

You grow tired of eating these:



And you're not sure what to do with these:



A big concern that many individuals of all ages have is the growing intake of sodium. In an attempt to eat healthy, fulfilling foods full of fiber and nutrients, many can turn to beans. Beans are an excellent and healthy source for nutrients ranging from protein to healthy fats to folate to fiber. A downside that may not be apparent is the high sodium content of certain canned beans. Sodium, while it is a necessary nutrient for our survival, is consumed in excess of more than twice the daily recommended value in America. It has been verified by the American Heart Association that excessive sodium intake is a factor in high blood pressure and heart disease. To stave off these unwanted health concerns, it is recommended to keep sodium intake below 1,500mg per day. Including beans regularly in the diet can further improve health benefits, mainly due to their fiber content

Fiber is an undigestible strand found in whole foods such as beans and grains. Because it is not absorbed like other nutrients, fiber serves to cleanse the gut. The Institute of Medicine has confirmed that meeting the daily recommendations for beans makes for an effective preventer of colon cancer,

one of the leading cancers in modern medicine. From a weight management perspective, fiber is highly satiating, which means it fills you up quickly and you are able to satisfy your hunger with less calories. With time, your bean consumption will become habitual and you can reap many benefits of a healthy diet.

... But what do I do with these?



This post will give you not only a detailed guide in preparing beans for cooking, but also some tasty recipes that anyone can do with nothing but a pot, a bowl, and a stove.

- 1.) **Buying in bulk:** Beans are readily available in 15 oz cans, providing a staggering 3 servings per can. This pales in comparison to paying a dollar more for a 1-lb bag of beans, which once cooked, provides an innumerable amount of servings. Go to Wal-Mart, Mexican or Mediterranean grocery stores, or Costco and get a 5 pound bag of beans once you're dedicated to making it a staple in your diet.
- 2.) **Soaking:** This remains a hotly debated topic among culinary artists and bloggers alike. Soaking your beans has been said to make for a better cooking process and removing the flatulence components, but this has not been validated. It is up to you if you want to soak your beans before cooking them. Soaking can reduce the amount of time needed for cooking, but has also been said to remove flavor. Soaking instructions depend for each bean. Be sure to keep the original package if you're unsure of how long to soak. Recipes may call for cooking without soaking
- 3.) **Cooking:** Again, this depends on what type of bean you're cooking. Thicker beans may require many hours while tiny lentils only require 30 minutes. Some recipes may suggest mixing in some herbs and spices for improved flavor. As far as monitoring your beans as they cook, be sure to keep a lid over your pot to keep the beans from drying out. Other than that, just about every

bean is cooked with a moderate level of heat, known as a simmer. Be sure to cook on medium high to keep just below boiling.

- 4.) Putting it all together: Not all beans are equal in their cooking times or even their “outputs”. Beans, when measured dry, will usually output anywhere from 2 to 3 times their volume once cooked. In addition, some beans may require more water than others. Here is a table to general references with regards to beans

Beans (1 cup)	Water (cups)	Cooking Time	Yield (cups)
Adzuki	3 - 4	2 - 3 hours	3
Anasazi	3 - 4	1½ hours	2¼
Black Beans	3 - 4	1½ hours	2¼
Black-Eyed Peas	3 - 4	1¼ hour	2
Cannelini (white kidney beans)	3 - 4	1½ hours	2½
Cranberry Bean	3 - 4	1¼ hours	3
Fava Beans	3 - 4	3 hours	1⅔
Garbanzo	3 - 4	3 hours	2
Great Northern Beans	3	2 hours	2⅔
Kidney Beans	3 - 4	1½ hours	2¼
Lentils, Brown	2¼	45 minutes - 1 hour	2¼
Lentils, Green	2	30 - 45 minutes	2¼
Lentils, Red*	3	20 - 30 minutes	2
Lima Beans	3	1½ hours	2 - 3
Mung Beans	3 - 4	1¼ hours	2
Navy Beans	3 - 4	2½ hours	2⅔
Pink Beans	3	50-60 minutes	2¼
Pinto Beans	3 - 4	2 - 2½ hours	2⅔
Split Peas, Green	2 - 3	45 minutes	2
Split Peas, Yellow	2	1 - 1½ hours	2
Soybeans	3 - 4	3 - 4 hours	3

RECIPES:

Red Lentil Curry – Spicy, Indian

- 2 cups of red lentils
- 1 large onion, diced
- 1 Tbs vegetable oil
- 2 Tbs red curry paste
- 1 Tbs curry powder
- Pinch of cumin and salt
- 1 can of tomato puree



- 1.) Put lentils in a pot of enough water to cover, bring to a simmer, cover with a lid. Add water as needed to keep lentils covered. Cook for 20 minutes or until tender.
- 2.) Heat vegetable oil in a large skillet over medium heat, stir in onion once oil is hot until completely caramelized, 10+ minutes.
- 3.) Mix in paste, powder and a pinch of cumin and salt into the pot. Add fresh minced ginger and garlic for additional flavor (optional). Stir constantly to prevent over cooking of the paste.
- 4.) Stir in the tomato puree and remove from heat. Add the lentils and stir in for a thick consistency.
- 5.) Can be served with rice or chicken. Fresh parsley on top makes for a tasty garnishment.



Lentil Casserole with Goat Cheese

What You'll Need:

- 1 cup lentils
- 2 cups water
- 1/2 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 onion, diced
- 1 large carrot, grated
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 handful of fresh parsley, chopped
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1/4 cup goat cheese
- Salt and pepper
- Cooking spray



1. Bring the lentils and water to a boil, then reduce the heat to a simmer. Let lentils cook until all the water is absorbed — about 20 minutes. Set aside in a large bowl once cooked.
2. While the lentils are cooking, preheat oven to 400 degrees. Heat oil in a medium frying pan over medium-high heat.
3. Add the onion, carrot, and garlic to the pan and sauté until the onion is translucent and the other vegetables are tender.
4. Add the cooked vegetables to the bowl of lentils along with parsley, flour, soy sauce, and a pinch of salt and pepper. Stir until evenly combined.
5. Lightly grease a small casserole dish with cooking spray(8x8 inches should work) with and spread the mixture evenly in the dish. Top with the crumbled goat cheese.
6. Bake the casserole for about 10 minutes, or until the cheese has softened and melted.
7. Top with some extra fresh parsley, and enjoy!

Chickpea Veggie Burgers

- 1 small onion, finely diced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 carrot, chopped in chunks
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled
- 1/2 cup fresh parsley leaves
(add more herbs like dill, mint, and basil for a different flavor)
- 1 cup dry chickpeas
- 1/2 cup bread crumbs
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin



Chickpea burger topped with tzatziki and served with tabbouleh

- Firstly, the chickpeas take about 12 hours to soak before cooking. Prepare the night before or the morning of. When the beans are ready, bring 3 cups of water to a boil, reduce to a simmer, and cook the beans in the pot for an hour or until tender.
- Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Heat 1 tablespoon of the olive oil in a small saucepan over medium heat.
- Add the diced onion and saute, stirring occasionally, for five minutes, until soft and translucent. Remove from heat and place onions in a large bowl.
- In a food processor or blender, blend carrot, garlic, parsley/herbs, and chickpeas until smooth. Add chickpea mixture to the bowl with the onions and mix to combine.
- Add bread crumbs, salt, coriander, and cumin to the chickpea mixture and mix until fully combined. Should have a pasty but firm consistency.
- Spray a baking sheet with olive oil spray or brush with olive oil. Form chickpea mixture into 4 patties about 3 inches across and 1/2 inch thick. Place patties on and baking sheet and use a pastry brush to brush patties with remaining 1 tablespoon of olive oil.
- Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, or until they begin to turn golden brown. Serve on a bun

Pinto and Beef Chili

- 1 pound lean ground chuck/ground beef
- Salt
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 4 cups chopped onion (2 medium)
- 2 minced jalapeno peppers
- 10 cloves minced garlic
- 1 tablespoon paprika
- 1 tablespoon cumin
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 3 cups fat-free, low-sodium beef broth
- 1 (28-ounce) can whole peeled tomatoes, drained and chopped
- 1 cup pinto beans dry
- cilantro leaves, chives, sour cream, or shredded cheese



Served with low-fat sour cream and cheese

- Prepare beans ahead of time by rinsing with water, placing into a large pot, and covering with water + a few inches. Simmer over medium high heat for 2 hours with a lid on the pot (prevent beans from drying out)
- Coat pan with cooking spray. Sprinkle beef evenly with a pinch of salt. Add beef to pan; sauté 5 minutes, turning to brown on all sides. Remove from pan.
- Add oil to pan; swirl to coat pan completely. Add onion and jalapeño; sauté 8 minutes or until lightly browned, stirring occasionally. Add garlic; sauté additional 1 minute, stirring constantly. Stir in beer, scraping pan to loosen browned bits.
- Cook until all liquids evaporate (about 10 minutes), stirring occasionally. Stir in paprika, cumin, and tomato paste; cook 1 minute, stirring frequently. Add to a large stock pot (or crock pot if available)
- Add broth, tomatoes, beans to mixture; bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer 1 1/2 hours or until mixture is thick and beef is very tender, stirring occasionally (especially on bottom to prevent sticking). Season to taste with additional cumin, paprika, salt and pepper. Serve with minced cilantro, sour cream, cheese or chives as a garnishment

Home Made Refried Beans

- 2 ½ cups dry pinto beans (1 lb bag)
- 3 quarts of water
- ½ cup chopped onions (one small or half of a medium)
- 2 Tbsp of olive oil
- ¼ cup additional water during the frying process
- Salt and pepper
 - Prepare beans (rinse with water and remove stones) and cook in a large pot. To do so, raise 3 quarts of water to a boil and then bring to a simmer, place the beans in the pot and cook for 2 ½ hours with lid to cover. These beans cook a little longer because you want them to be soft for mashing later
 - Add the 2 Tbsp of olive oil to a large frying pan (or another pot) and bring to high heat for cooking the onions. The onions are completed once they are translucent. Strain the water from the bean pot and add the beans to the mixture
 - Use a potato masher to puree the beans. You want a thick texture. Add salt and pepper to taste and additional toppings such as cheese, chives, or rice make for a good garnishment. Refried beans keep for a decent amount of time, so be sure to cook in bulk and save some for later – microwaving works perfectly for reheating.

