

Asparagus & Rice Soup with Pancetta

6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided

2 cups diced yellow onions

Salt, to taste

1/4 cup white rice

31/2 cups chicken stock

1/2 cup water

1/2 pound asparagus, woody ends

trimmed

1/2 cup minced pancetta

Freshly cracked pepper, to

taste

Yields 4 servings.

Add four tablespoons olive oil to four quart saucepan over medium-low heat.

Add onions and a pinch of salt and cook slowly, stirring regularly, for ten minutes.

Add the rice, chicken stock and water and bring to a simmer. Cover tightly and cook until the rice is nutty-tender, 15 to 20 minutes. Turn off the heat.

Slice asparagus on an angle about 1/8-inch thick, which should yield about two cups.

Warm the remaining two tablespoons of oil in a 12-inch skillet over medium heat.

Add the pancetta and asparagus slivers and cook, stirring, until asparagus softens.

Add the pancetta and asparagus to the broth and bring to a boil.

Add fresh pepper and let boil for one minute. Serve warm.

This recipe originally appeared in The Zuni Cafe Cookbook, by Judy Rodgers.