

PASTINA: THE ITALIAN PENICILLIN

Cooking Time & Servings

- **Preparation Time:** 10 minutes
- **Cooking Time:** 45 minutes
- **Total Time:** 55 minutes
- **Servings:** 4

Ingredients

For the Broth

- 2 medium carrots (peeled and halved)
- 1 celery stalk (chopped)
- 1 zucchini (ends trimmed)
- 1 small onion (peeled and halved)
- ½ leek (sliced into rounds)
- 1 clove (optional but aromatic)
- 1 sprig fresh parsley
- 1 ripe cherry tomato
- 1½ quarts (6 cups) water
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- Extra virgin olive oil (to taste)

For the Pastina

- 8 tablespoons (½ cup) pastina or any tiny pasta (e.g. stelline, acini di pepe)
 - Grated Parmigiano cheese (optional)
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Method

1. Clean & Prep the Vegetables

Peel and halve carrots. Clean celery and zucchini. Slice the leek. Stick the clove into one half of the onion.

2. Cook the Broth

In a large pot, add 6 cups of water. Add salt and all prepared vegetables. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer covered for 40–45 minutes.

3. Strain the Broth

Remove and discard the vegetables (or save for another dish). Return the strained broth to

the pot.

4. Add the Pastina

Bring the broth back to a boil. Add the pastina and cook according to package instructions (usually 5–7 minutes), stirring occasionally.

5. Serve

Ladle into bowls. Finish with a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil and a sprinkle of Parmesan, if desired.

Tips & Tricks

- **Use leftovers:** Blend the strained veggies to create a rustic minestrone or veggie purée.
- **Add protein:** Stir in shredded chicken or a poached egg for a heartier meal.
- **Go gluten-free:** Use gluten-free pastina or rice instead.
- **Boost flavor:** Add a bay leaf, thyme, or even a parmesan rind during broth simmering.
- **Kid-friendly version:** Melt in a little soft cheese (like Laughing Cow) to make it creamy!