

Insider News

ESCAROLE SAUSAGE AND WHITE BEANS

Ingredients

1 cup uncooked dried navy beans
1 lb. sweet Italian pork sausage, casing removed
1 large onion, thinly sliced (about 1 cup)
2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
6 cups Chicken broth
1 head escarole (about 1 pound), chopped
grated Parmesan cheese
freshly ground black pepper

Method

Soak the beans according to the package directions. Drain. Cook the sausage in a 6-quart saucepot over medium-high heat until it's well browned, stirring often to break up meat. Remove the sausage from the saucepot with a slotted spoon.

Add the onion to the saucepot and cook for 2 minutes.

Add the garlic and cook for 30 seconds.

Stir in the broth and beans. Heat to a boil. Reduce the heat to low. Cover and cook for 1½ hours or until the beans are tender.

Return the sausage to the saucepot and add the escarole. Cover and cook for 5 minutes or until the escarole is tender. Serve with the cheese and black pepper.

Executive Chef, Mario Coiro

PUNCHES OF POP

Do you remember decorating your new home? It began as a big empty space, and it grew, quickly, or over time, into an atmosphere that expressed your taste in color, pattern, texture and furnishings. Unless your tastes have changed, you still enjoy the look of your surroundings, but don't you sometimes feel that you need something to keep a room looking fresh? Many people like the idea of change. Some go all out and completely redo rooms. Others like what they have and just want to give the room a pop, a little something that will greet them when entering a room in their home.

Do you have lampshades in your bedroom? Why not add tassel fringe at the bottom? Custom pillows

will also add a nice pop to a living room or a family room. If you have wall to wall carpeting, an area rug can be added on top. It works just as nicely as on wood flooring and will introduce both pattern and color.

If you have artwork or pictures on your walls, they are most likely surrounded by two inch matting. Change the matting to four inches. In addition, you can change the color. For example, if the matting is ivory you can change it to gold velvet. It is all about scale and the addition of color coordination to maintain the integrity of the decoration of the room. You will be surprised at the result if you were to only change the frame and mat size. The same holds true for art on top of a fireplace mantel. Instead of six inch statues, candle sticks or vases, change to an 18 to 24 inch size. Over time, pieces are collected. Each piece may provide a memory, or they may have a theme, but ultimately they may compete with the décor of a room. Three great shapes may add more to a room than eight small pieces. How items are grouped is very important. From a decorating standpoint, you don't want to clutter a space. Instead, you want to showcase fewer pieces and create balance with color, shape and height.

On a grander scale, if all of your color is at the bottom of the room, you could try an accent color on the ceiling or on one wall. For example, if your dining room walls are light and neutral, try a mossy green ceiling or a plum colored wall. Alternatively, the accent color can be identical to a color in an existing fabric or area rug. You can further balance the room by changing the size, style and finish of your picture frames.

If you have eight foot ceilings, you could make use of a corner of the room by using a seven foot plant to accentuate its height. A sculpture on a pedestal, a newly upholstered occasional chair or brush fringe outlining your existing seat cushions can also add a new point of interest to the space.

There are a number of different ways to add to a room in your home without making a complete change. That little punch of pop may very well revitalize some of that feeling you had when you first decorated your new home.

Wendy Lepkoff, Wendy Interiors