

# RV GODDESS: Minestrone

Minestrone (*big soup* in Italian) is traditionally a tomato-based vegetable soup. There are no rules. Any vegetable will do. I often add kale, fava beans or zucchini. If at home, I cook the pasta separately and add it at the last minute. In the RV, I toss the dried pasta into the pot 10-15 minutes before serving. Minestrone is super healthy, potassium-rich and low calorie. This recipe is great to serve for vegans and vegetarians, but even your favorite carnivore will enjoy this hearty meal.

- 3 Tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium yellow onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 large carrot, peeled and chopped
- 2 ribs celery, sliced
- 28 ounce can diced tomatoes (do not drain)
- 32 ounces vegetable stock
- 15-20 green beans, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 yellow potato, peeled and cut into dice-sized cubes
- 2 teaspoons dried oregano flakes
- 2 stems fresh basil leaves, chopped
- 1 bay leaf, whole
- 15 ounce can cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
- Large handful small pasta (orecchiette, penne, farfalle, elbows), cooked
- ½ cup frozen peas
- Grated parmesan, for passing, if desired

Heat a large Dutch oven over a medium flame. Coat the bottom with olive oil. Add the onion, garlic, carrots and celery and cook, stirring often for about five minutes, until the onions are soft, being careful not to let the vegetables brown. Add the canned tomatoes and vegetable stock. Stir well. Add the green beans, potato, oregano, basil, bay leaf and cannellini beans. (NOTE: at this point, the soup can be cooled and refrigerated for up to 24 hours.)

Bring soup to a boil, then reduce heat to a simmer. Let the soup simmer until vegetables are just cooked through. Toss in the pasta and peas. Return to a simmer. Remove the bay leaf and serve. Garnish with parmesan, if desired. (Optionally, garnish with additional fresh basil.) Serves 6.