

Peasant Soup

1 tbsp canola oil
1 ½ lbs ground beef
1 onion, diced
Salt, pepper and garlic salt, to taste
2 cups carrots, peeled and diced
2 cups celery, cleaned and diced
2 cups cabbage, diced
28-32 oz canned tomatoes, including juice
28-32 oz canned tomato puree or sauce
about 48 oz water
8 beef bouillon cubes
1 tsp dried basil
1 tsp dried thyme
Extra salt and pepper, to taste

Heat the oil in a large soup pot or dutch oven. Brown the ground beef well. Try not to stir it too often so that you get some nice caramelization (brown spots) on both the meat and the pot. Push the meat to one side and tilt the pan to the other side so that the fat drains away from the meat. Spoon out most of the fat, leaving less than a tablespoon. Return the pot to the heat and add the onion to the fat. Sprinkle both the meat and the onions with a bit of salt, pepper and garlic powder. Stir the onions occasionally, keeping the meat and onions separate so that the onions get direct contact with the heat of the pan. Once the onions are softened and slightly translucent, stir the beef and onions together.

Add the carrots, celery, cabbage, tomatoes, tomato puree, water, bouillon cubes, basil and thyme. Stir together. Bring the pot up to a boil, then immediately reduce heat to a simmer. Continue simmering for at least an hour, or longer if you have the time. Add water if it begins to look too dry. Before serving, check the seasoning by tasting the broth. Add salt or pepper as needed.