

Minestrone Soup

Direct from Lauren's kitchen to yours.

Ingredients

Olive Oil

- 1 large late summer squash or zucchini- chopped in bite-sized pieces and oven roasted or sautéed in a pan until just tender but holding their shape well
- 1 onion peeled and chopped
- 1 large or four small sweet peppers seeded and chopped
- 2 heaping TBL of dried herbs – you choose but consider oregano, thyme, rosemary
- A pinch of red pepper flakes
- 2 heaping TBL of tomato paste
- 1 can chopped tomatoes
- 1 TBL of maple syrup
- 1 can white beans drained
- $\frac{1}{2}$ small cabbage cored and chopped
- 1 bunch of Your choice of greens- spinach, chard or kale
- Veggie bouillon cube or two
- Salt and pepper to taste
- GF Elbow macaroni – cooked according to directions in a separate pan
- Plant-based parmasean- grated

Directions

In a large heavy dutch oven, heat a splash or two of olive oil on medium heat. Add onion and sweet pepper, turning down the heat to let them gently soften without coloring. After 10 minutes, turn the heat back up and add tomato paste, allowing it to darken and thicken. Add herbs, the can of chopped

tomatoes, maple syrup, drained beans, chopped cabbage, veggie broth cubes, and water to cover. Bring to a boil, cover and turn heat to low. Simmering for 30-45 minutes, the longer the better, adding water as needed.

When nearly ready to serve, add greens, adjust seasonings, and simmer until greens are cooked. Serve over a spoonful of elbow macaroni and top with grated vegan cheese.

Enjoy!

Baked Red Rice & Beans

When I returned to my kitchen after three weeks away, my deep desire for comfort food was in direct conflict with my lack of desire to grocery shop. I recalled bookmarking a pantry-friendly recipe in NYT prior to leaving that was a perfect match for the cold front moving into Texas. With a few adaptations, this simple dish hit the spot on so many levels, yummy, hands-off, and full of texture.

Here you go with a grateful nod to Mark Bittman for his inspiration

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 1 sweet pepper, stemmed, seeded, and chopped
- 1 fresh jalapeño or serrano, stemmed, seeded and minced
- 1 can coconut milk, refilled with water to use as needed
- 2 veggie bouillon cubes
- 1 teaspoon of Herbes de Provence
- Pinch of red pepper flakes

- 2 cans of kidney or other red beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 cups red rice (Carmargue is possible), parboiled for 15 minutes, rinsed in cold water, and drained
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Directions

Preheat oven to 375 degrees

Parboil rice and set aside.

In a large dutch oven on the stovetop, heat oil and saute onion and sweet pepper. When tender and fragrant, add jalapeño, coconut milk, bouillon cubes, herbs, and pepper flakes. Simmer for a few minutes, then add beans and rice. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Level off all ingredients with a large spoon or spatula and add just enough water to cover the beans and rice. Turn up the heat to bring all ingredients to a boil and then place dutch oven in the heated oven. Cover with the lid for a steamed dish or leave the lid off and enjoy the crispy crust that forms.

Because this is Texas I served this dish with slices of fresh avocado and salsa.

Enjoy!