

Italian White Bean Soup-adapted from the Sydney Morning Herald

- 2 Tablespoons butter
- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 2 ounces pancetta or bacon, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, sliced
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 fresh bay leaf
- 1 ½ cups dried cannellini beans, soaked for at least 5 hours, or “speed-soaked” (See note below.)
- 3 cups chicken stock
- Salt and pepper
- 2 ½ -3 ounces taleggio cheese (or parmesan if you can’t find taleggio)
- Extra virgin olive oil to drizzle

Heat the butter and olive oil in a large pot. Add the pancetta or bacon, garlic and onion and cook over a medium heat for 5-10 minutes until softened and golden brown. Add the bay leaf, drained cannellini beans and chicken stock. Bring to the boil, skim the surface if needed, partly cover with a lid and reduce the heat to simmer. Cook for 1 ½ hours or until the beans are soft, then season with salt and pepper.

Chop the taleggio into small pieces and stir into the soup. If using parmesan, grate it on each serving, then drizzle with a small amount of olive oil.

NOTE: To “speed-soak” beans, cover them with water, and bring to a boil. Boil for 5 minutes, then turn heat off. Leave sitting on the stove for at least an hour. Proceed with recipe.)