

Easy Baked Beans

This baked bean recipe originally contained a lot more sugar. I found that if I cook the onions long and slow to caramelize them, you can get plenty of sweetness with just those and a little added molasses. These are really good, so pay attention to portion size. Even when its good for you, enough is enough. A good serving for me is the equivalent of around ½ can of beans (that is about two servings of carbohydrates). I serve these instead of bread or other starches.

1 onion, chopped

3-4 garlic cloves, pressed or minced

1 8-oz can tomato sauce

¼ cup cider vinegar

2 Tablespoons molasses

1 teaspoon dry mustard (or 1 Tablespoon of a good prepared mustard)

2 -3 cans beans, try pinto, aduki,, black beans, kidney beans, or Great Northern beans

Sauté the onion on low heat until very soft. Add pressed garlic and stir briefly before adding the rest of the seasonings. Cook and stir until well blended, then add beans. I like to simmer it an hour over low heat with the lid cracked to allow steam to escape.

Beans and Rice and Salsa

I don't use a recipe for this, so the amounts are approximate. Adjust it for your taste. This is one of those meals that Bill and I look forward to all day, and it's so healthy! I like things pretty spicy, so tone it down if you wish. I cook the rice in a rice cooker. When you can let it cool just a little, it is easier to cook with.

Beans and Rice:

1 onion, chopped

1 cup of uncooked brown rice – cooked and cooled

1 can of beans (any kind, I like pintos), rinsed and ideally with a less salt than the regular canned

1+ Tablespoon cumin

1 Tablespoon oregano

Sauté onion in olive oil (I usually sauté onions long and slow until they are sweet, even adding a few sprinkles of balsamic vinegar towards the end, but all you have to do is cook until soft). Add beans, rice and seasonings. Cook until heated.

Salsa:

I learned this technique from my friend Chris Bekins years ago, and while I've tried various recipes, this is still my favorite. You can use all red salsa or tomatillo sauce, but I really like the combination.

½ bottle packaged red salsa

½ bottle packaged tomatillo sauce

¼ red onion, finely chopped

1-2 tomatoes, finely chopped

¼ - ½ cup cilantro, finely chopped

juice from 1 lime

Mix all ingredients. This is really best fresh. It is edible but not nearly as good the next day.

Yellow Split Pea Dal

From Still Life with Menu cookbook, by Mollie Katzen (a good cookbook!)

'Dal' in Indian cooking refers to porridge-like dishes made from dried legumes – usually split peas or lentils. Dal is often served in a thinned state as a soup, but equally often it will be a thick, hearty side dish. This is a thick dal, comprehensive and highly spiced enough to be the focus of a meal. Leftovers can be thinned with a little water and served as a soup. I serve this as an entrée, over brown rice.

1 cup dried yellow split peas
5 cups water (plus ½ cup more later)
2 TBSP butter (*I use olive oil*)
3 large cloves garlic
¾ tsp cumin seeds
¾ tsp mustard seeds
½ tsp turmeric
½ tsp cinnamon
¾ tsp salt (I skip or use less)
Black pepper
Crushed red pepper

Place split peas in a saucepan with 5 cups of water. Cover and bring to a boil. Lower heat and simmer very slowly, partially covered, until soft (2 – 2 ½ hours).

Melt butter/heat oil in a large skillet. Use a garlic press to crush the garlic. Add cumin and mustard seeds, turmeric and cinnamon. Cook, stirring, over medium heat 3-5 minutes.

Add cooked split peas, and stir until everything is well mixed. Keep stirring and cooking as you gradually add an additional ½ cup or so of water. You want to get a creamy consistency but not soup. Add salt, black pepper and red peppers. Cook and stir another 5 minutes over low heat.

Red Lentil Dhal

This recipe is a little more involved than the previous recipe (and I have left the spelling the way the recipe authors spelled it) – but it is really worth it. Roasting and grinding the spices only takes a little longer and the aroma and flavor is unbelievable! I got the recipe from this web location:

<http://www.theppk.com/recipes/dbrecipes/index.php?RecipeID=127>

3 tablespoons peanut oil
1 medium yellow onion
1 tablespoon fresh ginger, grated
4 garlic cloves, minced
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup dried red lentils
2 tablespoons tomato paste
4-5 cups water or veg broth
5 plum tomatoes, chopped
juice of 1 lime
1 cup lightly packed chopped fresh cilantro

Spice blend

2 teaspoon mustard seeds
1 teaspoon fenugreek seeds
1 teaspoon coriander seeds
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
6 whole cloves
4 cardamom pods

2 dried red chilis (seeds removed)
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon

In a saute pan over medium heat, toast the seeds (but not the dried red chili) for about 5 minutes, stirring frequently. Remove from pan and let cool. Transfer to coffee grinder, along with the dried red chili and cinnamon, and grind to a fine powder.

Over medium-high heat oil a soup pot, add onions and saute for 5 minutes. Add garlic and ginger and saute 5 more minutes. Add spices and salt, saute 5 minutes more.

Add 4 cups of water and stir to deglaze the pot. Add tomato paste and lentils. Bring to a boil then lower the heat a bit and simmer for 20 minutes.

Add the tomatoes, lime juice and cilantro and more water if it looks to thick. Simmer 10 more minutes, or until lentils are completely tender.

Three Sisters Stew

This recipe is from Jill Nussinow's cookbook: The Veggie Queen: Vegetables get the Royal Treatment. See notes in the beginning of this section about her classes on pressure cooking. This recipe uses a pressure cooker. Since I don't have one (yet), I've used it but adapted it to cooking on top of the stove. This stew is wonderful in the fall when winter squash and corn are fresh.

5 minutes high pressure; natural release.

1 cup Anasazi, red, or kidney beans; soaked overnight or quick soaked

1 Tablespoon canola oil

1 large onion, chopped

1 chipotle chile, seeded, cut into pieces

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

2 teaspoons dried oregano

1 ¼ cup boiling water

1 pound organic delicate, kabocha or butternut squash, seeded and cut into 1 inch cubes

10 sundried tomatoes, cut into pieces

1 medium red pepper, cut into strips and then diced

1 tablespoon fresh sage, copped or 1 teaspoon dried sage

1 cup corn, cut from the cob, or frozen, thawed

1 Anaheim or Poblano chili, roasted and diced

tamari to taste

½ cup green onions, sliced

¼ cup toasted pumpkin seeds, for garnish

Heat the canola oil in the cooker over medium heat. Add the onion and sauté for 2 minutes. Add the chipotle chili, cumin seeds and oregano and cook for 1 minute. Then add the drained beans, boiling water, squash, sundried tomatoes, red pepper and sage. Lock the lid in place. Bring to high pressure over high heat. Reduce the heat to low and maintain high pressure for 5 minutes.

Let the pressure come down naturally. Remove the lid, tilting it away from you. Stir in the corn, roasted pepper, tamari and green onions. Cook for a minute or two to be sure that corn is cooked through. Serve hot, garnished with toasted pumpkin seeds.

Black Bean Mango Salsa Salad

This salad is beautiful, almost like stained glass. This recipe is adapted from a Sunset Magazine recipe. I've used it often for potlucks and everyone loves it. I think of this as a summer salad with summer vegetables, but you can adapt it to other seasons.

- 1 can (15 oz) black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 cup diced firm ripe mango (nectarine is great too when in season!)
- 1 roma tomato, diced
- ½ each orange and yellow bell pepper
- ¼ thinly sliced red onion
- 1 minced fresh jalapeno chili (seeded)
- ¼ cup chopped cilantro
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 Tablespoons lime Juice
- 1 Tablespoon balsamic vinegar

Mix all ingredients and serve chilled.

White Bean Salad

I like to use organic beans, which have less salt than conventional beans. Since I don't use salt when I cook, beans can taste a little flat. The garlic helps and so does the salad dressing. But what really gives it a little zing is the jalapeño pepper. Even if you don't like hot foods, chop it up fine enough and – especially with low salt beans – you probably won't even know its there.

2 cans white beans (any kind), rinsed and drained
¼ red onion, thinly sliced
1 bell pepper, chopped (any color or combination of colors)
1 jalapeño , seeded and chopped fine (optional)
1 garlic clove, pressed
1 carrot, slice very thin or cut in small cubes
3 radish, thinly sliced
1 avocado, cubed
1 -2 handfuls snow peas – tips cut off and cut up

Balsamic Vinaigrette Salad dressing – recipe follows

Mix all ingredients. Chill if time.

Balsamic Vinaigrette

This is my husband's recipe, but we each make it a little differently. I'll give you both versions. It keeps well in the refrigerator, so we make enough for several salads at a time. The version with more olive oil than vinegar gets solid when cold but can easily be warmed up by setting the bottle in hot water..

Bill's version:

2 Tablespoons balsamic vinegar
5 Tablespoons Virgin Olive Oil
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1 teaspoon honey

Kathy's version:

½ balsamic
½ olive oil
a Huge spoonful of Dijon mustard
1 clove garlic, pressed (optional, when you have the time)
herbs: If I want fresh herbs, I'm more likely to add them to the salad directly.

Warm Tomato and White Bean Stew

This recipe is adapted from Sunset Magazine, September 2004. It takes about 30 minutes (or less!) to prepare and cook. It claims that it makes 4 servings. I've decreased the cheese so that it can serve 2 as a hearty entrée. I featured this recipe in the newsletter late last summer, so you may recognize it. It really is a seasonal dish – especially great for late in the season when ripe, home grown or farmers market tomatoes are readily available.

2 – 3 pounds ripe tomatoes

½ cup slivered fresh basil

2 TBSP olive oil

1 clove garlic, peeled, and minced or pressed

Salt (recipe calls for 1 tsp, I add just a dash – maybe 1/8 tsp)

Fresh ground pepper

1 can (15 oz) white beans, rinsed and drained

2 oz fresh mozzarella cheese- drained and cut into ½ in cubes

¼ cup (or less) freshly grated parmesan cheese

1. Wash, core and dice tomatoes. In a 4-5 qt pan, combine tomatoes, basil, olive oil, garlic, salt and pepper. Let stand until tomatoes are very juicy, about 15 minutes.
2. Set pan over medium-low heat and gently stir in beans. Stir occasionally until mixture is warm to the touch – about 5 minutes
3. Add mozzarella cheese and gently stir until cheese has softened, 2-3 minutes.
4. Stir in parmesan and ladle into bowls. Top each serving with a sprinkling of more basil.

Serves two as an entrée. Good with a slice of whole grain bread.