

Creamy Italian Zuppa Toscana Soup

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Whenever the weather turns chilly, I can't resist making a big pot of soup. Over the years, I've made so many different kinds, both at home and in my restaurants, but this Zuppa Toscana has always been a favorite. Back when we were running our kitchens, soup was something I loved to feature because it brought people together – simple, comforting, and always changing with the season.

This version is one I make often for my family now. The smoky pancetta adds incredible depth, the sausage gives it that classic Italian heartiness, and the mix of kale and spinach reminds me of the rustic soups I grew up with. It's the kind of recipe that feels familiar yet special every time I serve it. And just like in the restaurant days, I can never resist pairing it with a warm loaf of crusty bread for dipping – because for me, that's where the comfort really begins.

Things to know about this Creamy Italian Zuppa Toscana Soup

- **Greens:** I like to use both kale and spinach – the kale holds up beautifully in the simmering broth, and the spinach adds a touch of delicate freshness. If you only have one on hand, either works fine.
- **Sausage:** Mild or spicy Italian sausage is your choice. In the restaurants, we always used a mix to balance

flavors.

- **Pancetta:** Don't skip it! The little bites of pancetta add that smoky, salty depth that makes this soup taste like it's been simmering for hours.
- **Potatoes:** Thinly sliced potatoes cook quickly, but diced potatoes are great if you prefer chunkier bites.
- **Cream:** For a lighter version, I sometimes swap the heavy cream for half-and-half. It still gives that rich, cozy texture without feeling too heavy.
- **Serving suggestion:** Always serve with a warm slice of crusty bread or focaccia – it's how we did it in the restaurant, and it makes all the difference at home too.

Variation ideas:

- Add a pinch of crushed red pepper for a little heat.
- Swap some of the potatoes for cannellini beans for extra protein.
- For a dairy-free option, use coconut milk instead of cream – it adds a subtle sweetness that pairs beautifully with the sausage.
- If you love this cozy Tuscan soup, try it alongside my creamy sausage tortellini soup or my classic Italian sausage risotto – both are perfect for a comforting meal any night of the week!”

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Cook Time & Servings

- **Prep Time:** 10 minutes
- **Cook Time:** 30 minutes

- **Total Time:** 40 minutes

- **Servings:** 6

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
 - 4 oz pancetta, diced
 - 1 lb. Italian sausage (mild or spicy, casings removed)
 - 1 medium onion, finely chopped
 - 3 cloves garlic, minced
 - 4 medium russet potatoes, thinly sliced or diced
 - 6 cups chicken broth
 - 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes (optional)
 - Salt & freshly ground black pepper, to taste
 - 3 cups chopped kale (stems removed)
 - 2 cups baby spinach
 - 1 cup heavy cream (or half-and-half for lighter)
 - Freshly grated Parmesan, for serving
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Instructions

1. Cook pancetta & sausage:

In a large soup pot, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add pancetta and cook until golden and crisp. Add sausage, breaking it apart with a

spoon, and cook until browned.

2. Sauté aromatics:

Stir in onion and cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and cook 1 minute more.

3. Simmer potatoes:

Add potatoes, chicken broth, red pepper flakes, salt, and pepper. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer 15–20 minutes, or until potatoes are tender.

4. Add greens:

Stir in kale and spinach; cook 3–4 minutes until wilted.

5. Finish with cream:

Lower heat, stir in heavy cream, and warm through without boiling. Adjust seasoning as needed.

6. Serve:

Ladle into bowls, sprinkle with Parmesan, and serve with crusty bread.