**Italian Sausage Tortellini Soup**

1 lb. Hot Italian sausage  ( I use mild or sweet sometimes)

1 cup of chopped onions    plus 2 cloves of garlic minced

5 cups of beef broth

1/2 cup of water

1/2 cup of red wine

2cups (4 medium) chopped, seeded, peeled tomatoes or 6 oz. tomato paste if you do not like tomato chunks

1 cup of thinly sliced carrots

1/2 tsp. basil leaves

1/2 tsp. oregano

8 oz. tomato sauce (16 oz. if not using fresh tomatoes)

1 1/2 cups of sliced zucchini

8 oz. fresh cheese tortellini ( eg. Contadina or Buitoni)

3Tbl. chopped fresh parsley

1 medium red pepper, cut in 1/2" pieces

If sausage comes in casing, remove. In a 5-quart Dutch Oven brown sausage. Remove from Dutch Oven, reserving 1 Tbl. of drippings to sauté the onions and garlic until tender. Add beef broth, water, wine, tomatoes or tomato paste, tomato sauce and sausage to Dutch oven. Then add the basil and oregano mixing well. Bring to a boil.

Reduce heat; simmer uncovered for 30 minutes. Skim fat from soup.

Stir in zucchini, carrots, tortellini, red pepper and parsley. Simmer covered an additional 20-25 minutes or until tortellini are tender.

Yields: 8, 1 1/2 cup servings