

White Bean Soup with Chard and Parmesan

This bean-and-green filled soup is hearty, healthy, and perfect for mid-February. If you're harboring an elderly Parmesan heel in the back of your fridge, retrieve it and toss it in the soup pot.

Serves about 6

3 tablespoons olive oil, plus additional for drizzling
1 cup chopped onion
5 cloves garlic, minced
1 cup diced carrots
1 bunch Swiss chard, stems and ribs thinly sliced crosswise, leaves roughly chopped
2 cans low-sodium chicken broth (or stock), or vegetable broth
Two 15-ounce cans cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
1 bay leaf
3/4 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves, minced
Leftover Parmesan rind, optional, plus freshly grated Parmesan cheese for serving
2 teaspoons tomato paste
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

In a medium soup pot, heat olive oil over medium heat. Saute the onions, garlic, carrots, sliced chard stems, and a hit of salt and pepper until the vegetables have softened, about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the broth, the equivalent of 1 can (14 ounces) of cold water, beans, bay leaf, thyme, and Parmesan rind and bring to a boil.

Lower the heat, stir in the tomato paste, partially cover and allow to simmer for about 10 minutes. Stir in the chard leaves, cover, and simmer an additional 10 minutes or until the chard is completely wilted. Retrieve the bay leaf and discard.

To serve, drizzle each serving with olive oil and sprinkle generously with grated Parmesan cheese.

N.B. There's no need to toss out the Parmesan rind immediately. Keep it with the soup, even for a few days in the fridge, discarding it once you've ladled out the last bowlful.