

Mangiare in Bellezza: Terra Nova Nature School

By Emily Vera and Kate Dawson



Emily Vera and Kate Dawson are lead educators and founders of Terra Nova Nature School in Richmond, BC.

Nestled within a 63-acre parkland, Terra Nova Nature School offers nature-based programs to children of all ages. After harvesting a bountiful crop of scarlet runner beans, zucchini, squash, and kale from our school garden, the children and educators of the licensed preschool program organized a “Family Soup Day.” Families were invited to send a favorite ingredient to add to the soup, which resulted in a colorful melange of mixed vegetables and grains, including “forbidden rice,” which came with a handwritten note from one parent explaining the significance of the grain:

Black rice was only served to Chinese emperors and their royal family. For the unlucky few who attempted to steal even a handful of this special rice, the result would be death. This rice is highly nutritious and offers more antioxidants per serving than blueberries.

On a crisp, bright autumn day, parents, grandparents, and siblings were invited to join us outdoors for a lunch of crusty bread and homemade soup. Of course, the soup was delicious, but it was the sense of community that really made the day special. As a mother shared with us, “We really enjoyed eating the soup together along with the other families. It felt like one big family gathered together.”

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The recipe

Onions

Garlic

Olive oil

Fresh vegetables: anything that is ripe, nutritious, and delicious

Grain of choice: barley, millet, rice (forbidden, if possible!)

Fresh herbs such as oregano, thyme, bay leaves, parsley, or cilantro

Pepper and salt to taste

8 cups of vegetable stock

Sauté the onions and garlic in a good amount of olive oil until aromatic and softened. Add chopped vegetables and continue to sauté for another few minutes. Add the herbs. Once the vegetables start to look glossy, add the stock. Season the soup with salt and pepper, and cook for 5 minutes. Add the grains and cook until tender. Let the soup simmer gently rather than boil. Enjoy!



North American Reggio Emilia Alliance



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