

Garlicky Greens

1 large bunch of kale

1 large bunch of chard

2 tablespoons olive oil

Salt

5 cloves of garlic, crushed and chopped

1/4 cup Parmesan cheese

Crushed red pepper flakes

Chop the greens into 1-inch pieces. In a large skillet, heat the olive oil. Add a couple big pinches of salt and the greens. They should hiss and spit a bit when they hit the pan. Stir continuously until their color gets bright green, and they just barely start to collapse - two, three, maybe four minutes, depending on how hot your pan is and how much structure your greens have. Then, just thirty seconds before you anticipate pulling the skillet off of the heat, stir in the garlic. Saute a bit, remove the pan from the heat, stir in the Parmesan, and add a big pinch of crushed red pepper flakes. Taste, add a bit of salt if needed, and serve immediately if not sooner.

Hearty Chard and Chickpea Soup

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 onion, chopped
1 stalk celery, diced
1 carrot, peeled and diced
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 1/2 cup diced tomatoes
1 quart stock
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano (or 1 tbsp fresh, minced)
1 cup small pasta
1 can chickpeas, drained (or about 2 cups cooked chickpeas)
1 bunch swiss chard, stems and leaves separated, chopped
Salt, to taste
1/8 teaspoon cracked black pepper
generous pinch red chili flakes
1/4 cup minced fresh parsley
Freshly grated parmesan

Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add onion, celery and carrot and saute until softened, but not browned (reduce heat if they start browning), about 7 minutes. Add garlic and saute 1 minute. Stir in tomato paste, then add diced tomatoes, stock and dried oregano. Bring to a boil. Stir in pasta, chickpeas and chard stems; simmer until pasta is tender, about 10 minutes. Add chard leaves, and stir until wilted, about 1 minute. Add salt, pepper and chili flakes to taste. Stir in parsley just before serving, and top individual bowls with more parsley, chili flakes and parmesan, if desired.