

LAZY DAY BEEF & VEGETABLE SOUP

Want homemade soup without the fuss? This one is a complete meal-in-a-bowl with beef, vegetables and pasta.

2 1/2 pounds beef for stew, cut into 3/4 inch pieces
2 cans (14 to 14 1/2 ounces each) ready to serve beef broth
1 can (15 ounces) chickpeas, drained
1 can (14 1/2 ounces) diced tomatoes with garlic and onions, undrained
1 cup water
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon dried Italian seasoning, crushed
1/2 teaspoon pepper
2 cups frozen mixed vegetables
1 cup uncooked ditalini or other small pasta
shredded Romano cheese (optional)

1. Combine beef, broth, chickpeas, tomatoes, water, salt, Italian seasoning and pepper in 4 1/2 to 5 1/2 quart slow cooker; mix well. Cover and cook on HIGH 5 hours or on LOW 8 hours. (No stirring is necessary during cooking.)

2. Stir in mixed vegetables and pasta. Continue cooking, covered, 1 hour or until beef and pasta are tender. Stir well before serving. Serve with cheese, if desired.

Makes 6 to 8 servings (1 1/2 to 2 cups each).

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING (1/6 OF RECIPE):

430 calories; 42 g protein; 36 g carbohydrate; 13 g fat; 1,201 mg sodium; 91 mg cholesterol; 7.6 mg niacin; 0.5 mg vitamin B₆; 2.9 mcg vitamin B₁₂; 6.1 mg iron; 8.6 mg zinc