



Tuscan Bean and Vegetable Soup with Floating Bruschetta



This Italian-inspired, one-pot meal is an invitation to personal creativity. Vary the combination of herbs, beans, and cheese to suit your personal tastes – but be sure to leave in the onion, carrots, garlic, and tomatoes of the base recipe.

Soup:

- ½ pound lean ground beef
- 1 cup chopped yellow onion
- 1 cup chopped carrot
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped or pressed
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh rosemary or 2 teaspoons crumbled dried rosemary leaves
- 1 can (28-ounce) diced tomatoes, un-drained
- 1 can (15-ounce) cannellini, Great Northern, or other white beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 can (14-ounce) sodium-reduced chicken broth
- 1 ½ cups sliced zucchini
- 1 ¼ cups sliced (1-inch) green beans or 1 ½ cups frozen cut green beans
- 1 cup water
- Salt and ground black pepper (optional)
- ¼ cup grated fresh Parmesan or Romano cheese
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley, oregano, or sage

Bruschetta (Cheese Toasts):

- ⅓ to ½ loaf (6 ounces) Italian or French bread
 - 1 clove garlic (optional)
 - ¾ cup (3 ounces) shredded Fontina, Provolone, Jack, or Cheddar cheese
1. For soup, heat large heavy soup pot over medium-high heat. Add beef, onion, carrot, garlic, and rosemary. Cook, stirring occasionally, until beef is browned. Add tomatoes with liquid, cannellini beans, broth, zucchini, green beans, and water. Cover, bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer 20 minutes.
 2. For bruschetta, preheat oven to 350°. Cut bread into thin (¼-inch) slices. Place on baking sheet. Bake 5 to 10 minutes, turning once, to crisp. Remove from oven. Rub each slice with garlic clove, if desired; sprinkle with cheese. Return to oven until cheese melts, about 3 minutes.
 3. Season soup with salt and pepper, if desired. Serve in large shallow bowls. Garnish each with 2 teaspoons Parmesan cheese and fresh parsley. Float bruschetta in soup or serve on the side.

Prep time: 20 minutes • Cook time: 30 minutes • Makes: 6 servings

Cook's Tip:

- In the meat department of your supermarket, ask for ground beef that is 85% to 95% lean – leaner beef is increasingly available.

Tester's Comment:

"We thought this soup was delicious. I used fresh rosemary. We loved it."

Nutrients per serving:

Calories	370
Protein	25 g
Total Fat	13 g
(Saturated Fat)	6 g
Carbohydrate	39 g
Calcium	251 mg
Cholesterol	54 mg
Fiber	8 g
Sodium	854 mg