

Baked Red Rice & Beans

When I returned to my kitchen after three weeks away, my deep desire for comfort food was in direct conflict with my lack of desire to grocery shop. I recalled bookmarking a pantry-friendly recipe in NYT prior to leaving that was a perfect match for the cold front moving into Texas. With a few adaptations, this simple dish hit the spot on so many levels, yummy, hands-off, and full of texture.

Here you go with a grateful nod to Mark Bittman for his inspiration

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 1 sweet pepper, stemmed, seeded, and chopped
- 1 fresh jalapeño or serrano, stemmed, seeded and minced
- 1 can coconut milk, refilled with water to use as needed
- 2 veggie bouillon cubes
- 1 teaspoon of Herbes de Provence
- Pinch of red pepper flakes
- 2 cans of kidney or other red beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 cups red rice (Carmargue is possible), parboiled for 15 minutes, rinsed in cold water, and drained
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Directions

Preheat oven to 375 degrees

Parboil rice and set aside.

In a large dutch oven on the stovetop, heat oil and saute onion and sweet pepper. When tender and fragrant, add jalapeño, coconut milk, bouillon cubes, herbs, and pepper flakes. Simmer for a few minutes, then add beans and rice. Add

salt and pepper to taste.

Level off all ingredients with a large spoon or spatula and add just enough water to cover the beans and rice. Turn up the heat to bring all ingredients to a boil and then place dutch oven in the heated oven. Cover with the lid for a steamed dish or leave the lid off and enjoy the crispy crust that forms.

Because this is Texas I served this dish with slices of fresh avocado and salsa.

Enjoy!

Not Your Grandma's Butter Beans

When I was growing up Butter Beans, often called Lima beans were rightfully feared. They led the list of most likely vegetable to be snuck into one's napkin. So of course I was intrigued when, Meera Sodha, a favorite recipe developer, offered up this dish of Tomato Rose Harrisa Butter Beans. Meera has never steered me wrong, but still Butter Beans?

What I discovered in this adaptation was an entirely new perspective on the humble beans and a perfect weeknight recipe.

Ingredients

- 7 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 shallots peeled and minced
- 1 serrano or chili of your choice, finely chopped
- 4 large tomatoes, chopped or a tin of chopped tomatoes

- 1 tbsp harissa spice blend or harissa paste – I used the blend from the Teeny Tiny Herb Co
- 1 tbsp red-wine vinegar
- Scant $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp rose water – although this can be omitted it elevated this dish to something special
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ tbsp sun-dried tomato paste
- 2 x 400g tins butter beans, drained saving the liquid or freshly cooked butter beans
- Fine sea salt, to taste
- 15g fresh dill
- 2 tbsp lemon juice (ie, from 1 lemon)

Directions

1. Put four tablespoons of the oil in a medium saucepan on a medium to high heat and, once it's hot, add the shallots and chili, cooking until soft and golden.
2. Stir in tomato paste and harissa powder caramelizing it just a bit and then adding tomatoes, vinegar, rose water and allow to simmer for 10 mins.
3. Add beans to the mixture and liquid if needed.
4. Season with salt to taste, remove from heat and allow to sit covered so that flavors can meld.
5. In a small dish mix lemon juice, fresh dill and a tablespoon or two of olive oil.
6. Spoon over top of beans when you are ready to serve.

Enjoy!

Eggplant and Lentil Stew

Here's a stew inspired by Yotam Ottolenghi to carry you into fall and it is a much deserved helping of pure comfort in a bowl.

Ingredients

- Olive oil
- 1 Red onion, peeled and finely chopped
- Fresh thyme leaves removed from stems
- 1 large or 2 small eggplants cut in chunks
- 24 cherry tomatoes halved or 2 large tomatoes chopped
- 180 g or 1 cup of Green French Lentils (Puy)
- Fresh baby spinach or frozen chopped spinach
- Water to cover
- 1-2 cubes of vegetable bouillon
- Vegan sour cream
- Crushed red pepper flakes
- Fresh oregano sprigs

Directions

1. Place chopped eggplant and halved cherry tomatoes in a large bowl. Generously season with salt and pepper and allow to sit.
2. Add olive oil to a large heavy, lidded skillet on medium heat. Add onion and saute until soft. Remove onion with a slotted spoon, leaving oil in the pan. Return to heat and add thyme, with eggplant and tomatoes, in batches if necessary. Saute until eggplant has softened and tomatoes have collapsed.
3. Add lentils and stir well to incorporate. Cover with water, bring to a boil, reduce heat to low. Cover and cook until lentils are tender, about 20 minutes. Add water if necessary. Adjust seasonings as needed, adding bouillon cubes one at a time. Fold in spinach before

serving.

4. Serve with a dollop of vegan sour cream, pinch of red pepper flakes and a sprig of oregano.

Red Lentil Bolognese

Adapted from Vegan Richa's Lentil Bolognese

Ingredients

- 1 package of gluten free spaghetti
- 1 cup of red lentils
- Olive oil
- 2 pkgs or 1lb of mushrooms chopped
- 1 onion, peeled and finely
- 1-2 shallots or cloves of garlic, peeled and finely chopped
- 2 grated carrots
- 1 t dried oregano or use 1/2 tbsp fresh
- 2 t dried basil or use 2 tbsp fresh
- 1 t of dried thyme or a sprig of fresh
- ½ t of red pepper flakes (adjust to taste)
- 3 T nutritional yeast optional
- 16 ounces of crushed tomatoes
- 2 heaping T tomato paste
- 1 T of maple syrup
- 1 cup of prepared veggie broth on reserve
- Salt and pepper to taste
- fresh basil or thyme for garnish

Instructions

1. Wash the lentils, cover with water and simmer over medium heat for 10-15 minutes. Keep a close watch and

add a bit of water and stir as needed. Cook until softened and the water has been mostly absorbed. Set aside.

2. Heat oil in a deep heavy skillet over medium heat, add onion, shallots or garlic and a sprinkle of salt. Once onion has softened add a handful or two of the chopped mushrooms. Saute in batches, removing cooked ones to a bowl as you work your way through all of the mushrooms.
3. Return all mushrooms to the skillet, add the carrots, herbs, spices and mix in. Cook for 2 mins.
4. Add the tomato paste and crushed tomatoes, maple syrup, salt, pepper. Simmer for 15 minutes.
5. Fold in the cooked lentils and mix well. Cook for 1-2 minutes. Adjust thickness with veggie broth or tomato paste. Allow it to sit while pasta is prepared.
6. Prepare spaghetti, drain
7. Serve bolognese over cooked spaghetti, garnishing with fresh basil and vegan parmesan.
8. Enjoy!

Spiced Walnut Lentil Patties

These patties. They are just the best. Plate them up with some roasted veg and a salad or pack them along as I did on your next hike. Consider precooking the lentils and rice to cut down on the last minute prep or prepare the full mixture and allow to sit overnight in the fridge. You can top these any way you like but I am partial to the avocado mayo that follows.

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup chopped red onions
- 1/3 cup walnuts, ground
- 1 bunch of fresh cilantro finely chopped
- 3/4 tsp each of ground cumin and coriander
- A pinch or two of cayenne
- 1 tea of sweet or smoky paprika
- 1/2 tsp garam masala
- 3/4 cup cooked brown or white rice
- 1 1/2 cups cooked brown lentils
- 2 Tbsp tomato paste
- 1 flax egg 1 tbsp flaxseed meal mixed in 2.5 tbsp warm water, let sit for 2 minutes
- 4 or more tbsp gf ground breadcrumbs or chickpea flour to firm up the mixture
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Olive oil for cooking patties

Instructions

1. Saute onion until soft. Add ginger, walnuts, and cilantro.
2. Mix well and add to the food processor with spices, salt, basil, rice, half of the cooked lentils, and pulse a few times until well combined. Transfer to a bowl with the rest of the lentils.
3. Add tomato paste, oil, flax egg, and mix everything with your hands or heavy wooden spoon until evenly mixed in. Mashing a bit if needed.
4. Adjust seasonings as needed. Add in the breadcrumbs or flour.
5. Let the mixture chill for 10 minutes.
6. Add in more flour or breadcrumbs if too moist to form into patties.
7. Heat a skillet over medium-high heat. Add just a splash of oil and spread it around. Once oil is hot place

patties on the skillet and cook for 4 to 6 minutes per side.

8. Serve with your favorite sauce, sriracha mayo, or try this avocado-ranch.

Inspired by Vegan Richa

Lemony White Bean Soup

Bringing together simple, good quality ingredients makes for kitchen magic. This delicious Lemony White Bean Soup is a stand-out example of that principle.

INGREDIENTS

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 large carrots, diced
- 1 bunch sturdy greens, I used cabbage and kale, finely sliced and stems chopped
- 1 can of chopped tomatoes
- 3 tablespoon tomato paste
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon ground cumin, plus more to taste
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon red-pepper flakes, plus more to taste
- 3 shallots, minced
- 1 leek finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon finely grated fresh ginger
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 2 veggie broth cubes prepared with boiling water to dissolve
- 2 (15-ounce) cans white beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 cup chopped fresh, soft herbs, such as parsley, mint, dill, basil, tarragon, thyme, chives, or a

combination

- salt and pepper to taste
- Fresh lemon juice from 2 lemons (and grated zest for topping)

PREPARATION

1. Heat a large heavy pot over medium-high for a minute or so to warm it up. Add the oil and heat until it thins out. Add leek, shallots, and carrot, and sauté until soft and brown at the edges, 7 to 10 minutes.
 2. While the vegetables cook, rinse the greens and pull the leaves off the stems. Chop stems into small bite-size pieces and cut the leaves into thin strips. Set aside.
 3. Once vegetables are ready, stir tomato paste, 3/4 teaspoon cumin and 1/8 teaspoon red-pepper flakes into the pot, and sauté until paste darkens, about 1 minute. Remove this mixture from pot and set aside. Wiping pot clean with a paper towel
 4. Adding a splash more oil to the pot, sauté stems and leaves from greens until just barely tender.
 5. Combine in leek, shallots, carrots and white beans stirring into the greens.
 6. Grate in ginger and cover mixture completely with prepared broth adding additional water if needed.
 7. Bring soup to a gentle simmer, cover, and cook for 20-25 minutes. Add lemon, herbs, and salt and pepper to taste.
 8. Serve topped with a drizzle of olive oil, grated lemon zest, and more red-pepper flakes, if desired.
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Lablabi–Tunisian Chickpea Soup

I must admit I was equally skeptical and intrigued by this recipe and danced around it for several days before giving it a go. Worried it would taste like a bowl of warm hummus I had Plan B on the ready, but it was never required. The real problem turned out to be not making enough! Like with many cultural mainstays, it is the bringing together of good quality simple ingredients that make for kitchen magic, and you will soon discover that this soup is no exception.

Just an FYI- This recipe must be started 8 hours in advance with soaking the chickpeas

Ingredients

FOR THE CRISPY CHICKPEAS:

1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup cooked chickpeas or 1 (15-ounce) can chickpeas, drained and rinsed

2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon kosher salt, plus more to taste

1 teaspoon za'atar, plus more to taste

FOR THE SOUP:

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups dried chickpeas, **soaked overnight and drained**

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup plus 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for serving

2 bay leaves

1 ½ teaspoon kosher salt, plus more to taste

½ loaf hearty rustic bread (about 8 ounces – I used this one)

1 cup chopped onion

6 garlic cloves, minced or finely grated (I used shallots)

1 tablespoon ground cumin, plus more for serving

2 chopped Roma tomatoes

1 tablespoon harissa paste or spice mix plus more for serving
(adjust this according to taste)

3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

1 tablespoon finely grated lemon zest, for serving

½ cup chopped flat-leaf parsley, for serving

Crispy chickpeas:

Layout chickpeas on clean toweling to completely air dry for at least 30 mins.

Preheat oven to 425 degrees

Move chickpeas onto a parchment-covered baking sheet. Splash 2 -3 teaspoons of olive oil and toss well with salt and a sprinkle of za'atar.

Bake 15 mins or until crispy, add more seasoning if desired, and set aside to cool.

At the same time, you can toast the rustic bread until crispy for the soup. Tear in bite sized pieces, and place on a baking sheet for about 10 minutes.

Chickpeas for soup:

In a heavy stockpot or pressure cooker, combine drained soaked chickpeas, 5 cups water, 1 tablespoon olive oil, bay leaves, and 1/2 teaspoon salt over high heat. Bring to a boil for 2 to 3 minutes, then reduce heat to a simmer, cover, cooking until chickpeas are tender, 30 mins in the pressure cooker, and about 1 to 2 hours in a stockpot.

When the chickpeas for the soup are tender, discard bay leaves. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the chickpeas, 1/2 cup of the chickpea cooking liquid, and 1/4 cup olive oil to a blender or food processor, and purée until smooth. Set aside.

In a large skillet over medium-high, heat the remaining 2 tablespoons oil until shimmering. Add the onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 5 minutes. Add garlic or shallots and cook until golden, about 2 minutes. Add the remaining 1 teaspoon salt, 1 tablespoon cumin, and tomatoes and cook, stirring, until fragrant, 1 minute. Add a splash of the chickpea cooking liquid to the pan, and bring to a simmer to deglaze, scraping up the browned bits on the bottom of the pan. Turn off heat.

Combine chickpea purée and onion mixture, remaining cooking liquid along with harissa and lemon juice, and stir well. Add water as needed if the soup seems too thick, and adjust seasonings.

Serve by dividing toasted bread pieces among soup bowls, add soup and garnish with lemon zest, parsley, olive oil, more cumin, and some of the crispy chickpeas. Serve hot, with more harissa on the side.

Enjoy!

Adapted from Melissa Clark NY Cooking

Best Ever Black Bean Soup

This week I am happy to share a recipe from an Austin friend and outstanding vegan chef, Anna Fry. Anna passed along this recipe ages ago when our then-preteens enjoyed this soup for lunch at her home during a school holiday. It still a top request at the Hubele home when soup season rolls around.

What's great about this soup is, you are sure to have most if not all of the ingredients on hand, and prep time is minimal.

Ingredients

- 2-3 T olive oil
- 1 T fresh ginger grated
- 1-2 garlic cloves, peeled and minced
- 1 small onion, peeled and diced
- 2-3 fresh tomatoes diced
- 2 cans rinsed and drained black beans, or fresh cooked
- 1 can full-fat coconut milk
- 1-2 cups vegetable broth
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- Dash cayenne pepper
- Juice from one orange and one lime
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Serve with fresh cilantro and lime wedges

Directions

In a heavy soup pan over low heat, warm olive oil, adding onion, garlic and ginger. Saute over low heat until items are soft and onions become translucent. Add tomatoes and spices, cooking for a few more minutes. Add beans, coconut milk and one cup vegetable broth. Simmer for 10 minutes to blend flavors, adding more broth if desired and citrus juices. Season to taste. You can choose to serve soup as is or divide in half, blending one portion of the soup with an immersion blender and combining with remaining unblended soup.

Enjoy!

Photo by J Doll