

— AMERICA'S —
TEST KITCHEN

Provençal Vegetable Soup (Soupe au Pistou)

SERVES Serves 6

WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS

Provençal vegetable soup is a classic French summer soup with a delicate broth that is intensified by a dollop of pistou, the French equivalent of Italy's pesto. We wanted a simple version that focused on fresh seasonal vegetables. Leeks, green beans, and zucchini all made the cut; we like their summery flavors, different shapes, and varying shades of green. We added canned white beans (which were far more convenient than dried in this quick-cooking soup) and orecchiette for its easy-to-spoon shape. For the best flavor, we make our own vegetable broth (a quick paste that's stirred into boiling water). Incorporating the cooking liquid from the canned beans adds much-needed body to the broth. For the pistou, we just whirled basil, Parmesan, olive oil, and garlic together in our food processor.



INGREDIENTS

Pistou

- ☐ ¾ cup fresh basil leaves
- ☐ 1 ounce Parmesan cheese, grated (1/2 cup)
- ☐ ⅓ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- ☐ 1 garlic clove, minced

Soup

- ☐ 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- ☐ 1 leek, white and light green parts only, halved lengthwise, sliced 1/2 inch thick, and washed thoroughly
- ☐ 1 celery rib, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- ☐ 1 carrot, peeled and sliced 1/4 inch thick
- ☐ Salt and pepper
- ☐ 2 garlic cloves, minced

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

✳ We prefer broth prepared from our Vegetable Broth Base (see related content), but store-bought vegetable broth can be used.

INSTRUCTIONS

1 FOR THE PISTOU: Process all ingredients in food processor until smooth, scraping down sides of bowl as needed, about 15 seconds. (Pistou can be refrigerated for up to 4 hours.)

2 FOR THE SOUP: Heat oil in large Dutch oven over medium heat until shimmering. Add leek, celery, carrot, and 1/2 teaspoon salt and cook until vegetables are softened, 8 to 10 minutes. Stir in garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in broth and water and bring to simmer.

3 Stir in pasta and simmer until slightly softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in haricots verts and simmer until bright green but still crunchy, 3 to 5 minutes. Stir in cannellini beans and their liquid, zucchini, and tomato and simmer until pasta and vegetables are tender, about 3 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve, topping individual portions with generous tablespoon pistou.

- ☐ 3 cups
vegetable broth
- ☐ 3 cups water
- ☐ ½ cup orecchiette
or other short pasta
- ☐ 8 ounces haricots
verts or green
beans, trimmed and
cut into 1/2-inch
lengths
- ☐ 1 (15-ounce) can
cannellini or navy
beans
- ☐ 1 small zucchini,
halved lengthwise,
seeded, and cut
into 1/4-inch pieces
- ☐ 1 large tomato,
cored, seeded, and
cut into 1/4-inch
pieces

