Italian Sausage, White Bean & Orzo Soup with Fresh Spinach

Phillis Carey class, 1/2016



1 tablespoon olive oil
1 1/4 pounds Italian sausage, mild (sweet)
1 1/2 cups onion, diced
2 small carrots, peeled, diced
1 rib celery, diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
6 cups low-sodium chicken broth
14 1/2 ounces canned tomatoes (diced type)
15 ounces canned cannelini beans, rinsed, drained
2 teaspoons fresh rosemary, chopped finely
1/2 cup orzo
6 ounces baby spinach
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
1 cup Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, grated (use ample)

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 531 Calories; 35g Fat (54.9% calories from fat); 31g Protein; 34g Carbohydrate; 6g Dietary Fiber; 72mg Cholesterol; 1020mg Sodium. Exchanges: 1 1/2 Grain(Starch); 3 Lean Meat; 2 Vegetable; 5 Fat.

Carolyn T's Blog: tastingspoons.com

Servings: 6

1. Heat oil in large 5-quart pot. Crumble sausage into pot and cook, stirring and breaking up in pieces, over medium heat until sausage is nicely browned. Pour sausage into a strainer and set over a bowl to drain.
2. Return a tablespoon of the fat from the sausage into the pot and add carrots, onion, celery and garlic, along with the sausage meat and cook until onions are translucent, about 5-7 minutes. Add the chicken broth, tomatoes and the juices, beans and rosemary. Bring to a boil.
3. Add orzo to the boiling soup and cook, stirring often, until the orzo is JUST tender, about 9-10 minutes. Skim off any excess fat and stir in the spinach, cooking just until wilted - less than a minute. Season to taste with salt and pepper and serve soup topped with lots of grated cheese.

NOTE: If making this ahead, cook orzo separately and add just to reheat - or place cooked orzo in the bottom of each serving bowl. Also, if making ahead, do not add the spinach until just before serving.