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Favata

Puglian style pork, fennel and Cavolo Nero or Savoy cabbage casserole.

675g dried fava beans cooked in 1680g water
110ml extra virgin olive oil
350g pound spare ribs, in one piece
450-500g Squisito Puglian or Sardinian pork sausages
225g Sara's gammon or Alex's pancetta with the skin on - in one piece
big handful of Cavolo Nero or 1/2 head Savoy cabbage, shredded
2 - 3 bulbs fennel with leaves, chopped
2 medium onions, thinly sliced
2 large ripe tomatoes, peeled and chopped (or 400g tin Italian tomatoes)
Trapani salt and freshly ground black pepper
slices of fried bread
Grana Padano cheese

Soak 675g beans overnight with a pinch of bicarbonate of soda. Rinse and drain then cook in a pressure cooker with 1680g water and a sliced red onion until on the firm side of *al dente*.

Fry the pork and sausages in olive oil in a large casserole. When the pork is well browned, add the drained beans and enough hot water to cover generously. Add the bacon and the prepared vegetables. Season and cook slowly for about 2 hours or move to the bottom oven or slow cooker. Add a little more water (to cover) from time to time if necessary, but never too much as the sauce should be thick.

When the meat is tender, almost to the point of being overcooked by usual standards, first take out the pork and divide it into ribs. Then lift out the bacon and cut it into small pieces. Return both to the pan and reheat.

Serve the stew very hot, accompanied by slices of crisply fried (or toasted) bread and plenty of grated Grana Padano cheese.

Serves 6

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