

Black Bean Minestrone (from 12 Best Foods Cookbook) **(Good on Days 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10)**

Serves 6

- 1** **tblsp extra-virgin olive oil**
- 1** **medium carrot, thinly sliced**
- 1** **rib celery, thinly sliced**
- 1** **medium leek, white part only; halved and sliced**
- 1** **medium onion, chopped**
- 1** **clove garlic; minced**
- 4** **cups fat-free, reduced sodium vegetable broth**
- 3** **cups coarsely chopped Swiss chard leaves (spinach if not available)**
- 1** **medium gold potato, peeled and cut in ½" cubes**
- 6** **plum tomatoes, seeded and drained**
- 1** **tblsp tomato paste**
- 1** **cup canned black beans, drained**
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- Grated cheese (if allowed on the day the soup is being consumed)**

1. Heat the oil in a medium Dutch oven over medium heat. Sauté the carrot, celery, leek and onion until the onion is translucent, 4 minutes. Mix in the garlic. Cook until the onion is soft, 3 minutes longer, stirring often.
2. Add the broth, chard, potato, tomatoes, and tomato paste. Simmer until the potatoes are tender, 10 minutes. Add the beans, cooking until they are heated through, 5 minutes. Season the soup to taste with salt and pepper. Ladle into deep bowls. Top with a generous sprinkling of grated cheese and serve. This soup keeps up to 3 days, tightly covered in the refrigerator. It reheats well in a covered pot.