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## RECIPE OF THE WEEK

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# Italian Sausage & Vegetable Minestrone

Sara made this comforting and very tasty *zuppa* one Sunday afternoon - it's a sort of Panzanella (the famous Tuscan salad with torn bread) meets Ribollita (a hearty potage made with bread and vegetables) minus the bread so it's great if you are coeliac or gluten intolerant.

I seasoned my bowl with a grating of Grana



Padano cheese but that's a bit of a luxury since the meaty flavour of sausage and Winter cabbage is the signature of this dish.

*2 tbsp olive oil*  
*500g Tuscan or Genovese sausage, skins removed*  
*1 carrot, chopped*  
*1 large brown onion, finely chopped*  
*1 stick of celery*  
*1 large glass cups white wine (optional)*

*1 x 400g tin borlotti or cannellini beans drained*  
*2 garlic cloves, finely chopped*  
*1 litre vegetable or chicken stock*  
*200g pearl barley*  
*1 tsp Trapani salt*  
*500g Cavolo Nero or Tundra cabbage, quartered, then sliced into 5mm thick slices*  
*2 bay leaves*  
*4 Brussels sprouts, sliced*  
*Handful of freshly grated Grana Padano or Pecorino Giglio Sardo cheese for garnish*

Heat a good couple of splashes of olive oil in a large casserole without burning then squish in the sausagemeat. Break up with the back of a spoon and gently brown without burning whilst preparing the Holy Trinity - carrot, onion and celery.

Set aside the sausagemeat then gently sauté the veg with the pan lid on so the it sweats in it's own juice. Throw in the chopped garlic once the veg start to soften then add a large glass of wine and bring up to the boil before reducing to a gentle simmer

If you like your soup thickened don't add flour or cornflour but hand blend some of the beans with a stock blender before adding to the soup.

Lid and simmer for 10 minutes then add the stock, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, bay leaves and lastly the reserved sausage.

Lid the casserole and simmer for 10 minutes, then uncover and continue cooking until the cabbage is tender, about another 10-20 minutes.

Towards the end season with a pinch of salt. To serve, sprinkle with grated Grana Padano or Giglio Sardo. Serves 4.

To download this recipe go to [www.squisito-deli.co.uk](http://www.squisito-deli.co.uk)

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