VEGETABLE & HERB CHICKEN STEW

By: Simply Creative Chef Rob Scott

Ingredients: Yield: 4-6 Servings

2 tablespoons olive oil
2 stalks celery, cut into bite-size pieces
1 carrot, peeled, cut into bite-size pieces
1 small onion, chopped
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 14.5 ounce can chopped tomatoes
1 14 ounce can low-sodium chicken broth
½ cup fresh basil leaves, torn into pieces
1 tablespoon tomato paste
1 bay leaf
½ teaspoon dried thyme leaves
2 chicken breasts with ribs (about 1 ½ pounds total)
1 15 ounce can kidney beans, drained

Directions:

- Heat the oil in a heavy 5 ½ quart saucepan over medium heat
- Add the celery, carrot, and onion
- Sauté the vegetables until the onion is translucent about 5 minutes
- Season with salt and pepper, to taste
- Stir in the tomatoes with their juices, chicken broth, basil, tomato paste, bay leaf, and thyme
- Add the chicken breasts – press to submerge
- Bring the cooking liquid to a simmer
- Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer gently uncovered until the chicken is almost cooked through, turning the chicken breasts over and stirring the mixture occasionally, about 25 minutes
- Using tongs, transfer the chicken breasts to a work surface and cool for 5 minutes
- Discard the bay leaf
- Add the kidney beans to the pot and simmer until the liquid has reduced into a stew consistency, about 10 minutes
- Discard the skin and bones from the chicken breasts
- Shred or cut the chicken into bite-size pieces
- Return the chicken meat to the stew
- Bring the stew just to a simmer
- Season with salt and pepper, to taste
- Ladle the stew into servings bowls and serve with bread (crusty bread is recommended)