

Pumpkin, leek & cannellini bean soup



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Preparation: about 20 minutes

Cooking: about 35 minutes

Serves: 4

2 tbs olive oil
2 garlic cloves, crushed
2 leeks, trimmed, halved lengthways, washed and thinly sliced
1.2 kg peeled and diced butternut pumpkin (about 1 medium)
pinch ground chillies (or to taste)
7 cups chicken stock
1 tbs thyme leaves
10 thin slices spicy pancetta
400g can cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
salt and freshly ground black pepper
thyme sprigs, to serve

1. Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add garlic and leeks and cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes or until leeks are tender.
2. Add pumpkin, chillies, stock and thyme. Stir to combine, cover and cook, stirring occasionally, over medium-low heat for 20–25 minutes or until pumpkin is tender.
3. Meanwhile, preheat a grill on medium-high heat. Place pancetta on a foil-lined grill tray and grill for 1 minute on each side or until crisp at the edges. Drain on paper towel and cool. Break pancetta into thin strips and set aside.
4. Using a blender or food processor, puree soup until smooth. Stir in beans and season with salt and pepper to taste. Heat soup over medium-low heat for 5 minutes or until hot. Ladle soup into serving bowls, top with pancetta and thyme sprigs and serve.



Pumpkin

- A good source of beta carotene, which the body converts to vitamin A. The deeper the colour, the higher the content of beta carotene.
- A source of vitamin C and dietary fibre, both of which are retained in pumpkin soup.