



Bean and farro soup from Garfagnana

ZUPPA DI FARRO DELLA GARFAGNANA

Serves 4

Ingredients

150 grams / about 1 cup
farro
150 grams / about 1
cup mixed dry beans
(cannellini beans and
borlotti beans)
3 tablespoons extra virgin
olive oil + more for
serving
½ golden onion
½ carrot
½ celery stick
1 bay leaf
50 grams/ 1¾ oz pancetta,
diced
1 tablespoon tomato paste
1.2 l / 5 cups hot water
Fine sea salt
Freshly ground black
pepper
4 slices country bread,
slightly toasted

The night before, soak the farro and the beans in a bowl with plenty of water.

The next day, make the battuto: finely chop onion, carrot and celery, and collect them in a medium thick-bottomed pot. Add the olive oil, the diced pancetta, a bay leaf, and a generous pinch of salt, and cook the aromatics on medium-low heat for 5 to 8 minutes, until softened.

When the battuto is soft and golden, add the well drained farro and beans, mix thoroughly to mingle the flavours, then add the tomato paste and cover them with hot water.

Bring the soup to a boil on high heat, then reduce to the minimum and simmer, covered, for about one hour and a half, checking it from time to time to prevent it from drying up too quickly. The soup is ready when thick and creamy: farro will retain its characteristic chewy texture, but beans should be melt-in-your-mouth soft. There's nothing worse than beans that are still al dente. Should they be still al dente, add more hot water - a ¼ cup increment per time - and cook the soup a little longer, until beans are soft. Taste and adjust the seasoning with salt and pepper.

Ladle the farro soup into four bowls, add the toasted bread, and drizzle each serving with some olive oil, sprinkle with freshly ground black pepper, and serve.

Any leftover can be stored in the fridge for a couple of days. Reheat gently over low heat, adding a bit of water as necessary to thin.