

RACHIELE/TUCCI FAMILY RECIPE

FAGIOLI STUFATI ALL' UCCELETTO

Stewed Beans Tuscan Style

(Makes 6 - 8 Servings)

1 pound dried great Northern (no pre-soaking) or navy beans	¾ cup diced carrots
8 cups water	¾ cup diced celery
2 cloves garlic, lightly crushed	5 fresh or canned whole plum tomatoes peeled, seeded, and chopped
6 large fresh sage leaves	2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley leaves
Two 5-inch sprigs fresh rosemary	Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
5 tablespoons olive oil	

VARIATIONS:

Thyme or marjoram may be substituted or added to the sage and rosemary.

Puree beans in a blender or food processor until smooth. Add a small amount of olive oil (or small amount of water used to cook the beans) and process until beans are a spreadable consistency. Serve at room temperature on toasted bread or crackers. Can be stored in refrigerator for up to 3 days or frozen in airtight container for up to one month.

Rinse the beans, removing any oddly colored ones or stones. Place the beans in a large flame-proof casserole set over low heat. Add the water and bring to a gentle simmer. Add the garlic, 3 of the sage leaves, 1 sprig of the rosemary, and 1 tablespoon of the olive oil. Simmer until the beans are tender but not mushy, about 45 minutes. Strain, discarding the garlic and sage, and set aside.

Add the remaining 4 tablespoons olive oil to a saute' pan set over medium-high heat. When the oil is hot but not smoking, add the pancetta or bacon, stirring briskly. Stir in the onions, carrots, and celery and cook, stirring, to soften slightly, about 5 minutes. Chop the remaining 3 sage leaves and the leaves from the remaining rosemary sprig, and add to the vegetables along with the tomatoes and parsley. Then season with salt and pepper. Cook to warm the tomatoes, about 5 minutes more. Stir in the beans and reduce the heat to medium. Cook to warm the beans and to flavor them with the tomatoes, about 10 minutes. Season with additional salt and pepper if desired, and serve.