

CHICKEN, SAUSAGE, AND KALE SOUP

(Poor Girl Gourmet)

1 whole cooked chicken breast, cut crosswise into 1-inch strips
1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil (I used a bit less)
1 medium yellow onion, coarsely chopped
1 medium carrot, peeled, trimmed, coarsely chopped
1 celery stalk, trimmed, coarsely chopped
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 tsp. dried thyme, or 1 Tbsp. fresh
1/8 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes (optional)
2 (6-inch) links sweet Italian sausage (approximately 1/2 pound), casings removed, meat cut into 1/2-inch pieces
4 cups chicken broth
1 (15-ounce) can cannellini beans, including liquid
1 bunch kale (approximately 3/4 pounds), washed, stemmed, coarsely chopped
Kosher salt
freshly ground black pepper

While the chicken roasts, prepare the other ingredients. (Bake it covered in a 350F oven until cooked, about 20-30 minutes.)

Heat the olive oil in a large stockpot -- at least 6-quart capacity, as the kale starts off as quite a gargantuan pile -- over medium heat. Add the onion, carrot, celery, and garlic and saute -- you are in the soffritto phase of this soup now -- until the whole lot is softened and has blended together such that the color is leaning toward orange, 10 to 15 minutes.

Add the thyme and crushed red pepper flakes, then add the sausage -- you should have in the neighborhood of 24 pieces of 1/2-inch sausage from the two links, in the event that you are curious -- cooking until the sausage is lightly browned, 3 to 5 minutes. Add the broth, the beans with their liquid, and the kale.

Add the chicken pieces to the pot, cover, and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the massive pile of kale is fully incorporated into the soup, 20 to 25 minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste, and serve it forth.

Serves 4.

Note: I served ours with a dollop of pesto on top, but it was equally good the next day without!

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