

ITALIAN WEDDING SOUP

SERVES 8

.....

FOR THE MEATBALLS*:

- 1 large egg*
- ¼ of an onion, grated*
- ¼ cup dry whole grain bread crumbs*
- ½ cup fresh bread crumbs (1 slice of bread, crusts removed)*
- 1/3 cup Pecorino or Parmigiano cheese*
- 1 pound ground turkey, preferably dark meat*
- 1 Tablespoon finely chopped parsley*
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped*
- ¾ teaspoon sea salt*
- freshly ground black pepper to taste*

FOR THE SOUP:

- 2 Tablespoons unrefined extra-virgin olive oil*
- 1 medium yellow onion, diced*
- 2 large carrots, diced*
- 2 stalks celery, diced*
- 10 cups chicken or turkey stock, preferably homemade*
- 1/3 cup Pecorino or Parmigiano cheese*
- 1 ½ cups cooked cannellini beans or 1 15-ounce can, drained and rinsed***
- sea salt and freshly ground pepper to taste*
- 10 ounces baby spinach, stems trimmed or 1 head escarole, chopped*
- 2 Tablespoons freshly grated Pecorino or Parmigiano, plus extra for garnish*

.....

1. To make the meatballs, stir the first five ingredients in a bowl to blend. Add the remaining meatball ingredients and combine well with your hands. Using a half tablespoon or a mini-ice cream scooper, scoop the meat mixture into your hands and form them into 1-inch diameter meatballs. Set aside on a plate or baking sheet.
2. To make the soup, warm the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onions, carrots and celery and sauté until the onions are translucent.
3. Add the broth, beans and 2 teaspoons salt. Bring to a boil and carefully add the meatballs (if using escarole, add this now too.) Lower to a simmer and cook until the meatballs are cooked through, about 8-10 minutes.
4. Stir in the spinach and grated cheese and cook until spinach is just wilted.
5. Taste for seasoning. Serve with additional grated cheese, if desired.

*To make this vegetarian, use your favorite vegetarian meatballs and vegetable broth.

**Traditionally served with ditalini or pastina. If you prefer to use pasta, add already cooked pasta to the soup and the end with the spinach. Another option is to add cooked Arborio rice or green peas.