gave me a list of eight ingredients that he uses to make a chickpea soup. I worked out the quantities and cooking times and added a few personal touches of my own. The recipe below is our combined effort.

I prepared two versions of the soup, one with dry and the other with canned chickpeas. Italians never use canned beans, but for those unaccustomed to cooking with some advanced preparation (albeit minimal), I wanted to present a quicker version. Surprisingly, the tastes were quite similar to each other, with the dried chickpea version tasting a bit more earthy.

Serving size: approx. 1 cup. Serves 7.

Ingredients

- 8 oz (1 1/3 cups) dried chickpeas, or
- 1.5 19 oz. cans chickpeas, washed and drained
- 2 medium carrots, cut into 1/4-inch horizontal slices
- 1 small onion (yellow or red), sliced
- 1-2 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 sprigs flat-leaf parsley, leaves only
- 1 heaping tablespoon fresh rosemary, needles only
- 1 Tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup crushed canned tomatoes, San Marzano type
- vegetable broth:
 - 6 cups broth (homemade if possible) for the dried chickpeas
 - 3 cups for the canned chickpeas
- 1 Tablespoon kosher salt
- 1 oz medium shells, uncooked

Directions

1. If using the dried chickpeas, rinse and place them in a bowl with abundant water. Cover the bowl and set aside overnight.
2. Place the next 5 ingredients (carrots through rosemary) in a food processor. Pulse 25 times (15 seconds) or until all ingredients are coarsely chopped. Set aside.
3. In a 3-quart pot, heat the oil, add the chopped ingredients. Saute' over moderate heat for 4 minutes, stirring frequently.

4. Add in the chickpeas (soaked and drained, or canned), tomatoes, broth and salt, mix well. Bring to a boil, then reduce to low heat, cover and cook as follows: the dried chickpeas for 1 hour; the canned chickpeas for 30 minutes.
5. Remove from heat. In small batches blenderize the soup until smooth (30 - 40 seconds). Return to the pot and keep warm.
6. Cook pasta according to package directions. When cooked, drain and add to the soup. Serve hot with freshly grated cheese (optional).

Nutritional Information

Yield: 12 pieces
Serving: 2 pieces
Calories: 140
Carbohydrates: 23 g
Protein: 6 g
Fat: 3 g
Saturated Fat: 0 g
Cholesterol: 0 mg
Fiber: 5 g

GI Value: 28 - low