



Lemony Tuscan White Bean and Kale Soup

MM-Green, Soup

Prep Time: 15 minutes **Cook Time:** 30 minutes **Total Time:** 45 **Difficulty:** Easy **Servings:** 4 **Source:** © Chef Laura Bonicelli

INGREDIENTS

soup

- 2 (15-ounce) cans white beans, such as cannellini or great northern
- cooking spray (olive oil or avocado, if possible)
- 1 medium yellow onion, diced (about 1½ cups)
- 2 medium carrots, peeled and cut crosswise into ¼-inch-thick rounds (about 1 cup)
- 1 medium celery stalk, diced (about ⅓ cup)
- 2 sprigs fresh rosemary
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1½ teaspoons Kosher salt, plus more as needed
- ¼ teaspoon Aleppo pepper
- 1 (32-ounce) carton chicken or vegetable stock (4 cups)
- 1 small bunch flat-leaf kale (about 8 ounces), center ribs removed and leaves coarsely chopped (about 5 cups)
- 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice (from 1 medium lemon)

cauliflower pesto

- 1½ cups cauliflower florets
- 1 garlic clove
- 1 tablespoon nutritional yeast
- 1½ cups fresh basil leaves
- zest of 1 lemon
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- ¼ teaspoon Aleppo pepper
- Kosher salt, to taste

DESCRIPTION

A rustic Tuscan-style soup that gets its body from beans, not cream — half mashed to thicken, half left whole for texture. A spoonful of bright cauliflower pesto at the end lifts the whole bowl with basil, lemon, and just enough garlic. Satisfying comfort food, no added fat required.

DIRECTIONS

1. Make the pesto first. Steam the cauliflower florets in a covered steamer basket over simmering water until fork-tender, 8 to 10 minutes. Let cool slightly.
2. Combine the steamed cauliflower, garlic, nutritional yeast, basil, lemon zest, lemon juice, and Aleppo pepper in a food processor. Process until smooth, scraping down the sides as needed. Season to taste with Kosher salt. Set aside.
3. Drain and rinse the white beans. Transfer half of the beans to a medium bowl and mash with a potato masher until smooth. Set aside.
4. Heat a medium pot over medium heat and coat with cooking spray. Add the onion, carrots, celery, rosemary sprigs, garlic, salt, and Aleppo pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, 5 to 8 minutes.
5. Stir in the whole and mashed beans and the stock. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, then reduce heat and simmer

for 10 minutes to allow the flavors to meld.

6. Remove and discard the rosemary sprigs. Stir in the kale and simmer until it is tender and vibrant green, 3 to 5 minutes.

7. Remove the pot from the heat and stir in the lemon juice. Season to taste with additional Kosher salt.

8. Ladle into bowls and top each with a generous spoonful of cauliflower pesto.

NOTES

Mashing half the beans is what gives this soup its body. The starch from the crushed beans acts as a natural thickener, creating a creamy base without any dairy or added fat, while the whole beans give you texture in every bite. This trick works with any bean soup — chickpea, black bean, lentil — and is worth remembering whenever you want richness from a lean recipe.

The pesto makes about 1 cup, more than you'll need for one pot of soup. It keeps in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days and freezes well in ice cube trays for up to 3 months. Use it on eggs, roasted vegetables, grain bowls, or stirred into any soup or stew that could use a bright green lift.

Add the kale at the very end. Long cooking turns the leaves dull and slimy, but a few minutes in hot broth wilts them just enough to stay tender and hold their color. If you're using a heartier green like collards or turnip greens, they need more time — add them with the stock instead.

Stir the lemon juice in off the heat. Boiling acid dulls its brightness, and you want that first squeeze of lemon flavor to hit the bowl.