

Zucchini Soup with Eggs and Cheese  
Minestra di Zucchine con Uova e Formaggio  
Serves 6 to 8

This is one of those easy Italian soups that can be made with almost any vegetable that's in season and fortified with some grated cheese and eggs to become a whole meal. In Italy, a similar soup, stracciatella, is served to young children as a full meal containing vegetables, protein, and dairy. This is my version, which I served to my grandkids when they were little. I fondly remember tying kitchen towels around their necks to use as bibs and letting them feed themselves, hoping more made it into their mouths than onto the towels.

1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil  
1 1/2 pounds medium zucchini, thinly sliced into half-moons  
1 large onion, chopped  
Kosher salt  
1/2 teaspoon peperoncino flakes  
2 fresh bay leaves  
3 large eggs  
1/2 cup freshly grated Grana Padano  
1/4 cup fresh basil leaves, chopped

Heat the olive oil in a large Dutch oven over medium-low heat. When the oil is hot, add the zucchini and onion. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables begin to soften, 8 to 10 minutes. Season with 2 teaspoons salt and the peperoncino. Add 2 quarts water and the bay leaves, and bring to a vigorous simmer. Cook until the zucchini is very tender but not falling apart, about 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, beat the eggs in a bowl with 1/2 teaspoon salt, the cheese, and the basil until well combined. Slowly pour the egg mixture into the soup, stirring as you go, to make shreds of egg. Once all of the egg mixture has been incorporated, return the soup to a simmer briefly, then remove it from the heat, discard the bay leaves, and let the soup stand 5 minutes before serving.