

Pasta Fazool (Pasta e Fagioli)

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Recipe source: [Dean & DeLuca](#), with minor adaptations noted

Serves 8 as a main course



INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 stalks celery, chopped coarsely
- 1 large onion, chopped coarsely
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ pound dried Soldier beans or cannellini beans

Note: If [using canned beans](#) instead, you'll need 3 cups drained and rinsed.

- 2 bay leaves
- 2 teaspoons dried basil
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 teaspoon dried rosemary
- 6 cups chicken broth
- 4 cups water
- 28-ounce can tomatoes, drained

Note: Use the drained juice to replace part of the water and/or broth listed above

- 1-2 rinds Parmigiano-Reggiano or other type of hard cheese
- 4 ounces very small cut tubular pasta, such as ditali
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

- For Garnish: Extra-virgin olive oil, grated Parmigiano-Reggiano, and chopped fresh basil

DIRECTIONS:

- Although the original recipe does not call for it, I like to sort, rinse, and soak the dried beans for at least a few hours and overnight if possible prior to cooking the soup. Be sure to drain and rinse the beans after the soak and before cooking.
- Place the olive oil in a large, heavy saucepan over moderate heat. Add the celery, onion, and cook until they're soft, about 5 minutes.
- Add the garlic, stirring constantly for 30 seconds.
- Add the beans, dried herbs*, broth, water, tomatoes, and cheese rind.

**Note: You may either scatter the dried herbs freely in the soup (as shown in the photos above), or wrap them up in a small muslin or cheesecloth pouch if you would prefer to infuse the flavor of the herbs but not the leafiness. Another option is to use whole fresh herbs tied together (bouquet garni) and dropped into the pot for flavoring.*

- Bring to a boil, cover, and reduce heat to low. Cook, covered, stirring occasionally, until the beans are soft, about 1 to 2 hours (maybe even more depending on the age of your beans).
- When beans are soft, remove cheese rind from the pot. Also, remove the cheesecloth pouch of herbs or bouquet garni if you used them.
- Scoop out about a cup of beans and set aside.
- Using an immersion blender inside the pot, blend the soup until it reaches the consistency you like. Add the whole beans back into the soup pot.
- Wait a minute to let the soup return to medium heat and add the pasta. Cook for another 10 to 15 minutes, or until pasta is done. Add salt and pepper to taste.
- Serve in wide bowls, garnishing each serving with a drizzle of extra-virgin olive oil, about a tablespoon of cheese, and about a teaspoon of fresh basil.