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BORLOTTI BEANS: BORLOTTI MINESTRONE WITH ARUGULA PESTO

The vegetables can easily be varied by the season for this minestrone. In summer, include zucchini and tomatoes; in winter, potatoes and carrots are appropriate. This one's nice for fall. This recipe was by Vanessa Barrington from our *Heirloom Beans* cookbook.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

FOR THE SOUP:

2 cups borlotti beans, cooked in the Rancho Gordo manner with their broth
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 small onion, sliced
3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
1 medium fennel bulb, sliced thinly
½ of a medium head of green cabbage, sliced (about 5 cups)
5 cups chicken broth
1 ½ pound green beans, trimmed and cut in half
Salt and freshly ground pepper

FOR THE PESTO:

3 garlic cloves
¼ pound baby arugula leaves
1 small handful flat leaf parsley leaves
1 ⅓ cup olive oil
½ cup freshly grated parmesan cheese
2-3 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
Salt and freshly ground pepper

In a large, heavy soup pot over medium heat, warm the olive oil. Add the onion, garlic, and fennel, along with a pinch of salt and cook, stirring, until soft and fragrant, about 10 minutes. Add the cabbage and stir to coat in oil and wilt, about 5 minutes. Add the broth and another pinch of salt. Bring to a boil and simmer for 15 minutes. Add the green beans and the cooked borlotti beans and simmer for an additional 15 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Meanwhile, prepare the pesto. Put the garlic into a mortar along with a pinch of coarse salt and pound into a paste. Transfer to the bowl of a food processor. (You may also use the food processor for the first step, but pounding the raw garlic mellows its harshness and creates a texture that integrates well into the pesto). Add the arugula, parsley, and a pinch of salt. Process until everything is well chopped. Slowly drizzle in the olive oil with the motor running, stopping once to scrape down the sides of the processor with a rubber spatula. Add the lemon juice and parmesan cheese and season to taste with salt and pepper.

Makes about ¾ cup. Leftover pesto is wonderful spread onto sandwiches or crostini, stirred into scrambled eggs or tossed into a bean salad.

Swirl a dollop of pesto over each serving.

REBOSERO BEANS: BISON CHILI WITH CHOCOLATE

Here's an exclusive recipe from our upcoming book, *Supper at Rancho Gordo*. I think it would be great with a skillet cornbread, also using our Oregano Indio.

1 pound ground bison
1 onion, chopped
5 garlic cloves, peeled and minced
¼ cup olive oil
1/3 cup Rancho Gordo New Mexican Chile Powder
2 tablespoons Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio
2 tablespoons cumin, ground
1 red bell pepper, roasted, peeled and chopped
1 yellow bell pepper, roasted, peeled and chopped
2 cups water
½ tablet Rancho Gordo Stoneground Chocolate
2 cups cooked Rebozero bean, plus 1 cup of cooking liquid
1 cup stale beer
1 tablespoon (or to taste) Rancho Gordo Sal de Mar

In a large pan, crumble and cook the ground bison meat. Add a little olive oil if it's particularly dry. When just cooked, remove the meat with a slotted spoon and reserve. Add a little more oil to the pan and sauté onions and garlic until translucent.

When translucent, add the chile powder and mix to a paste. "Fry" the paste for two minutes, turning constantly. Add the oregano, cumin and 1 cup of water and mix well. Allow to cook for 15 minutes.

Break up the chocolate and add to the pot. Stir and once incorporated, add the beans, their liquid, the peppers, the beer and the final 1 cup of water. Stir well and test for seasoning and add salt as needed, keeping in mind it will intensify as the chili evaporates. Cook on very low for about 45 minutes, stirring occasionally. Check seasoning and serve with cornbread.

If the chili is a little bitter, try a scant teaspoon of sugar to smooth things out.

SAN FRANCISCANO BEANS: RANCHO GORDO CHILI CON CARNE

Among chili aficionados, your answer to the question of “beans or no beans” can earn you disdain or respect. I love beans in my chili but I also dislike that thick, stodgy mess made mostly beans that is called “chili con carne” on the labels of cans and in certain regions of our fair country. The star should be the chiles, either from pods or ground to a powder.

¼ cup olive oil
2-3 pounds chuck roast, cut into ½ to 1 inch cubes
2 white onions, chopped
4-6 cloves garlic
1 tablespoon Rancho Gordo Mexican Oregano
½ cup Rancho Gordo New Mexican Red Chile Powder
1 teaspoon cumin, ground
salt
3 cups water
1 bottle Negra Modelo (or other dark beer)
1 cup Rancho Gordo San Franciscano beans or Pinto beans, cooked and drained
1 tablespoon of Masa Harina (optional)

In a stock pot, heat the oil and brown the meat pieces. Remove as they brown. When all the pieces are browned and seared, lower the heat and sauté the onions and garlic until soft. Then add the oregano, chile powder, cumin and salt. Fry the spices for a few minutes and then slowly add the water and then the beer.

Bring to a boil and then reduce heat to low. Add the meat back to the pot and allow to simmer gently for about (?)^{*} Ladle out hot with garnishes of raw chopped onion, chopped cilantro, chile powder, etc.

Serve with hot flour tortillas, buttermilk biscuits or your favorite cornbread.

^{*} missing text in newsletter

MARCELLA BEANS: MARCELLA HAZAN'S CANNELLINI SOUPS

If you really love beans, all you want in a bean soup is beans. There is very little liquid in this soup, but you can certainly add more broth or water if you prefer it soupier. At the other extreme, you can add less and make it thick enough to serve as a side dish to accompany a nice roast.

½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 teaspoon chopped garlic
2 cups cooked Marcella beans, drained (liquid reserved for another use)
Salt and freshly ground pepper
1 cup homemade beef broth
2 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
Toasted thick slices of crusty bread

Put the oil and garlic in a saucepan. Cook over moderate heat, stirring, until the garlic is a pale gold. Add the beans and a pinch of salt and pepper. Cover and cook gently for 5 minutes.

Transfer ½ cup of the beans to a food mill, add the broth and puree back into the pan. Simmer the soup for 5 minutes, then season with salt and pepper. Swirl in the parsley. Ladle the soup over the toasted bread and serve.

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TOMATILLO SALSA

Tomatillos, still in their husks
thick slices of onion
Serrano chiles
garlic cloves, unpeeled
Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio
lime
cilantro
salt

On a hot dry skillet, or a Mexican comal, place the garlic in the center and then add around it the onion slices, tomatillos and chiles. Pan roast until soft. Remove from heat as they finish and allow to sit in a bowl until cool to touch.

Peel the vegetables as needed and add them to a blender, along with the juice of the limes and some chopped cilantro. Add salt and oregano. Blend until just mixed. It should still have some texture and extended blending makes it too frothy. A food processor is better and a lava molcajete is best.

MIDNIGHT BLACK BEANS: EASY BLACK BEAN SALAD

Makes 6 servings

½ red onion, thinly sliced
2 tablespoons Stivalet Banana Vinegar (or another light, fruity vinegar)
2 cups small, sweet cherry tomatoes
1 teaspoon fine sea salt, more as needed
1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio
2 cups cooked Midnight black beans, drained (save the liquid for another use)
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil.

1. In a small bowl, combine onions and vinegar. Set aside to macerate while preparing rest of salad, or up to three hours.

2. Halve cherry tomatoes and place in a serving bowl. Sprinkle with 1 teaspoon salt. Add Midnight beans, onion mixture and olive oil. Toss gently to mix, adjust salt to taste, and serve.

RIO ZAPE BEANS: RIO ZAPE BEANS WITH CUMIN AND CHILE

Very early on, Deborah Madison was a huge supporter of what we're doing at Rancho Gordo. She even brought a film crew to interview me! She's also been kind enough to mention us in many of her books and her latest, a revision of her seminal *Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone*, (now *THE NEW VEGETARIAN COOKING FOR EVERYONE*, 2014 Ten Speed Press) has this recipe calling for Rio Zape beans, which are of course included in this box.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

1 ½ cups Rio Zape beans
2 tablespoons olive oil or vegetable oil
1 large onion, diced
1 heaping teaspoon roasted ground cumin
½ teaspoons ground coriander
¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
Pinch powdered cloves
2 teaspoons dried red chile flakes, or 3 chiles de arbol
2 sprigs oregano, leaves only, chopped, or 1 heaping teaspoon dried
1 big bushy sprig epazote, chopped, or 1 teaspoon dried
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 ½ teaspoons sea salt

Rinse the beans, then put them in a bowl and cover them with boiling water. Let them stand for a hour while you gather your ingredients together.

Heat the oil in a pressure cooker. Add the onions, spices, chile, and herbs, give a stir, and cook over medium-high heat to sear and give flavor to the onions, about 7 minutes. Add the garlic toward the end of that time.

Drain the soaked beans, add them to the pot with 5 cups water and the salt. Fasten the lid, bring the pressure to high, and maintain it for 20 minutes.

Quickly release the pressure and when it is down, undo the lid and check the beans. They may be done or close to done. Continue to simmer them until they are as soft as you like. Taste for salt and add more if needed.

©Deborah Madison and Ten Speed Press

YELLOW INDIAN WOMAN BEANS: BRAISED BEEF BRISKET WITH YELLOW INDIAN WOMAN BEANS

This recipe comes from Brian Streeter of Cakebread Cellars. He's one of my favorite people and he's an incredible cook. Support from the Cakebread family and staff are part of the reason for our success today!

1 tablespoon Olive Oil
2 lbs. Beef Brisket, cut into 4 pieces
2 Onions, diced
2 Carrots, diced
4 Ancho Peppers, re-hydrated, de-seeded, and chopped
2 tablespoons chopped Garlic
1 cup Tomatoes, seeded and diced
1 cup Red Wine
1 cup Rancho Gordo Yellow India Woman beans, soaked 6-8 hours
1 quart Beef broth
1 tablespoon Oregano, dried
2 tablespoons Cumin, ground
1 tablespoon Coriander, ground
1 tablespoon Smoked Paprika
*1 tablespoon Epazote**
Salt and Pepper
2 tablespoons Fresh Cilantro
4 tablespoons Sour cream

Pre-heat the oven to 350°F. Place a medium deep-sided sauté pan over medium heat and add 1 T. olive oil. Lightly season the brisket with salt and pepper, and sear on all sides in the sauté pan. Make sure that the meat is browned well on all sides. Remove the brisket from the pan and place on a plate to rest. Immediately add the onions and carrots to the sauté pan, stir well and reduce the heat to medium. After 5 minutes, add the anchos and garlic, stir well. Five minutes later, add the tomatoes and cook until dry or all excess liquid has evaporated. Add the wine and reduce by half. Add the beef broth and bring the ingredients to a slow boil. Place the brisket in the broth, covering it with liquid. Place a lid on the pan and place in the 350°F oven. Cook for 2 hours.

After two hours, remove the pan from the oven and add the beans, oregano, cumin, coriander, smoked paprika, epazote and stir well. If the liquid has been absorbed or the pan looks dry, add more broth or water until it has a soup consistency. Cover with the lid and place the pan back in the oven for 1 hour. Take the pan from the oven and remove the beef from the beans to a plate to rest. Taste the beans for seasoning; if needed, add salt and pepper. To serve, slice the brisket; ladle the beans into a bowl, top with the sliced brisket, and garnish with fresh cilantro and sour cream. Enjoy with a glass of Cakebread Cellars Syrah.

MIDNIGHT BLACK BEANS: MOROS Y CRISTIANOS

1 ½ cups white rice, cooked
2 cups Midnight Black Beans and some of their bean broth, cooked in the usual manner
4 slices lean bacon, chopped
1 white onion, diced
2 cloves garlic, smashed
1 green bell pepper, diced
1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo chile powder
1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo Mexican oregano

In a large sauce pan, gently cook the chopped bacon. When done, add the onion, garlic, bell pepper. Add a little oil if there isn't enough fat left over from the bacon. Cook gently until the peppers are soft. Add the chile powder and oregano and stir until incorporated. Add the cooked beans and gently stir until mixed. Allow to cook on low for 10 minutes. Adjust the salt if needed.

On each plate, arrange the rice (the Christians and the Moors (black beans), half and half. Serve immediately.

AYOCOTE NEGRO: AYOCOTE BEAN & MUSHROOM SALAD

Here's a winning recipe from Heidi Swanson of 101cookbooks.com. She's been a supporter of what we do almost from the start and I think you'll agree she's insanely talented. Do yourself a favor and pick up her books *Super Natural Cooking* or *Super Natural Everyday* after you check out her website and sign up for her newsletter. You won't be sorry, especially if you are a bean lover, as I suspect you are.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

SHALLOT VINAIGRETTE

1/3 cup minced shallots

1/3 cup red wine vinegar

1/4 teaspoon fine grain sea salt

4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

1/2 pound sliced mushrooms

1 / 4 teaspoon fine grain sea salt

4 cups cooked Ayocote Negro beans

3 celery stalks, chopped

1/3 cup sliced dried figs

1/3 cup chopped toasted almonds

*1 big handful of shredded radicchio and/or kale
micro greens or chopped chives to finish*

Combine the shallots with the red wine vinegar in a small bowl. Allow to sit for ten minutes or so. Whisk in the salt, and olive oil. Taste and adjust if needed. If your vinaigrette is too harsh, add a small amount of honey or a sprinkling of sugar to take the edge off.

In the meantime, heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the mushrooms, and salt, and cook, stirring a few times along the way, until the mushrooms take on color and release their water, about 4 minutes. Remove from heat, and gently fold the beans, celery, figs, and almonds into the skillet with the mushrooms. Pour the shallot vinaigrette over everything, add the shredded radicchio, and toss before serving.

Finish with micro greens or chives, if desired.
©Heidi Swanson

WILD RICE SALAD WITH XOXOCONSTLE AND PINE NUTS

Makes 4 to 6 servings

4 scallions

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil

Coarse salt and ground pepper

*1 1/4 cups Rancho Gordo wild rice**

*2 tablespoons Stivalet Banana Vinegar**

*1/4 cup Xoxoc dried xoconostle "Orejones Dulces"**

*1/4 cup Xoxoc dried xoconostle "Xoxocostle Dulce"**

1/2 cup pine nuts, toasted

**available from ranchogordo.com*

1. Thinly slice scallions, separating white and green parts. In a medium saucepan, heat olive oil over medium-high. Add scallion whites and cook, stirring often, until soft, 3 minutes; season with salt and pepper. Add wild rice and 2 cups of water and bring to a rapid boil. Reduce heat to a bare simmer, cover and let cook for an hour.

2. Meanwhile, cut up the dried xoconostle pieces into small bite-sized pieces. Kitchen scissors are idea. Then, in a small saucepan, combine vinegar, dried xoconostle, and 2 tablespoons water. Bring to a boil over medium-high. Reduce to a simmer and cook until vinegar is almost absorbed, 3 minutes. Transfer to a bowl and add rice mixture, scallion greens, and whole pine nuts. Stir well to combine and season to taste with salt and pepper.

Serve warm or at room temperature.

DOMINGO ROJO BEANS: DOMINGO ROJO BEAN, HERB AND WALNUT SALAD

Martha Rose Shulman is one of my favorite recipe developers. I've never met her but I have several of her books and although she tends to have a healthy slant on things, you'd never know it from the actual recipes. She makes good food and it's worth watching what she's up to next. Here's a recipe for red beans and it would be ideal for our Domingo Rojo beans in your shipment. I love the contrast of creamy beans with the pop of a good walnut flavor (you could also use pecans).

Makes 4 servings

2 cups cooked Domingo Rojo beans
¼ cup finely diced celery
¼ cup chopped cilantro
¼ cup chopped flat-leaf parsley
2 tablespoons chopped fresh tarragon
¼ cup chopped chives
Salt and freshly ground pepper
½ small red onion, cut in half lengthwise, then cut across the grain in thin slices (optional)
1/3 cup (1 ½ ounces) walnuts
1 large garlic clove, peeled, halved, green shoot removed
¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes or ½ to 1 teaspoon Aleppo pepper, to taste
1 tablespoon pomegranate molasses
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1 tablespoon walnut oil
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil

1. Place the beans in a bowl and toss with the celery and herbs. Season with salt and pepper.
2. If using the red onion, soak the onion in cold water for 5 minutes, then drain, rinse and drain again on paper towels. Add to the beans.
3. In a mortar and pestle, mash the garlic with a generous pinch of salt and the red pepper flakes or the Aleppo pepper. Add the walnuts and grind together until the walnuts are coarsely ground but still have some texture. Toss with the beans.
4. Whisk together the pomegranate molasses, the lemon juice and salt and pepper to taste. Whisk in the oils, toss with the beans, and let marinate 30 minutes. Serve.

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ALUBIA BLANCA: FAGIOLI ALL'UCCELLETTO

Adapted from *Heirloom Beans* by Steve Sando and Vanessa Barrington (Chronicle Books 2008)

Chef Marco Canora gave me this recipe years ago when he heard I was doing an heirloom bean book many years ago. He's been a great supporter of Rancho Gordo and heirloom beans and this delicious recipe makes it clear why the Florentines are known as "bean eaters" or *mangiafagioli*.

1 pound Rancho Gordo Alubia Blanca, (soaked from 4 to 8 hours)
1 carrot, quartered
1 celery stalk, cut in thirds
1 bouquet garni (sage, rosemary)
1 garlic head, halved
3.5 ounces extra virgin olive oil
2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
3 tablespoons fresh sage, chopped
10-12 ea oven-cured tomato halves (recipe follows)
1 cup reserved bean cooking liquid
Salt, black pepper
Fried sage to garnish

1. Place the soaked, drained beans in a heavy gauge pot, add the bouquet garni, vegetables and garlic. Cover with cold water, and slowly bring to a simmer.
2. When the beans are two-thirds of the way cooked, add three tablespoons of salt and continue cooking until tender. Allow the beans to cool in the simmering liquid.
3. In a sauté pan, gently heat the sliced garlic and chopped sage in the olive oil. When aromatic, add the chopped, cured tomatoes and cook 3–5 minutes, or just until they begin to breakdown.
4. Add the beans to the pan along with the 200 ml of cooking liquid. Continue cooking until the liquid has reduced and leaves a glossy shine on the beans. Season with salt and pepper and a generous drizzle of extra virgin olive oil.
5. Transfer to a serving dish, and finish with fried sage leaves and Rancho Gordo Flor de Sal.

OVEN-CURED TOMATOES

6 ripe roma tomatoes
1 teaspoon fresh parsley, chopped
Rancho Gordo sal de mar
Extra-virgin olive oil

1. Preheat the oven to 200 degrees F
2. Core and halve the tomatoes, taking care not to slice all the way through
3. Combine in a bowl with the parsley, sea salt and extra virgin olive oil. Toss to coat.
4. Lay in a single layer on a sheet pan with a roasting rack, and place in the middle of the oven.
5. Cook 10-12 hours, or until water content is evaporated and the flavor is concentrated.

GARBANZOS: PASTA CON CECE

When discussing pasta e fagioli, let's not forget our super fresh, dried garbanzos. So many recipes call for extended amounts of soaking and the addition of baking soda to help soften the beans. Your alternative is to buy new crop Rancho Gordo garbanzos. We rarely soak and they cook quickly, staying whole while melting in your mouth.

This dish combines chickpeas (ceci in Italian) with fresh spinach and Baia Pasta's Sardinian shapes.

2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Garbanzos
1 cup cooking liquid from the garbanzos
2 cloves garlic, minced
3 large sage leaves
3 tablespoons olive oil (plus more for serving)
4 ounces pancetta, in small strips
4 cups fresh spinach, stemmed and chopped
Salt
10 ounces Baia Pasta Paccheri (Pac-Macs)
Parmigiana Reggiano, grated, for serving

Heat olive oil in a large pot over a medium low heat. When the oil is hot, add the garlic and pancetta and gently cook for about 10 minutes. The pancetta will start to brown. Stir in the spinach and toss so that the hot oil covers each leaf. Cook for about 3 minutes, until the spinach wilts. Add the garbanzos, the cooking liquid and stir. Let simmer for about 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, cook the pasta (see pasta notes from Baia Pasta) in plenty of boiling salted water until al dente. Drain the pasta and then add to the garbanzo mixture. Test for salt.

Serve in bowls. Drizzle with olive oil and allow guests to add the Parmesan cheese.

Note on Baia Pasta:

I'd grown really bored of pasta until I had the pleasure of discovering Baia's durum wheat pasta. American wheat is among the best and I think you'll love this pasta as much as I do.

The shape is paccheri, or Pac-Macs as Baia calls them. They're perfect for pasta e fagioli and you're likely to find some beans inside the generous tubes. The rough texture helps the sauce to cling to the pasta and just writing about the pasta is making me hungry.

MIDNIGHT BLACK BEANS: POTAJE DE FRIJOL

Adapted from *The Cuban Table* by Ana Sofia Pelaez and Ellen Silverman (St Martin's Press 2014)

Makes 6 to 8 servings

FOR THE BEANS:

1 pound Rancho Gordo Midnight black beans, rinsed well
1 large green bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and diced
½ large white onion, diced
4 large garlic cloves, peeled and lightly crushed with the back of a knife
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1 dried bay leaf

FOR THE SOFRITO

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 large green bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and diced
½ large white onion, diced
3 large garlic cloves, peeled and finely minced
2 teaspoons kosher salt
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
½ teaspoon dried oregano
½ teaspoon ground cumin
½ cup dry white wine
¼ cup green olives scuffed with pimientos, thinly sliced
1 dried bay leaf
1 to 2 tablespoons sherry vinegar
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper
1 teaspoon sugar (optional)

Inspect the beans for pebbles and dirt and rinse well and place them in a 6-quart heavy pot with 10 cups of water. Add the next five ingredients to the beans and bring to a boil using the same soaking water. Lower the heat to medium and simmer the beans until just tender, checking regularly and skimming the foam that forms on the top, 45 to 60 minutes.

In the meantime, prepare the sofrito. Warm the olive oil in a 10-inch skillet over medium heat. Add the green pepper, onion, and garlic and sauté until the onion is soft and translucent, 6 to 8 minutes. Add the salt, black pepper, oregano, and cumin, and cook an additional 2 minutes.

Add the sofrito to the pot with the beans. Stir in the wine, olives, and bay leaf. Bring the beans to a fast simmer over medium heat. Reduce the heat to medium-low and cook, covered, for 45 minutes to 1 hour. Stir frequently, until the broth has thickened and the beans are completely cooked through. Add the vinegar, salt, and black pepper to taste. Remove the beans from the heat and add the sugar if using.

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DOMINGO ROJO BEANS: COCONUT BROWN RICE AND BEANS

Makes 4 servings as a side dish

¾ cup cold water

¾ cup unsweetened coconut milk

1-inch piece Rancho Gordo canela

3 cloves

1 cup Massa Organics Whole Grain Brown Rice

1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo Sal de Mar sea salt

1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger

1 cup cooked Rancho Gordo Domingo Rojo beans

Cilantro or watercress for garnish (optional)

In a pan, add the water, coconut milk, canela and cloves. Bring to a boil and then turn off heat, allowing it to steep for 20 minutes. Strain, reserving the liquid and discarding the solids. In a medium saucepan, add the rice, the reserved liquids, salt and ginger and bring to a full boil. Allow to boil for about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat to very low and cover.

Cook for 45 minutes, undisturbed, until the rice has absorbed the liquid. Turn off heat and allow to rest for 10 minutes.

Fluff cooked rice with a fork and gently add the beans and cilantro or watercress, if using.

GARBANZOS: TUNISIAN GARBANZOS AND CHARD

Here's a great chickpea recipe from the immortal Paula Wolfert, from her long out-of-print classic, *Mediterranean Cooking*. She's been such an influence on so many cooks, home and professional, and her books read like novels. I'm currently in love with her latest, *The Food of Morocco* (Ecco 2009).

Makes 4 servings

¾ pound Swiss chard leaves, stemmed, rinsed and torn into large pieces

2 large cloves garlic, peeled

½ teaspoon coarse salt

1 teaspoon ground coriander

1 small dried red chile

2 tablespoons olive oil

½ cup minced onion

2 teaspoons tomato paste

1 cup cooked Rancho Gordo Garbanzos (Chickpeas) with ¾ cup cooking liquid

1 lemon, cut in wedges, optional

1. In pot steam, parboil or microwave chard leaves until tender, about 5 minutes.

2. Set leaves in colander to drain.

3. Squeeze out excess moisture and shred coarsely.

4. Crush garlic in mortar with salt, coriander and chile until thick, crumbly paste forms.

5. Heat olive oil in 10-inch skillet and sauté onion until pale-golden.

6. Add garlic paste and tomato paste and stir into oil until sizzling.

7. Add chard, cooked chickpeas and cooking liquid and cook, stirring occasionally, 10 minutes.

8. Remove from heat and let stand until ready to serve. (Contents of skillet should be very moist but not soupy. For looser texture, stir in more chickpea cooking liquid.)

9. Serve warm, at room temperature or cold with lemon wedges.

Note: Broccoli rabe, dandelion leaves, mustard greens, kale or turnip tops may be substituted for Swiss chard. (I used red chard because that was what was in the store.) Discard any yellow or damaged leaves and cook like chard. Cooking time will vary.

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MIDNIGHT BLACK BEANS: CARIBBEAN BLACK BEAN SOUP WITH ROASTED GARLIC AND TOMATOES

This recipe is from my first book, *Heirloom Beans* (written with Vanessa Barrington). I love black beans and tomatoes and constantly come back to this recipe whenever I've made Midnights.

Makes 4 servings as a first course or as a light meal with accompaniments

½ pound Midnight Black beans, cooked in the Rancho Gordo manner, cooking liquid reserved
6 garlic cloves, separated but unpeeled
4 whole Roma tomatoes, canned if not in season
2 tablespoons olive oil, plus more for drizzling on vegetables
½ of a medium yellow onion, chopped (about 1 cup)
1 jalapeño chile with seeds, chopped
1 medium carrot, peeled and chopped (about ½ cup)
1 ½ teaspoons ground cumin (preferably toasted and fresh-ground)
1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio
½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
2 cups chicken or vegetable broth
Salt and freshly ground pepper
Sour cream for serving
Avocado for serving
Cilantro for serving

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.

Wrap the garlic cloves in aluminum foil and drizzle a little olive oil over them. Put the tomatoes in an oven-proof casserole, sprinkle them with a little salt and drizzle olive oil over them. Roast the tomatoes and garlic for about 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a soup pot over medium-high heat, warm the 2 tablespoons of olive oil. Add the onion, jalapeño, and carrot and cook, stirring, until fragrant and beginning to caramelize, about 10 minutes. Add the beans and their cooking liquid along with the cumin, oregano, cayenne pepper, and broth.

When the tomatoes and garlic are soft and roasted, add them to the pot along with the salt and pepper to taste. Bring to a simmer and cook until vegetables are soft and flavors are blended, about 15 minutes. Add more broth or water to reach your desired consistency.

Cool slightly and transfer about half of the beans to a blender. Blend, holding the lid on tightly with a towel to avoid having the beans bubble up and burn you. Return the blended beans to the pot, stir, and adjust seasonings. Garnish each serving with sour cream, cilantro and avocado slices.

ALUBIA BLANCA / MARCELLA BEANS: WHITE BEAN AND FARRO SOUP

This recipe is inspired by the Zuppa di Farro in Pamela Sheldon Jones' Cucina Povera. I've made it a little soupier. I've kept it a farro soup with beans instead of a bean soup with farro but I did reduce the amount of farro and increase the beans. I also left the beans whole. I'm sure you would mash them in Tuscany but I prefer the whole bean. Obviously, you can have fun experimenting but remember that the farro is very filling. You could always add some pancetta to the onions, garlic, carrot and celery but I don't think it needs it.

Makes 2 to 4 servings

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil, plus a little more for drizzling at the end

1 medium yellow onion, finely chopped

1 large or 2 small carrots, peeled and finely chopped

1 stalk celery, finely chopped

2 cloves garlic, minced

1 ½ cups whole farro

6 cups liquid (vegetable stock, chicken stock, bean broth or a combination)

1 cup cooked Rancho Gordo Alubia Blanca or Marcella beans

Sea salt and ground pepper

¼ cup chopped celery leaves (or flat-leaf parsley)

In a medium soup pot, heat the ¼ cup of olive oil over medium heat, then sauté the onion, carrots and celery until soft, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and farro and cook, stirring frequently, for 2 minutes. Slowly add the liquid, allowing the farro to absorb some. Cook, stirring frequently, until the farro is tender, about 30 minutes.

When the farro is cooked, add the beans. Season with salt and pepper. Serve in warmed bowls, garnished with the celery leaves or parsley and a drizzle of olive oil.

VAQUERO / EYE OF THE GOAT BEANS: CHARRO BEANS

Makes 4 servings

½ pound cooked Vaquero, San Franciscano or Eye of the Goat beans

4 slices bacon

½ onion, chopped

1 to 2 fresh serrano chiles, minced

1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio

1 red bell pepper, roasted, peeled, and chopped

½ can of beer

In a skillet over medium-low heat, cook the bacon until the fat has rendered. Remove the bacon and chop it into small pieces; set aside. Add the onion, serrano chiles, and oregano to the skillet and saute until softened and fragrant, 3 to 5 minutes. Stir in the roasted red bell pepper.

To the cooked beans, add the beer, the reserved bacon, and the sautéed vegetable mixture. Let simmer for a bit to blend the flavors.

Note: You can leave out the bacon if you like; saute the vegetables in about 2 tablespoons of olive oil instead of the bacon fat. Season the finished dish with salt and/or black pepper.

AMARANTH: AMARANTH BREAKFAST PUDDING

1 cup Rancho Gordo Amaranth

3 cups water

1 canela stick

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1 to 2 tablespoons honey or maple syrup

¼ cup milk or a non-dairy alternative

Suggested toppings: shredded coconut, raisins, dried cherries, sliced banana and/or chopped toasted nuts

Combine the amaranth and water in a saucepan and stir well. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to low and add the canela stick. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until the liquid has been absorbed and the amaranth is creamy, about 20 minutes.

Stir in the vanilla, sweetener, and milk and cook an additional 5 minutes. Remove the canela stick, and serve with your desired toppings.

FLAGEOLET BEANS: FLAGEOLET BEANS WITH LEMON DRESSING

Flageolet are an odd bean. Maybe a little more vegetable-like than most beans, but not like limas or peas. They still are a bean. They have a thick skin but somehow they are delicate at the same time. They're also extremely mild so they take on whatever flavors you can give them.

I cooked these simply with a bay leaf and salt once they started to get soft. Conventional wisdom says to dress them while they're still warm but I had a hunch that I wanted to toss them with a vinaigrette after they cooled. I wanted two distinct flavors: beans and lemons, not lemony beans. Don't forget to stir in some chopped fresh parsley at the end. It's not just for color.

Makes 2 to 4 servings as a side

1 garlic dove

Salt to taste

½ teaspoons fresh thyme

3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

About ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

*3 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Flageolet beans,
drained and cooled*

Chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley for garnish

To make the vinaigrette, using a mortar and pestle, pound the garlic dove with the salt and thyme, Add the lemon juice. Once this is all mashed well, drizzle in extra virgin olive oil and mix until the sauce is emulsified. (Of course you can do this in a blender, food processor or just whisk the ingredients but I prefer the drama of a mortar and pestle.) Adjust the oil-to-acid ratio as you see fit but this should be a bright dish.

Transfer the beans to a serving bowl and gently mix with the vinaigrette. Add chopped parsley and serve.

GARBANZO BEANS: PASTA CON CECI

This recipe was inspired by one in the book *Fagioli: The Bean Cuisine of Italy* by Judith Barrett (Rodale Publishing, 2004).

Makes 4 servings

3 tablespoons olive oil, plus more for serving

2 cloves garlic, minced

4 ounces pancetta, cut into small strips

4 cups fresh spinach, stemmed and chopped

*2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Garbanzo beans,
plus 1 cup cooking liquid from the Garbanzos*

3 large sage leaves, minced

Salt

*10 ounces Baia Pasta Sardinians (Durum or Spelt)
or other small, textured pasta*

Grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese for serving

Heat olive oil in a large pot over a medium-low heat. When the oil is hot, add the garlic and pancetta and cook gently for about 10 minutes. The pancetta will start to brown. Stir in the spinach and toss so that the hot oil covers each leaf. Cook until the spinach wilts, about 3 minutes. Add the Garbanzos, the cooking liquid, and the sage to the pot and stir well. Let simmer for about 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, cook the pasta according to the package directions. Drain the pasta and then add to the Garbanzo mixture. Test for salt.

Serve in bowls. Drizzle with olive oil and allow guests to add the Parmesan cheese.

MARCELLA / ROYAL CORONA / MAYOCOPA: HEIRLOOM BEANS WITH PARSLEY-SAGE SALSA VERDE

Makes 2 servings

1 small garlic clove

1 teaspoon salt

¾ cup fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves

¼ cup fresh sage leaves

About ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

Fresh lemon juice to taste

Freshly ground pepper

*2-3 cups cooked and drained Rancho Gordo
heirloom beans such as Royal Corona, Marcella, or
Mayocoba*

*Grated Parmesan cheese for topping
(optional)*

To make the salsa verde, on a cutting board, mince the garlic and salt to make a paste. Add the parsley and sage and mince together with the garlic-salt paste. Transfer to a bowl and whisk in olive oil, lemon juice and ground pepper to taste. (You can also do this in a mortar or a food processor.)

Drizzle the sauce over the beans, to taste. Top with grated Parmesan, if desired. Save extra salsa verde for eggs, pasta, or roasted vegetables.

CRANBERRY BEANS: SHRIMP AND BEAN SOUP

Makes 4 to 6 servings

1 small onion, finely chopped
3 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 teaspoon cumin, ground
1 teaspoon Mexican oregano
1 serrano chile, chopped fine, seeds and veins removed if you want a mild soup
Salt to taste
2 cups cooked Cranberry or Pinto beans, and their cooking liquid
3 cups chicken broth
1 can chopped tomatoes
1 pound peeled and deveined shrimp
1 tablespoon butter
Chopped fresh cilantro for garnish (optional)

In a pot over medium-low heat, saute the onion and garlic in the olive oil. Add the cumin, oregano, chile and salt and allow to soften, about 10 minutes. (You can omit the chile if you don't like spicy food, or remove the seeds if you want to tone down the heat.)

Add the beans and their liquid, the broth, and the tomatoes and cook until the flavors have blended, about 20 minutes. Puree all the ingredients until smooth, either with an immersion blender or in batches in a blender. Taste and correct the seasoning. Return the soup to the pot if you used a blender.

When you're about ready to serve, warm the soup over medium heat. Stir in the shrimp and allow to cook through, 3 to 5 minutes. Stir in the butter and serve. Garnish with cilantro, if desired.

AZUFRADO BEANS: GRILLED SHRIMP WITH AZUFRADO BEANS, SAUSAGE AND ARUGULA

Makes 4 servings

3 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Azufrado beans (or a firm white bean), plus ½ cup bean-cooking liquid
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra for grilling
6 ounces sausage, casings removed
2-3 garlic cloves, chopped fine
1 yellow onion, diced fine
1 carrot, diced fine
2 small celery stalks, diced fine
1 tablespoon butter
1 cup baby arugula
Salt and pepper to taste
1 pound medium gulf white shrimp, shelled and deveined

In a sauté pan over medium heat, cook the sausage in 1 tablespoon of oil until sausage is rendered.

Add the garlic, onion, carrot, and celery and cook until tender. Add the cooked beans and the ½ cup cooking liquid and cook until the liquid reduces into a thick sauce, about 5 minutes. Add the butter and remove from heat. When the butter is melted, gently stir in the arugula.

Meanwhile, salt and pepper the shrimp and dribble with olive oil. Grill over high heat for about 2 minutes per side. Place the bean-and-sausage mixture in a bowl and top with grilled shrimp (or divide evenly among serving plates).

SPELT: BEAN, SPELT AND CELERY SALAD

Adapted from this recipe by Heidi Swanson on: www.101cook-books.com/archives/parmesan-celery-salad-recipe.html

Makes 4 servings

1 cup Rancho Gordo Spelt
8 large celery stalks, rinsed and stripped of strings
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
3 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
Finely grated lemon zest from 1 lemon
½ cup freshly grated Pecorino or Parmesan cheese, plus more for topping
About 2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Flageolet, Alubia Blanca, or Garbanzo beans
Salt and pepper to taste

In a pot bring 3 cups water to a boil. Add the spelt; boil for 5 minutes, then reduce the heat to low, cover and cook until the spelt is cooked through but still al dente, 30-50 minutes. Drain the spelt and reserve. (You can reserve any leftover liquid for broth.)

Slice the celery stalks quite thinly. Then, in a small bowl, make a thick dressing with the olive oil, lemon juice and zest, and cheese. Set aside.

In a large bowl toss the beans and spelt with the dressing. When well combined, add the celery. Toss once more. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Top with more olive oil, lemon juice and/or cheese, if you like.

FLAGEOLET BEANS: FLAGEOLET BEANS WITH LEMON DRESSING

Makes 2 to 4 servings as a side

*1 garlic clove
Salt to taste
1 1/2 teaspoons fresh thyme
3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
About 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
3 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Flageolet beans,
drained and cooled
Chopped fresh flat-leaf parley for garnish*

To make the vinaigrette, using a mortar and pestle, pound the garlic clove with the salt and thyme. Add the lemon juice. Once this is all mashed well, drizzle in extra virgin olive oil and mix until the sauce is emulsified. (Of course you can do this in a blender, food processor or just whisk the ingredients but I prefer the drama of a mortar and pestle.) Adjust the oil-to-acid ratio as you see fit but this should be a bright dish.

Transfer the beans to a serving bowl and gently mix with the vinaigrette. Add chopped parsley and serve.

SCARLET RUNNER BEANS: RUNNER BEAN AND RAW ASPARAGUS SALAD

Inspired by a recipe in the wonderful *Six Seasons* cookbook (Artisan, 2017). This has been our cooking bible around Rancho Gordo for the past year. We basically just added beans to his delicious asparagus salad.

Makes 2 to 4 servings

*1/3 cup dried breadcrumbs
1/2 cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
1/2 cup chopped lightly toasted black walnuts
1 teaspoon grated lemon zest
1/4 cup chopped mint leaves
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 pound asparagus, trimmed
1 cup cooked Rancho Gordo Scarlet Runner or
Yellow Indian Woman beans
About 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
Extra-virgin olive oil*

In a large serving bowl, toss the bread crumbs, cheese, walnuts, lemon zest, mint leaves, salt and pepper. Mix well.

Cut the asparagus on a sharp angle into very thin slices. In another bowl, combine the asparagus with the beans, the lemon juice and some olive oil. Just before serving, add the asparagus-bean mixture to the serving bowl and toss well. Check for seasoning, adding more olive oil, lemon or salt as needed.

BLACK LENTILS: LENTILS FOLDED INTO YOGURT, SPINACH AND BASIL

Peter Miller's *Lunch at the Shop: The Art and Practice of the Midday Meal* is a favorite book of mine. Peter has an architectural bookstore in Seattle and he knows the value of a good meal. A typical workday is no excuse to eat poorly. Peter is also "bean people" and has many recipes taking advantage of good legumes. He was quick to say yes when I asked him if he would share his lentil recipe from the book

Makes 4 servings

½ cup pine nuts or chopped walnuts
2 cups baby spinach
1 cup fresh basil leaves
1 cup cooked Rancho Gordo black lentils (see below)
2 tablespoons fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves, chopped
1 clove garlic, finely chopped
1 ½ lemons
1 cup Greek yogurt
¼ cup olive oil
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
½ cup Parmesan cheese, sliced

Heat a small sauté pan over medium heat. Add the pine nuts or walnuts and cook until lightly toasted, 5 to 7 minutes. Lay them out on a wooden cutting board to cool, then chop them roughly to the size of the lentils.

If your knife is sharp enough to slice the spinach and basil leaves without bruising them, gently cut them into bite-size pieces. Otherwise, tear them by hand.

Place the lentils in a bowl and mix in the spinach, basil, parsley, and garlic. Squeeze the juice of one lemon into the lentils, mix, and then fold in the yogurt. Mix again, then slowly pour in the oil, stirring, as you do, to combine. At this point, taste the mixture, and season with salt and 2 good grindings of pepper. Finally, fold the roasted nuts into the dish, and finish with a drizzle of oil. The dish is now ready to serve.

The lentils and greens will keep in an airtight jar or container in the refrigerator for at least 3 days.

Before serving, bring the lentils and greens close to room temperature. They can go on a slice of buttered (and perhaps grilled) bread, or on a lettuce leaf as a salad. Top the lentils with a squeeze of lemon juice, some Parmesan, and a final grind of fresh pepper.

MARK MILLER ON LENTILS

This is the simplest way of cooking lentils. It can be started before you are even certain how you will use them.

Makes 4 servings as entree

1 cup lentils, soaked
1 bay leaf or sprig of fresh thyme
1 teaspoon salt

Place the lentils in a small soup pot and add the bay leaf or thyme sprig and enough cold water to cover the lentils by 1 inch. Do not salt the water. Bring the water to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring so the lentils stay loose. Reduce the heat to low to maintain a gentle the lentils are soft but before they get too mushy.

Remove and discard the bay leaf or thyme sprig. Drain the lentils in a colander, and rinse them under cool water. Put them in a bowl, add salt, and let cool. Store them in an airtight container in the refrigerator, to be used later to create a variety of dishes. They will keep for 5 to 7 days.

Variation: For a quick side dish put the still-warm lentils into small bowl. Mix 1 clove of minced garlic and a handful of chopped parsley with the lentils until well-combined. Taste for salt, add a good drizzle of oil and some Parmesan, and serve. If there is any left over, it will be just as good the next day, served at room temperature.

LUCKY BLACK EYED PEAS: BLACK EYED PEA STEW

Makes 4 to 6 servings

1 pound Rancho Gordo Super Lucky Black Eyed Peas, cleaned and rinsed

¼ pound (4 or pieces) bacon, chopped into rough squares

2 stalks celery, chopped

2 small carrots, peeled and chopped

2 small to medium white onions, chopped

2 to 3 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed

1 bay leaf

2 tablespoons tomato paste

½ cup whole canned tomatoes with some juice, roughly chopped

Salt

Pepper

In a soup pot, gently cook the bacon on medium heat, stirring occasionally, until it's just done, about 10 minutes. With a slotted spoon, remove the bacon pieces and let them rest on a paper towel.

In the remaining bacon fat, sauté the celery, onion, carrot and garlic on medium heat until soft, stirring occasionally, about 15 minutes. When the vegetables are soft, add the Black Eyed Peas. Add enough water to cover the peas by about an inch. Stir, add the bay leaf and then raise the heat to high and bring the contents to a rapid boil. Keep boiling, partially covered, for 15 minutes. Add 1 tablespoon salt and adjust the water so that the peas are again covered by about an inch. Reduce to a gentle simmer until the peas are soft, about 35 minutes.

Add the tomatoes and the tomato paste. Stir and then gently heat through, about 15 minutes on medium heat. Add pepper to taste and the reserved bacon pieces. Adjust seasonings and serve.

GARBANZO BEANS: SPICY THAI CHICKPEA SALAD

From the blog *The People's Plate* (<https://onrhepeoplesplate.com>). This recipe serves from 6 to 8, so cut it down proportionally if you're not cooking for a crowd.

Makes 6 to 8 servings

DRESSING:

6 tablespoons lemon juice
¼ cup vegan fish sauce
2 tablespoons sesame seeds, toasted
2 teaspoons sugar
2 teaspoons minced fresh ginger
1 teaspoon crushed red pepper

SALAD:

4 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Garbanzo beans
2 red bell peppers, diced
½ small red onion, diced
1 cup diced celery (about 4 medium stalks)
1 cup diced cucumber (about half a medium cucumber)
½ cup cilantro, minced
8 cups mixed salad greens

Mix all dressing ingredients in a small bowl or jar. Place garbanzo in a medium bowl and cover in dressing. Let sit for at least 10 minutes. Meanwhile, prepare the vegetables. Mix all green and vegetables together in a large salad bowl. Once chickpeas have marinated, top the green mixture with the chickpeas and dressing, if serving immediately. If refrigerating for later, store the dressing/chickpeas separately from the greens.

VAQUERO BEANS: CHARRO BEANS

Makes 4 servings

3 tablespoons olive oil
1 onion, chopped
5 garlic cloves, chopped
1 bay leaf
½ pound Rancho Gordo Vaquero, Pinto, or Eye of the Goat beans
¼ pound bacon, chopped
¼ pound loose Mexican chorizo
½ of a bell pepper (any color), chopped
1 small jalapeno, seeded and minced
1 cup chopped whole canned tomatoes
1 tablespoon Rancho Gordo Mexican Oregano
Salt to taste

In a large pot over medium-low heat, warm the olive oil. Add half of the onion and one of the chopped garlic cloves and cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the bay leaf and beans and enough water to cover the bean by about 2 inches. Raise the heat and bring to a boil for 10 minutes, then reduce the heat and simmer until the beans are tender. If the liquid starts getting low, add more boiling water. Charro beans are soupy!

Warm a skillet over medium-low heat, then add the bacon and chorizo and cook, stirring, until lightly browned and the fat has rendered, about 10 minutes. Add the remaining onion and garlic along with the bell pepper, jalapeno, tomatoes, and Mexican oregano. Stir well and cook until the vegetables have softened, about 5 minutes.

Transfer the meat-vegetable mixture to the pot of bean and stir well to combine. Season to taste with salt and serve.

MOGETTE DE VENDÉE / ALUBIA BLANCA: BUTTERED GARLIC TOASTS WITH MOGETTE DE VENDÉE BEANS AND CRISPY PORK

From *French Beans: Exploring the Bean Cuisine of France* by Georgeanne Brennan

These toasts hail from the Vendée region of west-central France, where the small, white Mogette bean has been grown for generations and is still used to make this traditional appetizer. In olden days, beans were simmered in pots set in or near the chimney; no doubt they were scooped from the pot and crushed directly onto toasts grilled in the same fireplace. The pork bits might have been trimmings from jambon cru, a local version of prosciutto that was once a feature of every French farmstead. The toasts can be prepared in the oven, but grilling adds that bit of smoky, charred flavor reminiscent of the chimney.

If you're not eating meat, consider adding some mushrooms sautéed with fresh herbs to replace the prosciutto.

Makes about 20 small toasts — serves 6

4 tablespoons unsalted butter, plus more for spreading

½ of an onion, minced

½ pound Mogette de Vendée beans (or other small white beans, such as Alubia Blanca or Cannellini), picked over and soaked

1 teaspoon sea salt

½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1 baguette or sweet batarde, cut into ½-inch diagonal slices

4 to 5 garlic cloves, peeled or unpeeled

3 ounces jambon cru or prosciutto, shredded, fried, and chopped

In a large saucepan over medium heat, melt the 4 tablespoons butter. When it foams, add the onion; sauté until translucent, about 2 minutes. Drain beans, reserving their soaking liquid, then add them to the pan, stirring for a few minutes. Add enough reserved liquid to cover beans by about 3 inches, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low; cover and cook for 30 minutes. Add salt and pepper; continue to cook until beans are tender, about another hour. Taste and adjust seasoning, as desired.

Prepare a grill: Build a wood or charcoal fire, preheat a gas grill, or place a stove-top grill pan over medium-high heat. Grill bread about 2 minutes per side or until slightly dry. Rub one side of each toast with garlic, then spread with remaining butter.

Drain beans and pile some on each toast, mashing with a fork. Sprinkle with a little crispy prosciutto and serve immediately.

Alternatively, let your guests prepare their own canapés: Set the table with the drained beans, a bowl of garlic cloves, another of prosciutto, a platter of grilled toasts, and a plate of butter. It's quite convivial!

CALIFORNIA WILD RICE: CREAMY MUSHROOM AND WILD RICE SOUP

Yellow Eyes are a classic New England bean and regionally, they are the preferred variety for Baked Beans. There are countless recipes for the dish. This is a vegetarian version of New England Baked Beans.

Makes 4 servings

¾ cup wild rice, rinsed
4 tablespoons butter or olive oil
2 leeks, rinsed and chopped
1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves
4 garlic cloves, minced
¾ pound fresh mushrooms, sliced
1 small sweet potato, peeled and cubed
1 cup dry white wine
Chicken or vegetable stock as needed
1 ½ cups shredded, cooked chicken (optional)
¼ cup flour or cornstarch
1 cup half-and-half
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
Grated zest of 1 lemon

In a pot, combine wild rice with 4 cups water and ½ teaspoon salt. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce heat to medium-low and simmer until the rice is tender, about 45 minutes. Strain wild rice through a fine-mesh strainer set over a bowl. Reserve broth and wild rice.

In a Dutch oven or pot over medium-low heat, warm the butter or oil. Add leeks; saute 5 minutes. Add thyme, garlic, mushrooms, and sweet potato and sauté for another 5 minutes. Increase heat to medium-high and stir in white wine, scraping up any clinging vegetable bits. Cook until wine reduces, about 2 minutes.

Measure the reserved wild rice broth and add enough water or stock to equal 4 cups liquid. Add liquid to pot and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, and simmer until vegetables are tender, about 20 minutes. Stir in reserved wild rice and chicken, if using.

In a small bowl, mix together flour and half-and-half. Add this mixture to the soup and stir to combine. Season with salt and pepper and stir in lemon zest.

FRENCH GREEN LENTILS: LENTIL AND GREEN BEAN STEW

This easy recipe is adapted from a version by Spanish chef Nieves Barragan Mohacho. Her Sabor restaurant is in London. I'm hoping you have some of the Spanish pimentón that we now carry on our website.

For a lot of us, we're seeing the first green beans of the year coming into the markets. If you're not so lucky frozen green beans, especially the very thin French kind are fine. If you are feeling daring and brave, experimenting by adding a teaspoon of your new Wild Mountain Cumin would be my choice for adventure.

Prep 5 min

Cook 40 min

Makes 4 to 6 servings

1 pound new potatoes, scrubbed

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

4 garlic cloves, peeled and finely sliced

½ pound green beans, trimmed

1 tbsp Burlap & Barrel Smoked Spanish Pimentón

½ pound Rancho Gordo French Green lentils

2 teaspoons dried thyme

2 bay leaves, preferably fresh

Salt and pepper

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil; add the potatoes and cook until soft, 10 to 12 minutes. Let cool slightly, then cut each potato in half.

Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium heat and cook the potato halves until golden, 8 to 10 minutes. Add the garlic and cook until lightly golden and fragrant, 1 to 2 minutes. Add the green beans and cook, stirring often, until softened, 2 to 3 minutes.

Stir in the pimentón. Add the lentils plus enough water to cover them by 1 inch, then add the thyme and bay leaves. Simmer over medium-low heat until the lentils are soft, about 15 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Spoon into bowls and serve hot.

Nieves Barragan Mohacho is chef director of Sabor, London WI.

AYOCOTE BLANCO / ROYAL CORONA: RED CABBAGE, SAUSAGE AND WHITE BEAN SOUP

This adapted Rachel Roddy recipe from *The Guardian* is a perfect way to enjoy your new big white beans in this shipment. Roddy's original recipe contained canned beans. It's like a knife to the heart! We know the advantages of cooking the beans ourselves, especially this month with a choice of Ayocote Blancos or Royal Coronas. Your beans should be completely cooked before tossing them with wine. Wine is an acid that will prevent beans from softening.

Makes 6 servings

2 ounces pancetta, diced
4 tbsp olive oil
1 medium onion, peeled and chopped
1 celery stalk, chopped
1 garlic clove, peeled and finely chopped
Half of a medium red cabbage, shredded
1 glass red wine
1 14.5-ounce can plum tomatoes, chopped
4 cups water (use some or all of the bean broth, if you like)
3 pork sausages
4 cups cooked Ayocote Blanco or Royal Corona beans
Salt and black pepper

TO SERVE

Extra-virgin olive oil
1 sprig rosemary, minced
5 sage leaves, minced

In a large, heavy-based pan over medium-low heat, fry the pancetta in the olive oil. After a minute or so, add the onion and celery and fry until the onion is translucent, about 5 minutes.

Add the garlic and cook for a minute, then add the red cabbage and stir until it glistens with oil. Raise the heat a bit, add the wine, then, after a few minutes, the tomatoes and water. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer; cover and cook for 2 hours.

In the last 20 minutes, remove the casings from the sausages, crumble the meat into a frying pan, and fry until browned, about 5 minutes.

Once brown, add the meat to the soup, along with the beans. (You can puree half the beans before adding them to the soup, if you wish.) Simmer for the final 15 minutes, adding salt and pepper as needed.

If you like, finish by frying the rosemary and sage in a generous amount of olive oil, over medium-low heat, until the oil is infused with flavor. Drizzle a little of the herb oil over each serving.

CHRISTMAS LIMA: HOMINY AND CHARD IN TOMATO SAUCE

from *The Rancho Gordo Pozole Book* (Rancho Gordo Press, 2019)

Makes 8 to 10 servings

FOR THE TOMATO SAUCE:

3 white (or yellow) onion slices with the skins on
2 cloves garlic, unpeeled
1 stick Rancho Gordo canela (true cinnamon)
1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio
3 or 4 whole peeled tomatoes, canned, and about
¼ cup of their juice
Chicken or vegetable stock, if needed
2 tablespoons olive oil or manteca (lard)
Salt to taste

FOR THE CORN:

½ pound dried prepared hominy (3-4 cups cooked)
½ onion

FOR THE CHARD:

1 bunch green or red chard, leaves separated from
the stalks
½ white onion, chopped
1 serrano or jalapeno pepper, minced
2 tablespoons olive oil
Water, corn cooking water or bean broth,
as needed

For the tomato sauce:

Roast the onion slices and garlic until soft, over medium heat, for about 10 minutes, using a carnal or cast iron skillet. Remove from heat and allow to cool to the touch. Roast the canela stick, turning often, for about 2 minutes. The stick should give off its aroma.

Peel the onions and garlic skins.

In a blender, add the tomatoes, tomato juice, Oregano Indio, onion and garlic. Add a little chicken or vegetable stock if the blades get stuck. Blend until smooth.

In a large pan, heat olive oil or manteca (lard) over medium heat and then “fry” the tomato mixture with the canela, stirring constantly. Raise heat to medium-high for a gentle simmer and keep stirring until the mixture is a thick sauce, about 15 minutes. Season with salt. Remove the canela stick.

Use as is or thin with more stock.

For the corn:

Soak the prepared hominy in water, covered by two inches, from 6 to 8 hours.

In a large stockpot, add the corn, soaking water and additional water, if needed, to cover the hominy by about 2 inches. Add half an onion and then bring to a boil on high heat. Allow the pot to boil for 10 minutes and then reduce the heat to medium-low, and continue cooking with a gentle simmer until the prepared hominy is cooked, for about an hour and a half. You can use a lid, placed ajar to regulate the heat, but don't cover completely or you might end up with gummy corn. Check occasionally for enough liquid to cover the grain by about an inch, adding hot water from a kettle as needed. The corn is done when it's not chalky. It should have some texture. Strain the corn from the cooking water, reserving at least 2 cups of the liquid.

For the chard:

Chop the chard stalks into small pieces. Fry them over medium heat in a large pan in the olive oil with the onion and chile until soft, about 10 minutes. Meanwhile, bunch up the chard leaves and slice into ribbons. Add the chard to the hot pan and stir well so that the hot oil and onion mixture covers all the chard. Add a small amount of liquid (water, corn cooking water or bean broth) and let the chard cook down, over medium heat, for about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

To finish the dish:

For each serving, ladle a portion of hominy into a bowl, cover with the tomato sauce and then toss with the chard. Repeat for each guest.

CABALLERO BEANS: CABALLERO BEANS WITH WILD MUSHROOMS

Makes 2 servings

*8 oz wild mushrooms, wiped with a damp towel
and cut into bite-size pieces*

1 tablespoon butter

2 tablespoons olive oil

3 cloves garlic, minced

1 sprig of fresh thyme

*2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Caballero beans,
with some broth, warmed*

Salt and freshly ground pepper

In a saute pan over medium-low heat, warm the butter and oil. Add the minced garlic, mushrooms, and thyme and cook, stirring, until the mushrooms begin to soften and release their juices, 8 to 10 minutes or so.

Divide the warm beans among bowls. Remove the thyme from the mushrooms, and ladle them into the waiting bowls of beans. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Transition into autumn with ease.

CABALLERO BEANS: BLACK EYED PEA STEW

Makes 4 to 6 servings

*1 pound Rancho Gordo Black Eyed Peas, cleaned
and rinsed*

*¼ pound (4 or 5 pieces) bacon, chopped into rough
squares*

2 stalks celery, chopped

2 small carrots, peeled and chopped

2 small to medium white onions, chopped

2 to 3 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed

1 bay leaf

2 tablespoons tomato paste

*½ cup whole canned tomatoes with some juice,
roughly chopped*

Salt and freshly ground pepper

In a soup pot, gently cook the bacon over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until it's just done, about 10 minutes. With a slotted spoon, remove the bacon pieces and let them rest on a paper towel.

In the remaining bacon fat, saute the celery, onion, carrot and garlic on medium heat until soft, stirring occasionally, about 15 minutes. When the vegetables are soft, add the Black Eyed Peas. Add enough water to cover the peas by about an inch. Stir, add the bay leaf and then raise the heat to high and bring the contents to a rapid boil. Keep boiling, partially covered, for 15 minutes. Add 1 tablespoon salt and adjust the water so that the peas are again covered by about an inch. Reduce to a gentle simmer until the peas are soft, about 35 minutes.

Add the tomatoes and the tomato paste. Stir and then gently heat through, about 15 minutes on medium heat. Add pepper to taste and the reserved bacon pieces. Adjust seasonings and serve.

CASSOULET BEANS: CASSOULET BEANS WITH CAULIFLOWER

Makes 4 to 6 servings

1 large head of cauliflower, broken into florets and leaves reserved

4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil (divided use

Salt and freshly ground pepper

5 cloves garlic, sliced

5 tablespoons drained capers

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

1 teaspoon sweet pimentón (sweet smoked paprika)

3 ½ tablespoons Jerez sherry vinegar

1 ½ cups cooked Rancho Gordo Cassoulet or Alubia Blanca beans

Chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

Preheat the oven to 450F.

In a large bowl, toss the cauliflower pieces with 2 tablespoons of the olive oil, a pinch of salt and some cracked pepper. Toss well. Transfer the cauliflower to a large baking sheet and roast in the oven for 10 minutes. Shake the pan to loosen and move the cauliflower and cook for another 6 to 8 minutes. Set aside.

Pour the remaining 2 tablespoons oil into a cold frying pan, add the reserved cauliflower leaves, sliced garlic, capers and cumin seeds and then turn the heat to high. When the garlic turns golden, add the pimentón and then the sherry vinegar. Cook for 30 seconds to reduce the liquid a bit. Reduce the heat to medium and add the beans; cook for about 4 minutes, until the beans are warmed through. Add the roasted cauliflower. Make sure the ingredients are well mixed, then sprinkle with parsley and serve.

CRANBERRY BEAN: CRANBERRY BEANS WITH DANDELION GREENS

Makes 2 servings as entree or 4 as a side dish

1 tablespoon olive oil, plus more for drizzling

½ cup loose Italian sausage, broken up into small bits

½ of an onion, chopped fine

2 cloves garlic, minced

½ cup canned roasted tomatoes

½ cup bean-cooking liquid or chicken stock

1 ½ cups cooked Rancho Gordo Cranberry or Pinto beans

4 leaves fresh sage, minced

½ bunch dandelion greens, roughly chopped

Salt and freshly ground pepper

In a large pan, warm the olive oil over medium-low heat. Add the sausage, onion, and garlic and cook, breaking up the sausage pieces so that they are very small. When the sausage is cooked through, add the tomatoes and bean-cooking liquid. Cook until the tomatoes are warmed through, about 5 minutes.

Add the beans, sage, and dandelions. Continue to cook until simmering. Season with salt and pepper. Drizzle a little olive oil over the dish before serving.

MIDNIGHT BLACK BEANS: MIDNIGHT BLACK BEAN SALAD WITH RADISHES, CELERY, AND ONION

Makes 4 servings

1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio or Mexican Oregano
2 tablespoons Rancho Gordo Pineapple Vinegar (or white wine vinegar)
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 ½ cups cooked Rancho Gordo Midnight Black beans, drained
4 large radishes, thinly sliced with a mandoline
1 celery stalk, thinly sliced with a mandoline
½ of a small red onion, thinly sliced with a mandoline
Handful of flat-leaf parsley, chopped
¼ cup crumbled goat cheese

In a serving bowl, whisk together the salt, oregano, vinegar, and olive oil.

Add the beans, radishes, celery, onion, and parsley; toss to combine. Taste and adjust seasoning. Sprinkle with crumbled goat cheese and serve.

BAKED BEANS FROM A FELLOW BEAN CLUB MEMBER

Bean aficionado Trish Hooper sent us this abridged set of instructions for her baked beans. Enjoy and improvise for your own version:

I used 1# beans. Sautéed half onion, carrot, celery, 4 cloves all chopped in EVO, added soaked beans, dash Mountain Cumin, sage, and about 4 C liquid, ¼ c EVO. Set oven at 350, covered pot and in oven. Stirred and checked at 45 minutes. Uncovered at 1 hrs., 15 min to develop a slight surface crust.

CRANBERRY BEANS: FAGIOLI ALLA GLORIA

Makes 4 servings as a side dish

2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Cranberry beans, drained
1 shallot, very thinly sliced
1 fennel bulb, trimmed and cored, sliced very thin on a mandoline (fronds reserved for garnish)
2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
A generous drizzle of the best extra-virgin olive oil
Champagne vinegar
Zest and juice of 1 Meyer lemon
Salt and freshly ground pepper
Toasted pumpkin seeds for garnish

In a serving bowl, combine the beans, shallot, fennel, garlic, olive oil, vinegar, lemon juice, and zest. Gently mix the ingredients to combine. Add salt and pepper to taste.

If possible, let sit for an hour or two before serving to let the flavors mingle. Sprinkle with pumpkin seeds just before serving.

MARCELLA BEAN: CANNELLINI WITH TOMATOES AND SAGE (FAGIOLI ALL'UCCELLETTO)

In Florence, small game birds, uccelletti, are prepared with tomato and sage and for this recipe, the beans are similarly cooked. This version comes from Chef Marco Canora of Hearth restaurant in New York. Marco has been an heirloom bean (and Rancho Gordo) enthusiast for years.

Makes 6 servings

FOR THE TOMATOES:

*6 plum tomatoes
1 tablespoon chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
3 to 4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
Salt*

FOR THE BEANS:

*1 pound Rancho Gordo Marcella beans
1 medium carrot, peeled and quartered
1 celery stalk, cut into thirds
1 garlic head, halved
3 sage sprigs
3 rosemary sprigs*

TO FINISH:

*¼ cup safflower or grapeseed oil for frying
20 fresh sage leaves
½ cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus oil for drizzling
2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
3 tablespoons chopped fresh sage
Salt and freshly ground black pepper*

To make the tomatoes:

Preheat the oven to 200 degrees F. Core the tomatoes. Slice each tomato nearly in half lengthwise, taking care not to cut all the way through so the halves remain attached. In a medium bowl, combine the tomatoes, parsley, extra-virgin olive oil, and salt to taste. Toss to coat. Arrange the tomatoes, cut side down, in a single layer on a rack set over a baking sheet and set on the middle rack of the oven. Bake until the liquid is evaporated and the tomatoes are shriveled and reduced in size, but not completely dry, 10 to 12 hours.

Chop the tomatoes and set aside.

In a stock pot, combine the beans with the carrot, celery, and garlic head. Put the sage sprigs and rosemary sprigs on a piece of cheese cloth, gather the corners, and tie the bundle securely. Add to the pot. Add cold water to cover the beans by at least 1 inch. Bring to a simmer over medium-high heat, and cook until the beans are nearly soft, about 1 hour. Season with salt and continue cooking the beans until tender, about 30 minutes. Allow the beans to cool in their broth.

Remove and discard the vegetables, garlic head, and cheesecloth bundle. Drain the beans, reserving their broth.

In a small, heavy skillet over medium-high heat, warm the safflower oil until it is shimmering. Add the 20 sage leaves, 4 at a time, and fry until they are crisp, but remain bright green, 10 to 15 seconds. Remove them with tongs to a paper towel to drain.

In a large skillet over medium-low heat, warm the ½ cup olive oil. Add the sliced garlic and chopped sage, and sauté until aromatic. Add the chopped tomatoes and cook just until they begin to break down, 3 to 5 minutes.

Add the cooked beans to the skillet along with 1 cup of the broth. Continue cooking until the liquid has reduced and leaves a glossy shine on the beans. Season to taste with salt and pepper and drizzle generously with olive oil.

Transfer the beans to a serving dish and top with the fried sage leaves.

VAQUERO: CHILI VERDE WITH VAQUERO BEANS

This simple recipe is from my first cookbook (with Vanessa Barrington). I love Poblano chiles and this is a great recipe for the chiles and Vaqueros. Note that on the West Coast, a lot of grocery stores label Poblanos as “Pasilla,” which is just weird but what can you do? Pasilla are a dried chile and Poblanos are fresh. You can always use Anaheims if that’s what’s available at your store.

Makes 8 to 10 servings

3 cups cooked Vaquero beans in their broth
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
½ of a medium onion, chopped (about 1 cup)
3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
1 teaspoon cumin seeds, toasted and finely ground
One 3-pound boneless pork shoulder, trimmed of excess fat and cut into ¾-inch pieces
8 poblano chiles, roasted, peeled and cut into strips
8 fresh tomatillos, husks removed and blanched in boiling water for 5 minutes and chopped (if fresh tomatillos are unavailable, you may use canned and no blanching is necessary)
1 small handful of fresh cilantro leaves, plus more for garnish
1 teaspoon dried Mexican oregano
1 to 2 cups chicken broth (enough to just cover the pork)
Salt and freshly ground pepper

In a large Dutch oven, over medium heat, warm the oil. Add the onion, garlic, and cumin and cook, stirring, until the vegetables are soft and fragrant (about 10 minutes). Add the pork, chiles, tomatillos, cilantro, oregano, and chicken broth. Put in a little salt and pepper and bring to a simmer.

Simmer the pork until tender, about an hour. Add the beans to the pot with the pork and simmer for another 30 minutes. Garnish each serving with chopped cilantro.

RIO ZAPE: ENFRIJOLADAS IN RIO ZAPE BEAN SAUCE

The rich taste of Rio Zapes make a happy mix with the sharp onion and earthy cilantro. You can also use your rare and traditional Santanera Negro Delgado beans from this shipment as well.

Makes 6 servings

2 tablespoons vegetable oil suitable for high heat cooking plus 1/3 cup more for frying

1 medium onion (about 2 cups) chopped

3 garlic cloves, finely chopped

2 cups cooked Rio Zape beans

Approximately 2 cups chicken broth

1 dozen good quality corn tortillas

Salt

FOR SERVING:

¼ cup diced white onion

About ½ cup crumbled queso fresco

1 ½ avocados, peeled, pitted and cut into ¼ inch thick slices

½ cup fresh cilantro leaves

In a large, heavy skillet (such as cast iron) over medium heat, warm the 2 tablespoons vegetable oil. Add the onion and garlic and sauté until soft and fragrant. Cool slightly and put into a food processor along with the beans. Purée until smooth, adding chicken broth until the beans are the consistency of thin porridge. Transfer to a small skillet, large enough in diameter to accommodate a tortilla. Turn the heat to low under the beans to warm them gently. Stir occasionally, season to taste with salt and add more chicken broth if they seem thick.

Wipe out the skillet you used for the onions and garlic and pour in the 1/3 cup of oil. Heat over medium high heat until the oil is shimmering, but not smoking. To test the oil, dip in a tortilla and if it sizzles gently, the oil is just right. If it sizzles violently, turn it down a bit before trying again. If the tortilla doesn't sizzle at all, the oil will soak in too fast making the tortillas greasy, so turn it up. When the oil is right, fry the tortillas one-by-one on each side for just a few seconds per side. You want the tortillas to soften, but not to turn brown and crisp. Drain on paper towels as you finish frying all the tortillas.

Dip each tortilla into the warm puréed beans, one at a time. The beans should cling but not too thickly. Add more broth if the tortillas are too thickly covered. Fold them into fourths and place them on a warmed platter in a single layer. Sprinkle onion over the tortillas, followed by queso, avocado, and cilantro. Serve immediately.

YELLOW EYE: NEW ENGLAND STYLE BAKED BEANS WITH YELLOW EYES

Yellow Eyes are a classic New England bean and regionally, they are the preferred variety for Baked Beans. There are countless recipes for the dish. This is a vegetarian version of New England Baked Beans.

Makes 6 to 8 servings

1 pound Rancho Gordo Yellow Eye beans, soaked for several hours or overnight and then simmered for one hour until just beginning to soften

2 teaspoons dry mustard

1 tablespoon tomato paste

1 teaspoon salt

1/3 cup molasses

1/4 cup brown sugar, lightly packed

2 tablespoons maple syrup

1/2 of a large onion, sliced thinly

Preheat oven to 250 degrees F.

Drain cooked beans, reserving the bean broth. In 2 cups of the bean broth (supplemented with water if necessary) whisk together the mustard, tomato paste, salt, molasses, brown sugar, and maple syrup.

Put half the beans in a large, heavy Dutch oven and top with half of the sliced onion. Add the remaining beans and top with the remaining onion. Pour the broth and seasonings over the beans, cover and bake for 5 to 7 hours, stopping and checking occasionally to make sure all the liquid has not evaporated. Add more water as necessary, but not to much, because in the end, you want a thick, sweet sauce clinging to the beans. It shouldn't be watery. Add salt and pepper to taste and serve with barbecue or as a main dish with potato and green salad.

SANTANERA NEGRO DELGADO: PASTA DE FRIJOL

This is a Oaxacan dish and it's not for everyone but I just go crazy for it. Before you ask, I have no idea if this will be good without the lard. I hope you'll try it and let me know. I've made refried beans with olive oil and they are good but very different from the traditional lard version.

Fry a small sliced onion in lots of lard. Not the white bricks you find in a grocery store but beautiful rendered lard like you find in Mexican markets at the butcher section. When it's soft, add about 2 cups of cooked beans and lots of the bean broth. It should be somewhat soupy. Puree the mixture in a blender in batches. If you want to be fancy, and there's nothing wrong with that, push the mixture through a fine wire sieve with a wooden spoon or use the finest setting on a food mill. You should have a soupy mixture; not as thick as refried beans and not as thin as soup. On a hot dry comal or skillet, toast two or three avocado leaves. You need to get these from an heirloom variety as Haas leaves won't work. Most Mexican stores have them in the herbs and spice section. Toast these until they're brown but not burnt. Crumble them into the bean mixture and serve hot. Dip hot, fresh tortillas into this and I think you'll have a good time.

CHRISTMAS LIMA: CHRISTMAS LIMA BEAN STEW

I met Heidi Swanson years ago when she was a customer, and I was a vendor, at the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market in San Francisco. She's been a supporter of heirloom beans and never fails to use them (or mention Rancho Gordo) in her books. I have them all and she's one of my favorite people and cooks.

This is her recipe using Christmas Limas. "You can cook the beans a day or two ahead if you want to get a jump start. Remember to reserve some bean cooking liquid! It's not the end of the world if you forget. But it adds nice body flavor to broth. Don't skimp out on the olive oil here, it is important for the texture and body of the broth," says Heidi. This serves a big crowd.

Makes 8 to 10 servings

6 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Christmas Lima beans (from 1 pound dried)

16 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

2 large heads of celery, preferably with leaves, trimmed then sliced into ¾-inch chunks

3 bunches of scallions, chopped, green parts included

8 garlic cloves, very thinly sliced

Scant 2 teaspoons caraway seeds, lightly crushed

Fine grain sea salt

1 28-ounce can whole plum tomatoes, drained, rinsed, cored and roughly chopped

2 to 4 teaspoons celery salt

5 ½ cups water or broth (or combination)

Oily black olives, seeded and roughly chopped

1 lemon, cut into 1/8ths

Heat 12 tablespoons / scant 2/3 cup of the olive oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. When the oil is hot, add the celery, and stir until coated with olive oil. Cook for 10 minutes, stirring often. Add 2/3 of the scallions, the garlic, caraway, and a couple big pinches of salt. Cook for another 10 to 15 minutes, or until everything softens and begins to caramelize a bit.

Add the tomatoes and 2 teaspoons of the celery salt and cook for another few minutes.

Add the beans along with 5 ½ cups liquid (I typically do 2 cups bean liquid/broth + 3 ½ cups water), and remaining 4 tablespoons of olive oil.

Bring to a simmer, taste, and season with more salt or celery salt if needed. Let sit for a couple minutes and serve each bowl topped with a spoonful of chopped olives and a squeeze of lemon. You might also like to serve the soup sprinkled with the remaining scallions/spring onions.

GOOD MOTHER STALLARD: BEAN-STUFFED POBLANO PEPPERS

We all know the indulgent version of chile rellenos, filled with gooey cheese or picadillo, deep fried in a delicious egg batter. But all chile relleno really means is “stuffed chile” and if you don’t feel up to deep frying, you can stuff roasted chiles with just about anything good.

You’re going to ask me for a real recipe but there really isn’t one. I like to take cooked beans (like Good Mother Stallards), cooked potatoes, and some grated mozzarella and stuff them into plain, roasted, peeled Poblano peppers, then bake them for about 20 minutes at 350 F. Sometimes I add a dollop of yogurt but this isn’t really necessary. I wonder if you couldn’t do something like this with a regular bell pepper.

The stuffed chiles aren’t likely to win any beauty contests but you can make them mostly in advance and stuff them with leftovers like beans, potatoes, wild rice, brown rice, meat or even salad if you’re brave. Check out the Borracho Beans recipe if you need help with roasting and peeling fresh chile peppers.

LARGE WHITE LIMA: PORK AND LIMA BEANS

Makes 6 servings

FOR THE BEANS:

1 pound Rancho Gordo Large White Lima beans, rinsed

Enough water to cover the beans in your bean pot by a few inches

FOR THE PORK:

1 lb pork, not too fatty, cubed

1 ½ cups diced red onion

1 tablespoon crushed garlic

¾ tablespoon crushed ginger

1 teaspoon turmeric powder

The following ground to a coarse powder:

1 tablespoon cumin seeds,

1 tablespoon coriander seeds,

5 dried red chillies

3 tablespoons black vinegar (or sherry or balsamic vinegar)

1 teaspoon powdered jaggery or dark brown sugar

1 cup water

Salt to taste

2 tablespoons chopped cilantro for garnish

Set the rinsed beans in your bean pot of choice, cover with a few inches of water and bring to a boil. Let the beans boil hard for 10 minutes or so. Then reduce to a simmer, cover and cook the beans till done (replenishing water to cover by a few inches if necessary as you go).

While the beans are cooking prepare the pork: Heat oil in a saucepan over medium heat, add the diced onion and sauté for 5 minutes or so till beginning to brown.

Add the ginger and garlic and sauté for another minute till the raw smell disappears.

Add all the powdered spices and sauté for 30 seconds or so.

Add the cubed pork, the vinegar, salt and sugar and mix in thoroughly.

Add the water, bring the pan to a high simmer for a few minutes and then reduce to a low simmer. Cover and cook till the pork is tender but not falling apart. Check a few times to make sure the gravy isn’t drying out too much and the pork isn’t sticking. If so, add a bit more water and mix in. At the end there should be a thick gravy/sauce coating the pork.

Add the contents of the pan to the bean pot, mix in thoroughly, cover and simmer for 10 more minutes.

Garnish with cilantro and serve in bowls.

FLAGEOLET: LAMB AND FLAGEOLET STEW

Flageolet are light and lovely. Like me! My first choice is to do something garlicky and lemony but Spring lamb is another favorite dish. I make this every year, always with some variation. My trend these days is to cook everything very simply, and this stew is no exception. I insist you make it with 2 onions. They have lots of time to reduce and add their sweet, but never cloying, joy.

I now have access to endless Meyer lemons but regular ones will do. The lemons are ideal to cut the richness of the lamb stew. I made this to serve three one Sunday supper. I asked how many we could serve and if you are normal, I would guess almost six people but we are “robust” eaters in my family and everyone had seconds, except Nico, who went in for thirds. There was still a bit left over, but not much.

Makes 3 to 6 servings

½ pound Rancho Gordo Flageolet beans, rinsed
2 bay leaves
2 tablespoons sunflower or grapeseed oil
1 pound lamb stewing meat, cut into 1-inch chunks
¼ cup all-purpose flour
2 yellow onions, chopped
5 cloves garlic, minced
4 cups stock, water, bean broth or a combination of any of them
1 tablespoon dried thyme
Salt and pepper
Fresh flat-leaf parsley for garnish
Lemon wedges for garnish

Check the flageolet for organic debris. Rinse thoroughly in plenty of fresh water.

In a large pot, add the beans, bay and enough water to cover by 2 inches. Bring to a full boil and allow to continue for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to medium-low and maintain a gentle simmer until the beans are soft. Use a lid to help control the heat.

Meanwhile, in a heavy pot, heat the oil over medium-high heat until it's just rippling. Dredge the lamb in flour and brown on all sides in the oil in batches, about 8 to 10 minutes each. Remove the lamb and set aside.

Reduce the heat to medium and cook the onions and garlic until soft, about 15 minutes. Add the lamb back to the pot along with the thyme, broth and salt and pepper. Cook on medium-low heat until the meat is fork-cut soft, about 2 hours (the lower and longer, the better). Add more liquid if needed. Use the lid to maintain a low, slow heat.

Once the lamb is soft, gently fold the beans into the lamb mixture. Continue to cook for 20 minutes. The stew should be somewhat rich and thick.

Adjust the seasoning, if needed. Scatter the parsley over the top and serve with lemon wedges.

FLOR DE MAYO: BORRACHO BEANS

I originally shared this recipe years ago on our blog with Flor de Junio beans. They really are kissing cousins to Flor de Mayo. There are many variations on Borracho Beans so don't get too caught up in the details. You can do this with half a pound and drink half of the beer. Problem solved. If you don't want to use bacon, leave it out but add 1 or 2 canned chipoles in adobo for smoky flavor.

Makes 6 to 8 servings as a side

½ pound bacon (optional; see note)

1 pound Flor de Mayo beans, picked over and soaked for 2 to 4 hours

1 Large white onion, chopped medium

5 cloves garlic, minced

1 bay laurel leaf

4 green chiles like Hatch or Anaheim

1 bottle Negra Modelo dark beer

Salt to taste

Fresh cilantro and minced white onion for garnish

In a skillet over medium-low heat, sauté the bacon; when cooked, reserve on paper toweling.

Add the onion and garlic to the bacon fat and fry until soft, about 5 minutes.

Discard any extra fat.

Transfer the onion-garlic mixture and the bay leaf to a stock pot. Add the beans and their soaking water. Add enough water so the beans are covered by about 1 1/2 inches.

Bring to a hard boil for 5 minutes, then reduce heat to a mere simmer and cook until the beans are soft, checking for doneness after about an hour. Add salt just when the beans start to soften, and add more water as needed to keep the beans fully covered.

In the meantime, roast the chiles: Preheat the broiler and arrange the chiles on a baking sheet. Place the baking sheet directly underneath the flame and roast for 8 to 10 minutes, turning the chiles occasionally with tongs so they char evenly. (You can also roast the chiles individually over a direct flame on your stovetop.) Transfer the chiles to a paper bag, or to a bowl and cover with a plate, and let steam for 10 minutes. When the chiles are cool enough to handle, the skins should rub off easily. Remove the stem and seeds, then chop the chile meat.

Add the beer to the beans and more water if needed. Salt to taste. Add the chiles and crumble in the reserved bacon, and heat through. Serve with cilantro and raw onions.

ALUBIA BLANCA: POTATO SOUP WITH CASCABEL CHILE SALSA

I used to think of this bean as a workhorse and not a fancy favorite but in the era before the virus, when we were cooking beans to sample in the store every day, I was always surprised how good these were made with just onion, garlic, olive oil, and a pinch of Oregano Indio. And the broth was fantastic. It was so good that I'd make my way to the sampling table several times in the afternoon just to drink a shot of broth.

For the record, the store staff concluded that for them, a slow cooker was the best. They have access to a pressure cooker and all kinds of pots but they prefer the slow cooker.

I love the thought of soup. I love the reality of soup. At a dinner party, a soup course means the evening is bound to be full of good things and well-thought out. It means your host likes you enough to dirty a round of soup bowls. This soup is velvety and mild. The salsa has little or no heat but it's loaded with flavor. It's a nice accent to the beans and potatoes. The cream is the sign that we're celebrating.

Makes 4 to 6 servings as a soup course

1 cup cooked Alubia Blanca, Royal Corona, or Ayocote Blanco beans
2 ½ cups cubed, cooked potatoes (about 3 medium potatoes)
2 cups liquid made up from leftover bean broth, potato-cooking water, or a combination
3 tablespoons Cascabel Chile Salsa (see below)
2 tablespoons Crema Mexicana or sour cream
1 teaspoon of Rancho Gordo Mexican Oregano or Oregano Indio
Salt to taste

In a large saucepan, add the beans, potatoes, and cooking liquid. Blend with an immersion blender (or in batches with a countertop blender) and then gently heat over medium-low heat for about 10 minutes.

When the soup is hot, stir in the salsa, crema, and oregano. Add salt and check seasonings. Serve immediately. Garnish with more oregano and salsa, if you like.

CASCABEL CHILE SALSA

(adapted from a recipe by Diana Kennedy)

Makes 6 servings

10 Cascabel Chiles, wiped clean, seeds and veins removed, seeds reserved
12 ounces canned whole peeled tomatoes, drained
3 garlic cloves, roughly chopped
½ teaspoon salt
About ¾ cup water

Toast the chiles over medium heat on a comal or dry skillet, turning them constantly so that they don't burn. Remove from heat.

Toast the seeds to a deep golden brown, turning constantly or they will burn.

Blend all ingredients together for a minute or two in a blender, adding a little more water if necessary; the sauce should have a loose consistency, but will thicken as it stands.

BLACK CAVIAR LENTIL: LENTILS WITH LEEKS

Black caviar lentils are a new favorite. They are very quick cooking. Their tiny size and savory flavor makes them useful in lots of dishes but since you can cook them in about 20 minutes, there's no need to make a huge batch unless you want lots of leftovers. Don't forget to try them in salads.

I took four huge leeks and washed them well. Receiving them sandy is normal. I sliced them into half-moons and sautéed them in lots of butter and olive oil until they gave up the fight. I think you could do this in about 40 minutes but I put them on very low and let them take their time. Be sure and cook them without the lid, or with the lid ajar, once they start to get soft. Some evaporation is good. Salt lightly to start as they will get more intense as they cook down. Once cool, store them in the refrigerator and add a large scoop to whatever lentils (or beans) you have cooked and are heating through. It can be a lentil dish with leeks or a leek dish with beans, or something in between. You could take a mixture of leeks and lentils and place them in a buttered gratin dish, top with some bread crumbs and cook in a medium oven until you're happy.

If this idea appeals to you but you don't have leeks or don't want to be bothered, you can make something similar with sliced yellow onions, slow-cooked with olive oil and butter. Or just butter. I don't judge.

ROYAL CORONA: GRILLED TOASTS WITH ZUCCHINI & BIG BEANS

These giant, fat, white runner beans are creamier and more luxurious than Greek and Spanish gigandes and a little denser than traditional Italian coronas. Royal Corona beans can replace any white bean but be prepared to be astounded by how big they are when cooked. Fully cooked, they can be a little starchy but you can also keep cooking until they reach the creamy point. The oddly grand beans can be enjoyed in salads, tossed with roasted or grilled vegetables, or even pureed for a unique filling for ravioli.

Makes 4 servings

12 ounces small-to-medium-sized zucchini
2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Royal Coronas,
Large White Limas, or Christmas Limas, drained
1 clove garlic, finely grated or minced
Big pinch chili flakes (or to taste)
1 to 2 lemons
1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
Olive oil
4 slices rustic bread
Heaping ¼ cup chopped, fresh tender herbs:
basil dill, parsley, mint, fennel fronds, cilantro
¼ cup coarsely chopped roasted almonds

Grill the zucchini: Prepare a medium-high flame and preheat your grill. When hot, place the zucchini directly over the flames and cook, turning periodically, until blackened all over and the zucchini is tender, which will take anywhere from 10 to 25 minutes, depending on their size. (No need to trim your zucchini or rub it with olive oil.) Transfer to a cutting board to cool until safe to handle, then coarsely chop into pieces about the size of the beans.

In a mixing bowl, combine the zucchini with the beans, garlic, pepper flakes, the zest and juice of 1 lemon, white wine vinegar, and 1 to 3 tablespoons of olive oil. Season to taste with salt, then add more lemon juice if needed. I think this is best with an almost aggressive amount of lemon.

Returning to the grill: Brush your bread generously with olive oil, then quickly grill over direct heat until the bread is charred and lightly crisp. Flip and repeat.

Just before serving, stir the herbs and almonds into the beans and zucchini. Spoon the mixture over the warm toasts, and serve, with a knife and fork.

AYOCOTE AMARILLO: AYOCOTE AMARILLO BEANS IN SAVORY TOMATO SAUCE

I love adding soft cinnamon (canela) to tomatoes for a rich, woodsy flavor. Don't try this with hard American cinnamon, which is somewhat harsh. The technique of "frying" the sauce is very Mexican and if you're inspired, you could add some sliced pickled jalapeños just before serving.

Makes 2 to 4 servings

4 tomatoes from a can of whole tomatoes (or 4 fresh tomatoes, skins removed), chopped roughly
½ cup tomato juice, reserved from the can (if using fresh tomatoes, replace with water or broth, if needed)

½ yellow onion, chopped

2 cloves garlic

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 sticks canela or Ceylon cinnamon

1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio

Salt to taste

2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Ayocote Amarillo beans

Flat-leaf parsley, chopped

1 Lemon for juice

Place the tomatoes, the tomato juice, onion, and garlic in a blender and blend until smooth.

In a large saucepan, heat the olive oil over medium heat until it starts to shimmer, 3 to 5 minutes.

Add the tomato mixture and stir well. Add the canela and oregano and bring to a simmer; continue cooking for 15 minutes. Taste for seasoning. Add salt if needed.

Add the cooked beans and lower heat to medium-low. Gently stir and continue cooking until the beans are warmed through, about 5 minutes. Serve and add the parsley. Squeeze few drops of lemon, as desired.

GARBANZO: GARBANZOS, SPINACH & SMOKED PAPRIKA

This recipe comes from our newly published cookbook, *The Rancho Gordo Heirloom Bean Guide*. It's so simple but incredibly good. And it's a great way to get to know your new supply of pimentón.

Makes 2 servings

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling

½ of an onion, chopped fine

2 garlic cloves, minced

1 to 2 teaspoons smoked pimenton paprika

1 teaspoon salt

1 cup cooked Rancho Gordo Garbanzo beans, plus 1 cup of their broth

2 cups frozen spinach, thawed, or 2 cups cooked spinach (if using fresh)

Fresh lemon for serving

In a deep skillet over medium heat, warm the oil. Add the onion and garlic and sauté until fragrant, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the paprika and salt and continue to cook until combined. Add the Garbanzo beans and their broth and bring to a simmer. Stir in the spinach. Let cook until the spinach is heated through and the flavors have mingled.

Transfer to a serving bowl and top with a generous drizzle of olive oil and a squeeze of lemon.

PINTO: PINTO BEANS FLAVORED WITH HAM

This recipe comes from our friend Emily Nunn. We interviewed her a few months ago and she was kind enough to share a dozen recipes with us, including this one.

Emily says: “I’ve always enjoyed beans: as an American Southerner, one of my favorite comfort foods has always been a soupy pot of pintos and cornbread. For the meat, use a small ham hock (ask your grocer to sell you a single one; for some reason, in larger cities, they only sell them in pairs), or 1 small chunk of country ham about the size of two of your fingers, or a piece of side meat about the same size. You could even use 1 or 2 thick-cut slices of bacon cut into large pieces. If you use country ham, the beans won’t be greasy. Serve with cornbread or corn muffins

Makes 6 to 8 servings

*1 pound Rancho Gordo Pinto Beans, sorted,
rinsed, and soaked for 4 to 6 hours*

*Ham of your choice (small ham hock, chunk of
good country ham, side meat, etc. — see headnote)*

Fleshly ground black pepper

Extra virgin olive oil for drizzling (optional)

Place the beans in a large heavy-bottomed pot along with the ham or ham hock and water to cover the beans by a couple of inches. Bring to a boil (for about 5 minutes), then reduce the heat and simmer, stirring occasionally and adding water if the level gets too low (I like an inch of water on top), until the beans are very tender, 45 to 90 minutes. They should be slightly soupy, not thick like baked beans.

Season with freshly ground pepper to taste. Serve with a drizzle of olive oil if you like. (Don’t worry about the ham hock poking above the water but do turn it over several times.) You probably won’t need salt because: ham hock.

MAYOCOBA: MOLLETES (TRADITIONAL MEXICAN BREAKFAST SANDWICHES)

Creamy and versatile, Mayocoba has a pale yellow hue and super soft texture. This mild-flavored bean soaks up all the flavors of the cooking pot. It's a staff favorite at Rancho Gordo. A classic bean originally from Peru, now quite at home in our California beanfields, the Mayocoba is also known as Capario or Peruano. It's a thin-skinned but meaty bean that will take on all the flavors you can throw at it but still hold its shape. Great as a substitute for Cannellini or great Northern beans but unique in its own right.

It's popular all over Mexico but especially in the state of Jalisco, where you often see them used for super creamy refried beans.

It's easy enough to make a breakfast of molletes north of the border. These are great with or without the roasted poblano pepper (known as *rajas*), so don't let that hold you back.

The heart and soul of the dish is the refried beans. I like to sauté (very thin) red onion slices in bacon drippings until they're almost dissolved. I then add whole beans and some of their pot liquor, and some water if they seem a little dry. Using my bean masher, slide along the bottom of the skillet so that the onions incorporate into the beans. I repeat the process until the mass is a glorious mess of refried beans. Be sure and leave some texture for interest.

Makes 6 open-faced sandwiches

2 whole poblano peppers, rinsed and dried

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

1 small white onion, thinly sliced

1 baguette

2 cups refried beans made with Rancho Gordo Mayocoba or Pinto beans

1 tablespoon butter (room temperature)

2 cups shredded Manchego cheese

Preheat oven to 400°F.

Roast each poblano pepper directly over an open flame, medium hot. Use tongs to flip pepper occasionally, until the skin blackens and bubbles. Don't let the skin turn white or catch fire. (If you don't have gas stove, you can broil in the oven for 10 minutes, flipping them halfway through.)

Once roasted, place the chiles in a bowl and cover with a plate; allow them to sweat for about 15 minutes. Remove the skin and seeds, then cut in to thin strips and reserve.

In a skillet over medium-low heat, warm the 2 tablespoons of oil. Add the onions and sauté until golden, then add the poblano pepper strips; season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Cut the baguette crosswise into three sections, then slice each section in half.

Spread burren on each side. Add a layer of the refried beans then top with the onion-pepper mixture. Dust generously with the Manchego.

Bake baguette in the oven until the cheese melts and the bread is toasted, 15 to 20 minutes.

Serve warm.

DOMINGO ROJO: NEW ORLEANS RED BEANS & RICE

A small, mild yet dense, heirloom bean, begging to be put to work as red beans and rice, chili con carne, or a wonderful ingredient in your summer salad.

One of the reasons aficionados insist on good red beans for their red beans and rice is the bean broth. A good red bean will produce a sauce that coats every grain of rice and Domingo Rojo is that bean!

Cook them with onion and a bay leaf. Then let them do their magic in your kitchen. A rich chili with a few of these beans would change the minds of the most ardent “no-bean in my chili!” chili snob. Combining cooked beans with your favorite sausage makes a quick, no hassle meal. Mashing some of the beans with a fork and then returning them to the pot makes a creamy soup that doesn’t require meat or much of anything else to be delicious.

This is Rancho Gordo’s take on the classic dish. You can also find it in our new cookbook, *The Rancho Gordo Heirloom Bean Guide*.

Makes 6 to 8 servings

1 pound Rancho Gordo Domingo Rojo beans, uncooked
2 tablespoons oil
1 to 1½ pounds Andouille sausage, cut into thick slices
2 yellow onions, chopped
5 cloves garlic, chopped
1 rib celery, sliced
2 green bell peppers, seeds and pith removed, chopped
4 bay leaves
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper, ground
1 tablespoon dried thyme
Salt and freshly ground pepper
1 tablespoon Creole mustard (or coarse grain mustard)
Vinegary hot sauce like Louisiana, Crystal or Tabasco, for serving
White, long grain rice, cooked, for serving

In a large pot, such as an enameled cast iron dutch oven, heat the oil over medium heat and brown the sausage slices, stirring occasionally, about 6 minutes. Remove and reserve the sausage. Add the onion, garlic, bell pepper and celery and sauté until soft, stirring occasionally, about 10 minutes.

Add the dry beans, bay leaves, thyme, cayenne and enough water to cover by about 2 inches. Bring to a strong boil and continue boiling for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to low to medium low, so that the beans are cooking with a gentle simmer.

Once the beans have started to soften but not cooked fully, just over an hour, add the reserved sausage to the beans along with the mustard.

Continue to cook until the beans are soft. Add more water as needed. If you’re pressed for time, once the beans are cooked, you mash some against the side of pot with a wooden spoon to thicken the liquid, or continue cooking until the liquid is more like a thick gravy than a thin soup.

Check for seasoning and salt and pepper to taste. Serve with plain rice and bottles of hot sauce.

SUPER LUCKY 2021 BLACK EYED PEA: BLACK EYED PEAS WITH COCONUT MILK

This recipe, adapted from one by Marcus Samuelsson for *Food & Wine Magazine*, has received rave reviews from our Bean Club members and we wanted to offer it up for those who haven't had a chance to make it. Samuelsson is an American chef and cookbook author. His new cookbook, *Rise: Black Cooks and the Soul of American Food: A Cookbook*, is on my reading list.

Makes 8 to 10 servings

*2 cups dried Rancho Gordo Black Eyed Peas,
picked over and rinsed*
Kosher salt
4 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 large red onion, minced
1 ½ tablespoons minced peeled fresh ginger
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 habanero chile, seeded and minced
2 teaspoons berbere seasoning (or chile powder)
1 teaspoon ground turmeric
3 medium tomatoes, chopped
1 cup coconut milk
1 cup chicken stock or low-sodium broth
½ cup chopped cilantro
2 scallions, thinly sliced

In a large saucepan, cover the peas with water and bring to a boil; boil for 10 minutes. Reduce heat to a gentle simmer and cook until tender, about 40 minutes. Add salt just when the peas begin to soften. Drain and set aside.

Meanwhile, in a large saucepan, melt the butter. Add the onion, ginger, garlic, and chile and cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until softened and just starting to brown, about 10 minutes. Add the berbere and turmeric and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add the tomatoes and cook, stirring, until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in the coconut milk and stock and bring to a boil. Simmer over low heat, stirring occasionally, until the tomatoes break down and the sauce is thickened, about 20 minutes.

Add the peas to the sauce and cook over moderately low heat until the peas are lightly coated, about 10 minutes. Fold in the cilantro and scallions and serve.

BAYO CHOCOLATE: SOMEWHAT TARASCAN BEAN SOUP

Bayo beans are dense and meaty while exuding a really rich, complex bean broth when cooked with a little onion, garlic, and olive oil. The beans themselves are very mild but this means you can use them in all sorts of cuisines. Because they are dense and stay whole after cooking, they make the ideal salad bean. (Hint: Dress them with your vinaigrette while they're still warm to soak up all the flavor!)

In the beautiful little town of Patzcuaro, Mexico, one of the local specialties is Tarascan soup, most likely named for the local indigenous people. Of the several variations, the most popular is generally a mixture of tomatoes, chicken stock, and pureed beans. Bayo beans are traditional. I have also used Cranberry beans with success.

Makes 4 servings

1 pound plum tomatoes, halved
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
½ white onion, thinly sliced
2 cloves garlic, minced
4 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Bayo Chocolate beans, in their broth
3 to 4 cups chicken or vegetable broth
1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo Mexican Oregano
Salt
Safflower or grapeseed oil for frying
2 day-old corn tortillas, cut into thin strips
2 ancho chiles, seeded and cut into narrow strips
½ cup queso fresco or other moist white cheese
Sour cream or crema for serving
Fresh cilantro leaves for serving

Line a large, heavy skillet or comal with aluminum foil. Set over medium-high heat. Put the tomatoes cut side down in the pan and cook, turning occasionally with tongs, until blackened and soft, 10 to 15 minutes. Remove the tomatoes from the pan and chop. Set aside.

Remove the foil from the skillet or comal and discard. In the skillet or comal over medium-high heat, warm the olive oil. Add the onion, garlic, and tomatoes and sauté until soft, about 10 minutes. Let cool slightly. Put the vegetables in a blender and blend until smooth.

Transfer to a soup pot.

Puree the beans and their broth in the blender, adding some of the chicken broth if necessary to keep the blades moving. Transfer to the pot. Bring to a simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, for about 5 minutes.

Add the chicken broth and oregano and season with salt. Cook for 10 minutes to allow the flavors to blend.

Meanwhile, pour the safflower oil to a depth of about ½ inch into a small, heavy skillet. Set over medium-high heat and heat the oil until it is shimmering. Fry the tortilla strips, turning with tongs, until crisp and medium brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove quickly as they can become bitter if overcooked.

Put a little cheese, a few chili strips and some tortilla strips in each warmed bowl. Pour in the hot soup. Pass the sour cream and cilantro at the table for garnishing the soup.

CASSOULET: CASSOULET BEAN SOUP WITH GUANCIALE & CAPERS

Leftover Cassoulet beans are terrific for soups. Many like to puree them and have a silky texture but I generally prefer a more rustic soup. Salt-packed capers are delicious and only a slight bother. You can rinse and soak a batch of them, then squeeze the liquid out and rest them in some good olive oil.

Makes 2 servings

1 oz guanciale or pancetta, chopped
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 sprig fresh rosemary
2 tablespoons capers in oil (see note above)
1 garlic clove, chopped
1 cup bean broth and 1 cup water
1 ½ cups cooked Rancho Gordo Cassoulet beans
2 poached eggs
Salt and freshly ground pepper
Chopped fresh flat-lea/parsley for garnish

In a soup pot over medium-low heat, render the guanciale in the olive oil until cooked; add the rosemary, capers, and garlic and cook until the garlic is golden and fragrant. Add the liquids, raise the heat to medium, and cook for a bit to make the base for a soup. Add the beans and cook until heated through.

Right before serving, remove the rosemary sprig and season with salt and pepper. Divide the soup among bowls and top with the poached eggs.

(You can poach the eggs well ahead. Just under-cook them a smudge and pour the hot bean soup over them.) Garnish with parsley.

CRANBERRY: CRANBERRY BEAN & RICE SOUP WITH SWISS CHARD

Here is a perfect fall soup, adapted from Peter Miller's *Five Ways to Cook Asparagus (And Other Recipes)* (Abrams, 2017). Peter notes: "If you made this dish every week, it would seem quite straightforward. It is a wonderfully simple meal, but at first, it looks like a task. Once you get a sense of it, a habit of it, then it is easily done."

Makes 4 servings

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more if needed
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1 carrot, finely chopped
1 celery stalk, finely chopped
2 or 3 fresh sage leaves, chopped
3 cups cooked Rancho Gordo cranberry beans, drained, cooking liquid reserved
Sea salt and freshly ground pepper
½ cup arborio rice
2 tablespoons cold, unsalted butter
½ lb Swiss chard, leaves and stems chopped into pieces
¼ cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
6 slices good country bread
1 garlic clove

In a small saucepan, heat 1 cup water or stock over low heat.

Heat a good ceramic or stainless-steel pot over medium heat for a couple of minutes. Add half of the olive oil, the onion, carrot, celery, and sage. Cook for 5 minutes to soften the vegetables, then season with salt and pepper. Add the drained beans, reserving ½ cup to add later, and stir well. Cook for 10 minutes, stirring frequently. You can add a little more olive oil if the vegetables stick to the pan; you can also turn the heat down.

Transfer the contents of the pot to a food processor and process until smooth. Return the puree to the pot, add some salt, pepper, and 2 cups of the reserved bean-cooking liquid. Stir carefully. Add the reserved beans. Add ¼ to ½ cup hot water to the soup. You want a smooth, gravy-like consistency, but it must be thin enough to still cook the rice.

Add the rice to the softly boiling soup, along with a drizzle of olive oil, and stir to incorporate. Cook for 15 minutes, making certain the soup is loose enough to not clog up while the rice cooks.

Meanwhile, heat a sauce pan over medium heat. Add a little olive oil and 1 tablespoon butter to it, and when it foams, add the chard, a little salt and pepper, and a pinch of the parsley. Stir well to coat the chard. Turn down the heat slightly, cover, and cook at a lively but not wild pace for 4 minutes or so. If they seem a little dry, add a tablespoon of hot water. When they have absorbed most of the liquid but are still a little firm, turn off the heat and set aside.

When the rice is cooked, stir the chard and the remaining 1 tablespoon butter into the soup.

Grill or broil the bread quickly. When browned, rub it immediately with the garlic. Drizzle some olive oil over each piece and then sprinkle with some salt, pepper, and a little parsley. Cut the bread into strips or triangles.

Ladle the soup into bowls, and top with a couple pieces of bread, a little olive oil, parsley, a little pepper, and even the bread crumbs from the cutting board. Soup is ready.

DESI CHANA: CHANA MASALA

This recipe comes from my friend Arnab Chakladar who writes the blog *My Annoying Opinions*. I asked him to create a recipe for our newest garbanzo bean and he outdid himself. He notes:

1. Whether you soak the chana or not is up to you but if you don't you'll need to be patient while it cooks.
2. Even when fully cooked, desi/kala chana has a much denser texture than garbanzo beans.
3. You can also make this in a pressure cooker. In my old-school, whistling Indian pressure cooker. I'd cook and puree the masala first, add it to the soaked chana, top up with water and cook probably 30 minutes over medium heat. I have no idea what the Instant Pot conversion would be.
4. If you don't have tez patta at hand don't worry about it. However, if you have an Indian grocery near you it's easily found. It's also available on Amazon.
5. If you don't have KasJiimiri chillies, substitute a mild red chilli powder. You can make this hotter, of course, but the intended result is a balanced tanginess, not big heat.
6. You can add a bit of chopped onion to the garnish. A squeeze of lime is nice as well

Makes 4 to 6 servings

2 cups desi/kala chana, rinsed and soaked overnight (or 8 hours)

1 tez patta (dried Indian bay/cassia leaf), optional

2 tablespoons neutral oil (grapeseed or similar)

1 large red onion, sliced

1 tablespoon fresh garlic paste

1 tablespoon fresh ginger paste

The following ground together into a coarse powder:

½ tablespoon haldi (turmeric powder),

2 to 3 dried Kashmiri chillies,

1 ½ tablespoons cumin seeds,

1 ½ tablespoons coriander seeds,

1 tablespoon black peppercorn,

½ tablespoon fennel seeds,

1 pinch fenugreek seeds,

1-inch piece of cinnamon

2 cups chopped tomato

1 tablespoon sugar

Salt to taste

3 to 5 Thai chillies, slit

1 tablespoon chopped dhanial/cilantro

Add enough water to the soaked chana to cover by a few inches and bring to a boil for 10 minutes. Replenish with enough hot water to cover by a few inches, reduce to a simmer, add the tez patta (if using), cover and cook till the chana is done. Add more water along the way as necessary.

While the chana is cooking, prepare the masala as follows:

Heat the oil in a karhao or wok and add the sliced onions. Sauté over medium heat add till fully softened and browned along the edges.

Add the ginger and garlic pastes, mix in and sauté till the raw smell is gone.

Add the ground spices; mix in and sauté for another 2 to 3 minutes, taking care to not scorch the mix.

Add the tomatoes, sugar, and salt and sauté till the tomatoes have completely cooked down and the oil separates.

Take off the heat, add a few ladles of the water from the cooked chana, mix in and when cooled a little, transfer the contents of the karhai to a blender and puree till smooth.

Bring the chana back up to a high simmer and add the puree to the pot. Mash some of the chana against the side of the pot, mix everything in, cover and simmer together for another 10 to 15 minutes.

Uncover, garnish with the slit green chillies and dhanial, and serve with rice or chapatis or by itself in a bowl.

MIDNIGHT BLACK: MIDNIGHT SALAD WITH QUINOA & JICAMA

We featured this salad, created by our Bean Club coordinator Monica, in a recent newsletter. It was such a hit that we are including it here.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

FOR THE DRESSING:

1 garlic clove, minced, or a pinch of garlic salt
1/4 cup of oil
1 to 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
1 teaspoon honey
2 tablespoons Rancho Gordo Pineapple Vinegar or other mild vinegar
¼ teaspoon Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio
Pinch of cumin, to taste
Salt and pepper

FOR THE SALAD:

2 cups cooked, drained Rancho Gordo Midnight Black beans
2 cups cooked quinoa
1 ½ cups cooked corn kernels (from 2 ears of corn)
1 ½ cups peeled, cubed jicama (about ½ of a jicama)
1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
½ small red onion, chopped (about 4 oz)
Handful of cilantro, roughly chopped

To make the dressing:

In a small bowl, combine the garlic, olive oil, lime juice, honey, vinegar, oregano, and cumin. Whisk to combine, then season to taste with salt and pepper.

In a serving bowl, combine the beans, quinoa, corn, jicama, tomatoes, and onion. Add most of the dressing and stir gently to combine. Taste and add more dressing if desired.

Before serving, sprinkle with cilantro.

CICERCHIA: PASTA WITH CICERCHIA AND MUSHROOMS

From the book *Fagioli: The Bean Cuisine of Italy* (Rodale, 2014) by Judith Barrett. Barrett says: “In Puglia, where this recipe comes from, fresh *cardoncelli* mushrooms, so-named because they grow on the roots of the cardoon plant in the early spring, are used to prepare this dish. I found that the fresh oyster mushrooms in our markets come close to the flavor and the firm texture of the *cardoncelli*. If they are not available, you can use any other kind of fresh mushrooms.”

Makes 6 servings

½ pound (1 cup) dried cicerchie or chickpeas

1 bay leaf

Salt

1 pound dried orecchiette pasta

½ cup olive oil, plus more for serving

1 pound fresh oyster mushrooms, stemmed, caps cut into 1-inch pieces

Freshly ground pepper 2 cloves garlic, peeled

Soak the beans in cold water for 4 to 6 hours.

Drain and discard the soaking water. Rinse under cold water and drain again. Combine the beans and bay leaf in a heavy medium saucepan with 6 cups cold water over medium-high heat. When the water begins to boil, lower the heat and simmer, uncovered, about 1 hour, or until the beans are tender. Remove and discard the bay leaf, turn off the heat, and set aside.

Bring a large pot of water to a boil over high heat. Add 1 tablespoon salt and the pasta and cook, stirring occasionally, 10 to 12 minutes, until pasta is tender but firm to the bite, *al dente*. Drain.

Meanwhile, heat ¼ cup olive oil in a large heavy skillet over medium heat. Add the mushrooms, season with salt and pepper to taste, and cook, stirring frequently, 7 to 10 minutes, or until tender. Turn off the heat and set aside. Reheat just before serving.

Drain the beans and reserve 1 cup of the cooking water. Heat the remaining ¼ cup olive oil in a heavy 6-quart soup pot or casserole over medium-low heat. Add the garlic and cook about 5 minutes, just until it begins to brown, being careful not to burn it. Remove the garlic from the pot and add the beans. Cook, stirring, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the pasta and the reserved cooking water from the beans. Season with salt to taste. Continue cooking about 5 minutes longer, until the pasta and beans are hot and the liquid has thickened.

Serve in soup bowls. Top each serving with some of the mushrooms. Season with pepper and a drizzle of olive oil.

HIDATSA RED: CHILI SIN CARNE

After much experimenting with chili, I realized the real issue was tomatoes! They add a pleasant sweetness and some body, but they take the focus off the chile powder.

I made this with both the porcini powder and the paprika. I think the mushrooms added something good but this powder can be hard to find. If you have it, use it. I wouldn't make a special trip for it. I do love my paprika and the smoked kind adds depth. You might also add a few dashes of our Felicidad sauce, powered by smoked chipotle chiles. My original recipe called for corn and zucchini, but here is a seasonal variation for the winter months, using winter squash.

Makes 6 to 8 servings

8 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Hidatsa Red or Ayocote beans with their broth (about 6 cups of cooked beans and 2 cups of bean broth)
1 tablespoon cumin seeds or ground cumin
5 cloves
2 whole allspice
4 tablespoons olive oil
1/3 to 1/2 cup Rancho Gordo 100% Pure New Mexican Chile Powder
1 tablespoon Rancho Gordo Mexican Oregano or Oregano Indio
1 teaspoon smoked Spanish paprika (pimentón) (optional)
1 tablespoon porcini mushroom powder (optional)
1 small winter squash, such as butternut or delicata, peeled and cubed (about 2 cups of cubes)
2 cups vegetable broth
Salt to taste
Sugar (as needed)

Grind the cumin (if seeds), cloves and allspice in a mortar or electric spice grinder.

In a large pot, like an enameled cast iron, heat the olive oil over medium heat until it ripples. Add the chile powder and mix well with the oil, stirring constantly, for 5 minutes. Add the ground spices, oregano, and optional porcini powder and Spanish paprika. Mix thoroughly and continue cooking for about 3 minutes. You should have a dense paste. Add the squash cubes and sauté to coat with the spices.

Very slowly, mix in the vegetable broth, stirring constantly until well blended. Gently add the beans and their broth. Mix and cook on medium-low heat for about 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add salt to taste and cook for another 10 minutes. Test seasonings and add more salt if needed. If the broth is overly bitter, add sugar, a teaspoon at a time, until the flavor is correct. A teaspoon or two is more than enough.

Continue simmering on medium-low, stirring occasionally, until the squash is tender, the chili has started to thicken, and there is no grainy texture from the chile powder. Serve with lime wedges and crème fraîche, if you like.

MARCELLA: TUSCAN-STYLE BAKED BEANS

It was traditional in Tuscany to cook white beans in a wine bottle or glass jar nestled in the embers of a dying fire. Baked beans in the oven are not quite as romantic, but we think this Italian method is a good fit for our delicate Marcella beans.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

1 pound dried Rancho Gordo Marcella or Alubia Blanca beans, picked over and rinsed

5 to 6 fresh sage leaves

4 to 5 garlic cloves, peeled and smashed

4 tablespoons olive oil, plus more for drizzling

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 350°F. In a Dutch oven or heavy-bottomed pot with an ovenproof lid, combine the beans and enough water to cover by 2 to 3 inches. Add the sage, garlic, and olive oil. Bring the water to a boil on the stovetop, then cover the pot and carefully transfer to the middle oven rack.

Bake until the beans are tender but still firm, 1 to 3 hours. Check often to make sure the beans are covered with liquid, adding more hot water if needed. Avoid stirring the beans too much or they may start to fall apart. Add salt when the beans begin to soften.

Before serving, remove the sage leaves and garlic cloves. Serve warm with freshly ground black pepper, olive oil, and crusty bread.

RIO ZAPE: RIO ZAPE-FELICIDAD BEAN DIP

I created this recipe a couple years ago in honor of the Super Bowl, which I try but fail to find interesting. I know a bean dip seems like an obvious thing for me but I'd just never gotten around to it. You can use any of our hot sauces that you have available.

2 tablespoons olive oil

½ yellow onion, sliced very thin

2 garlic cloves, minced

1 cup cooked Rancho Gordo Rio Zape beans, with some bean broth

2 tablespoons Rancho Gordo Felicidad hot sauce

2 tablespoons sour cream

2 tablespoons cooked ground pork (optional)

2 tablespoons minced cilantro

In a skillet over medium-low heat, warm the olive oil. Sauté the onion and garlic in the olive oil until translucent, about 15 minutes. When the onions are soft, add the beans and their broth, the hot sauce and sour cream.

Using a food processor, immersion blender, or a blender, blend the mixture until smooth. Add the ground pork, if using, and stir. Chill for at least 2 hours.

When ready to serve, scoop into a serving bowl or platter and sprinkle the cilantro over the top. Serve with crudité (sliced fresh vegetables), crackers, or chips.

YELLOW EYE BEAN: RUSTIC RANCHO GORDO YELLOW EYE BEAN SOUP

The famous Jeremy Fox Yellow Eye soup, reprinted from *The New York Times*.

Makes 6 to 8 servings

FOR THE BEANS

3 cups dried Yellow Eye or Yellow Indian Woman beans, soaked 4 to 6 hours

1 carrot, peeled

2 ribs celery, halved

1 onion, quartered

1 head garlic, halved across the equator

Stems from 1 bunch Italian parsley, tied in a cheesecloth sachet

2 tablespoons kosher salt

1 tablespoon freshly ground black pepper

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

FOR THE SOUP

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling

3 large carrots, peeled and diced

5 ribs celery, diced

2 leeks, white and light green parts only, diced

1 head garlic, cloves peeled and finely grated

1½ teaspoons red chili flakes, plus more to taste

2 tablespoons chopped fresh rosemary

1 cup canned whole San Marzano tomatoes, drained and chopped

½ cup chopped Italian parsley

Rustic bread, sliced

1 clove garlic, halved

Prepare the beans:

Drain the beans and place them in a large pot. Add 3 quarts cold water, the carrot, celery, onion, garlic and parsley stem sachet. Bring to a boil, skimming off any foam that rises to the top. Reduce the heat to a gentle simmer and cook until the beans are soft and creamy, but not falling apart. (Start checking after 25 minutes; the fresher the beans, the shorter the cooking time.) Add the salt, pepper and olive oil. Discard the sachet and vegetables. Let the beans cool in the liquid.

Prepare the soup:

Pour the olive oil into a large pot set over medium heat. Add the carrots, celery, leeks, garlic, chili and rosemary. Cook until the rawness of the vegetables is just gone, 3 to 4 minutes. Add the tomatoes and cook until slightly caramelized, about 3 minutes more. Add the beans and their cooking liquid, bring to a boil and simmer until the vegetables are tender, 5 to 10 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Just before serving, add the parsley. Toast the bread slices. While still hot, rub them with the garlic halves, then tear into large pieces. Ladle the soup into bowls and top each with a few toasts, then drizzle with olive oil.

FRENCH-STYLE GREEN LENTIL: LENTIL SALAD WITH GRATED CARROTS AND MUSTARD VINAIGRETTE

This can easily be scaled up for more people (or more leftovers). I've found that a ratio of 2 parts grated carrots to 1 part cooked lentils is ideal.

Makes 2 servings

2 garlic cloves, minced

½ yellow onion, finely chopped

1 teaspoon Dijon mustard (or to taste)

3 tablespoons white wine vinegar or Champagne vinegar (or to taste)

½ cup olive oil

Salt and pepper to taste

4 carrots, peeled then grated (about 2 cups grated)

1 cup cooked Rancho Gordo French-Style Green Lentils or Rancho Gordo Caviar Lentils

1 cup chopped fresh parsley

In a serving bowl, combine the garlic, onion, mustard, and vinegar. Slowly whisk in the olive oil to make a vinaigrette. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Add the carrots and toss to coat. Add the lentils and parsley and toss gently.

TURMERIC: COOKING IDEAS

I'll be honest. I don't use much turmeric in my cooking, but our friends at Burlap & Barrel had it (and for me, that's all the indication I need that this is the good stuff), the staff here at Rancho Gordo loved it, and now your pantry is a little bit richer.

The kind fellows at Burlap & Barrel shared with us some cooking ideas to inspire you:

ONE-POT TURMERIC RICE AND BEANS

Sauté chopped onion in oil; toss in turmeric, cumin, salt, and pepper. Add dried beans and water to cover; simmer until beans are soft. Stir in uncooked rice when you have about 20 minutes left; cover and cook until rice is tender.

CRISPY CHICKPEAS WITH TURMERIC

Cook chickpeas; drain well. Toss in olive oil, turmeric, salt, pepper, ginger, and chili; transfer to a baking sheet and bake in oven at 400 degrees until crisp, about 30 minutes.

CHANA DAL

If you have any Desi Chana left from the last shipment, use them in a chana dal recipe with turmeric, cumin, and paprika or chili.

BLACK GARBANZO (ITALIAN CECI NERI): BLACK GARBANZO SALAD WITH MINT AND PRESERVED LEMON

We've been having so much fun with grated carrot salads that this felt inevitable. It's a flexible recipe and I'm sure you'll have fun creating your own version. It can easily be scaled up depending on how many servings you want.

If you don't have preserved lemon, you can substitute lemon juice and zest, to taste. I recommend using your best olive oil in a simple dish like this one. A fruity Spanish olive oil or a peppery Tuscan olive oil would be my top picks.

Makes 2 to 4 servings

1 garlic clove, minced
1 tablespoon chopped preserved lemon
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste
2 to 4 carrots, peeled then grated (about 2 cups grated)
2 cups cooked, drained Rancho Gordo Black Garbanzos
¼ cup chopped fresh mint

In a small bowl, combine the garlic and preserved lemon. Slowly whisk in the olive oil.

Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Place the grated carrots in a serving bowl. Add your desired amount of dressing and toss to coat. Add the garbanzos and mint and toss gently. Taste and adjust the seasonings before serving.

ALUBIA BLANCA: FISH AND SHRIMP STEW WITH ALUBIA BLANCA

The inspiration for this came from the book on Tuscan coastal cooking, *Acquacotta*, by Emiko Davies (Hardie Grant, 2017). The original recipe calls for clams and no fish, but I had fresh prawns and halibut on hand. I was also cooking beans and well, you know, beans.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

¼ cup olive oil
2 yellow onions, thinly sliced into half-moons
2 stalks celery, thinly sliced
Salt
2 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed
1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo New Mexican Red Chile Powder
1 large can (700g) whole peeled tomatoes
1½ cups cooked Rancho Gordo Alubia Blanca or other white heirloom beans
1 to 2 pounds halibut or another sturdy white fish, cut into cubes
1 pound shrimp, peeled and deveined
1 bunch flat-leaf parsley, roughly chopped
4 to 6 thick slices stale (or toasted) rustic bread
Lemon wedges for serving

In a large pot over low heat, warm the oil. Add the onions, celery, and a small pinch of salt; sauté, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are soft, about 20 minutes. Don't allow the onions to brown. Add the garlic and chile powder; cook, stirring, for a minute.

Empty the can of tomatoes into a bowl and with your hands, break up the tomatoes into small pieces. Add to the simmering pot along with 2 cups of water. Stir and gently simmer for 30 to 40 minutes.

Add the beans. Check for seasoning and add salt to taste. Bring the pot back to a simmer and add the fish and shrimp. Cook until done, 2 to 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and stir in the parsley.

Place a piece of bread in the bottom of each bowl. Carefully ladle the stew over the bread. Serve with lemon wedges.

AYOCOTE NEGRO: AYOCOTE BEAN, CELERY, AND RADISH SALAD

We've touted this recipe with Ayocote Blancos or Royal Coronas but I just made it with Ayocote Negro and it was terrific. A little meatier and denser, but just as good as with a white bean.

Makes 4 servings

2 ½ cups cooked, drained Rancho Gordo Ayocote Negro beans

½ red onion, sliced thin

1 celery stalk, cut in half lengthwise and then into ¼-inch slices

1 cucumber, thinly sliced

1 bunch of radishes, cleaned and trimmed, then thinly sliced

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

2 teaspoons vinegar (try our Pineapple Vinegar)

Salt and pepper to taste

1/3 cup chopped flat leaf parsley

In a large salad bowl, combine the beans, onion, celery, cucumber, and radishes. Add the olive oil, vinegar, and salt and pepper. Taste and adjust the seasonings. Just before serving, stir in the parsley. Serve at room temperature.

MANTEQUILLA: MANTEQUILLA BEAN AND CORN SOUP

We originally called for leftover Cassoulet beans for this recipe, but Mantequilla will work well. If you prefer creamier soups, you can obviously blend this with an immersion blender but personally, I love all the texture. I've made this with all bean broth and it was too "beany," if that makes sense. The pancetta and aromatics make such a delicious base that you don't need much else. It's a little early for fresh corn, but frozen works just fine if you can't find corn on the cob.

Makes 4 servings

1 tablespoon olive oil

3 ounces pancetta, cubed 3 cloves garlic, minced

1 small leek, trimmed, rinsed, and finely chopped

1 celery stalk, finely chopped

3 ears of corn, kernels removed, or 1½ cups frozen

1 tablespoon Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio

2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Mantequilla beans or white heirloom beans

2 cups water (or half water and half bean broth)

Salt and pepper to taste

Optional: 2 to 3 tablespoons heavy cream

Minced fresh flat-leaf parsley or cilantro for garnish

In a soup pot, warm the olive oil over medium-low heat. Add the pancetta cubes and sauté over medium-low heat until tender and chewy, about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally to prevent them from burning.

Add the garlic and leek and sauté until soft, about 5 minutes. Add the celery, corn kernels, oregano, beans, and water, stirring to mix all of the ingredients. Raise the heat to medium and continue cooking, stirring occasionally, until the corn is tender and the flavors have blended, about 20 minutes.

Season with salt and pepper. Right before serving, you can add some heavy cream if you like. Allow the soup to cook another 2 or 3 minutes to reheat if necessary. Serve in bowls, garnished with fresh herbs.

PINTO: DRUNKEN BEANS (FRIJOLES BORRACHOS)

Bacon, beer, and beans are a fine group of friends. You can really alter the flavor of borrachos by changing the kind of beer you use. My preference is a dark lager, like Negro Modelo, but if you have a bottle of Corona sitting around, use that if you like. And if you don't use the whole bottle of beer, you get to drink the rest.

Makes 2 to 4 servings

2 cups cooked heirloom beans such as Pinto, Rio Zape, or Eye of the Goat, with some cooking broth

One 12-oz bottle of beer (see note above)

1 thick slice bacon

½ onion, chopped

2 cloves garlic, minced

3 whole serrano peppers, minced (or to taste)

½ pound mushrooms, sliced

Lime wedges for serving

In a medium saucepan over medium-low heat, warm the cooked beans over medium-low heat. Stir in half of the beer. The beans should be somewhat soupy. If they're too thick, add more beer; or, increase the heat and cook off the excess liquid if too thin.

In a skillet over medium-low heat, cook the bacon until the fat is mostly rendered. Remove the bacon and excess fat, leaving about a tablespoon in the pan. Add the onion, garlic, and chiles and sauté until soft. Add the mushrooms; cook until soft. Chop the bacon and add to mixture.

Add the mushroom/bacon mix to the pot of beans. Mix thoroughly and cook for another 10 minutes. Test for seasoning.

Serve with lime wedges.

CHRISTMAS LIMA: CHRISTMAS LIMA BEANS WITH MARINATED ARTICHOKE HEARTS

I don't want to pretend that this is a clever recipe that I slaved over. I had some cooked Christmas Lima beans and I had a jar of artichoke hearts. Ta da.

I love artichoke hearts and the ones you find in a jar are perfectly delicious. They have a strong flavor so cooking with them isn't always easy. On a whim, I just heated the limas and the artichokes until they were warm and tossed them with chopped fresh parsley. There's plenty of oil on the artichokes. No need for more, but I won't judge if you do.

I would think this would make a carnivore trying to cut back on meat very happy. I also think some fresh mozzarella, or even a hunk of burrata, would be a natural addition, and elevate it to something you would be proud to serve to guests.

BLACK QUINOA: CHRISTMAS LIMA BEANS AND QUINOA WITH BEETS AND AVOCADO

Here's a recipe that uses two products in your box. Aren't we clever? If you roast the beets and cook the beans in advance, you can cook the quinoa and prepare the dressing quite quickly.

Recipe from *Heirloom Beans* by Steve Sando and Vanessa Barrington (Chronicle Books, 2008).

Makes 4 to 6 servings

5 small beets

Extra-virgin olive oil

½ cup uncooked quinoa

*3 cups cooked, well-drained Rancho Gordo
Christmas Lima beans*

½ small sweet onion, thinly sliced 1 avocado

FOR THE DRESSING

2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice

1 tablespoon cider vinegar

1 teaspoon honey

1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.

Scrub the beets and dry them, then place in a medium bowl and drizzle with the oil. Wrap the beets in 2 aluminum foil packages, sorting the beets by similar sizes. Roast for about 45 minutes, until they are tender.

When the beets are cool enough to handle, peel them, then cut them into ¼-inch-thick wedges and place in a large salad bowl.

Rinse the quinoa under cool running water. Bring a medium saucepan of generously salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the rinsed quinoa, stirring to mix in, then reduce the heat to low and cook for 15 to 20 minutes, until the quinoa is fluffy but still slightly crunchy. Drain and rinse quickly under cool running water, then drain well and add to the beets in the bowl, along with the cooked beans, preferably warmed a bit, and the sliced onion.

Cut the avocado in half lengthwise and remove the pit, leaving each half in the skin. Cut each half lengthwise into ¼-inch-thick slices, slicing through the flesh but not the skin. Then cut the slices crosswise into thirds in the same fashion.

Use a spoon to scoop the avocado from the skin and add to the bowl, tossing gently to combine

For the dressing: Whisk together the lemon juice, vinegar and honey in a small bowl. Whisk in the oil in a thin, steady stream until an emulsified dressing forms. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Pour the dressing over the salad and toss gently to combine. Taste and adjust the seasonings as necessary. Serve at room temperature within 2 hours.

BORLOTTO DI VENETO: POLENTA WITH BORLOTTI BEANS AND TOMATO SAUCE

In the Rancho Gordo library, we have a well-used copy of the book *Fagioli: The Bean Cuisine of Italy* (Rodale, 2014) by Judith Barrett, and this recipe is inspired by the book.

Makes 6 servings

¼ cup olive oil
1 large or 2 small red onions, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, peeled and finely chopped
2 cups canned chopped tomatoes, with their juices
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 cup chicken or vegetable broth
10 fresh basil leaves, finely chopped
4 fresh sage leaves, finely chopped
4 to 5 cups cooked, drained Rancho Gordo Borlotti di Veneto or Cranberry beans
Salt and freshly ground pepper
2 cups yellow polenta
6 ounces pancetta, diced (optional)
Chopped fresh basil or parsley for garnish

In a large pan, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the onions and garlic and cook, stirring, until the onions begin to soften, about 3 minutes. Stir in the tomatoes and vinegar. Dissolve the tomato paste in the broth and add to the onions and tomatoes. Add the basil and sage. Season with salt and pepper and simmer until the sauce has thickened, 15 to 20 minutes.

Add the beans to the tomato sauce. Cook, stirring, to combine and heat through, about 15 minutes.

To prepare the polenta: In a heavy pot, combine the cornmeal with 1 tablespoon salt. Turn the heat to medium and gradually whisk in 9 cups cold water, stirring constantly, until the polenta begins to boil. Lower the heat and simmer, stirring frequently with a wooden spoon, until thick, about 45 minutes.

If using pancetta: Place the pancetta in a small saucepan over low heat. Cook, stirring frequently, until the pancetta is brown and crisp, about 15 minutes. Use a slotted spoon to transfer the pancetta to a paper towel to drain.

To serve, spoon the polenta into serving dishes. Ladle the beans over the polenta and top with the pancetta, if using. Garnish with fresh herbs.

CHIAPAS BLACK BEAN (FRIJOL NEGRO DE VARA): TAMALES WITH BLACK BEANS

We did some research on traditional black bean recipes from Chiapas and discovered that black bean tamales, made with either blue corn or white corn, are a local specialty. This recipe, based on one from *Saveur Magazine*, seemed the most straightforward. Frozen banana leaves can be found in many Asian supermarkets.

Makes 14 tamales

1 package frozen banana leaves, thawed, center seams removed, leaves cut into 8-inch squares, scraps reserved

4 cups prepared corn masa, either white or blue
½ cup lard or vegetable oil

1 tablespoon salt

3 cups drained cooked black beans, such as Rancho Gordo Frjol Negro de Vara

Place the banana leaves in a wide bowl or baking dish of cold water while you prepare the masa.

In a large bowl, combine the masa, lard or oil, and salt with your hands, kneading the mixture until it forms a thick and pliable paste.

Cover and set aside for 30 minutes.

Line the bottom of a medium pot with a few layers of banana leaves to keep the tamales from sticking (this is a good use for the scraps left over from cutting the squares). Add enough water to come about 3 inches up the sides of the pot. Cover the pot and set over low heat to warm.

Turn the masa out onto a work surface.

Flatten it into a large rectangle, and sprinkle the beans over the surface. Use the heels of your hands to press and knead the masa and beans together until they are well combined. Divide the mixture into fourteen ½ cup portions, then shape each into a chunky patty about ¾ inch thick. Wrap each patty loosely in a banana leaf square to cover, then stack the tamales seam side down in the pot. Cover the pot and adjust the heat as needed; steam until the masa is set, about 1 hour 10 minutes. Turn off the heat and let rest, covered, for 30 minutes. Serve warm with salsa.

DOMINGO ROJO: COCONUT BROWN RICE AND BEANS

Isn't it amazing how many cultures have rice and beans as a favorite dish? Inspired by the Jamaican version of beans and rice, I was longing to see if coconut milk worked with brown rice as well as it does with the more traditional white rice. Friends, it's even better!

Makes 4 servings as a side

1 cup cooked Rancho Gordo Domingo Rojo beans in their broth

¾ cup cold water

¾ cup unsweetened coconut milk

1-inch piece canela (true cinnamon)

3 whole cloves

1 cup brown rice, preferably Massa Organics

1 teaspoon sea salt

1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger

Cilantro or watercress for garnish (optional)

In a small saucepan, warm the beans over low heat.

In another small saucepan, add the water, coconut milk, canela, and cloves. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat to very low and cover.

Cook for 45 minutes, undisturbed, until the rice absorbs the liquid. Turn off the heat; rest for 10 minutes.

Fluff the cooked rice with a fork; gently add the warm beans and cilantro or watercress, if using.

GARBANZO: GARBANZOS WITH SPANISH CHORIZO AND RED PEPPERS

I keep modifying an old favorite. I've started adding a dash of our Spanish Pimentón to this salad and it's a natural match for the Garbanzos.

I'm lucky enough to have a steady supply of Spanish Chorizo from my friends at Fatted Calf Charcuterie in Napa.

Serves 2 as a main dish, or 4 as a side dish

1 cup roasted red peppers, chopped

½ to 1 cup diced Spanish chorizo

1 ½ to 2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo

Garbanzo beans

¼ white or red onion, diced

½ teaspoon Rancho Gordo Castillo Spanish Pimentón

Olive oil and Rancho Gordo Pineapple Vinegar (or another mild vinegar) to taste

Fresh lemon juice to taste

Salt and pepper to taste

Chopped flat-leaf parsley for garnish

In a serving bowl, combine the roasted red peppers, chorizo, Garbanzos, onion, and pimentón. Season to taste with olive oil, vinegar, lemon juice, salt, and pepper.

Just before serving, sprinkle with parsley.

ROYAL CORONA: SUMMER HEIRLOOM BEAN CASSEROLE

I meant to make Deb Perelman's Pizza Beans. This Smitten Kitchen recipe has been one of the most talked-about and produced recipes I've ever known. Members of our Bean Club make it constantly and collectively they've made it a classic.

I was determined to try it, especially knowing that I had a batch of Royal Corona beans sitting in my fridge. I dutifully printed out Deb's recipe and bought the needed ingredients at my grocery store. As it turns out, we suffered an immense heatwave and some weekends are for fun in the kitchen and some are for not moving much off the couch. You can guess where I'm going here.

If you make my version and you like it, please let's give credit to Smitten Kitchen. If not, it's all my fault for being lazy. Actually, it would be hard to fault either version.

Another wonderful aspect of this dish was that the ingredients were mostly leftovers. Sometimes it pays to lack ambition.

Makes 2 to 4 servings

2 cups fully cooked Rancho Gordo Royal Corona, Ayocote Blanco, or Cassoulet beans, drained

1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved

½ cup roasted red peppers, chopped roughly

4 sprigs of thyme, leaves stripped and stems discarded

3 tablespoons olive oil Salt and pepper, to taste

1 cup mozzarella cheese (low moisture, not fresh), grated

1/3 cup Parmesan cheese, grated

Preheat the oven to 475F. Mix the beans, tomatoes, peppers, thyme, salt, pepper, and olive oil together and pour into an oven-safe casserole. Top with the two kinds of cheese. Bake for 20 minutes. The top should be browned and the beans bubbling.

Note: If you have a larger casserole dish, you may need more cheese to cover the whole dish. I don't think many will complain about extra cheese. This recipe can also be doubled or even tripled if you have a very large dish (it makes great leftovers).

SCARLET RUNNER: SCARLET RUNNER BEAN SALAD

This salad is an ideal opportunity to show off your best olive oil. I also think the crunch of the peppers versus the softness of the beans is a swell contrast. Be sure and go easy on the fresh oregano. I like things strong and bold, too, but oregano can easily overpower a dish when fresh.

Makes 6 servings

2 cups drained cooked Scarlet Runner Beans, or any Runner or Ayocote bean

½ red bell pepper, chopped

½ green bell pepper, chopped

1 clove garlic, minced

1 scant teaspoon fresh Italian oregano

½ fresh tomato, chopped

Olive oil and vinegar to taste

Salt to taste

Gently toss all ingredients and chill for about an hour.

Variations: Serve on a bed of lettuce. Use a fig balsamic vinegar for a touch of sweetness, or experiment with our Banana or Pineapple vinegars.

BLACK CAVIAR LENTIL: LENTILS WITH CABBAGE AND MOREL MUSHROOMS

As almost everything I make goes, this one is easy to improvise with. I had morels so I used them. Maybe you have shiitakes or porcini. The method is the same. Obviously, if you don't want the bacon, just leave it out and increase the olive oil for sautéing the cabbage. You could use either our black or green lentils here.

Makes 2 to 4 servings

FOR THE LENTILS:

1 pound Rancho Gordo French-style Green Lentils, or Black Caviar Lentils, picked over and rinsed

1 large yellow onion, chopped

2 cloves garlic, minced

2 teaspoons salt

1 bay leaf

¼ cup olive oil

FOR THE CABBAGE/MUSHROOM MIXTURE:

1 cup dried morel mushrooms

2 to 3 slices of bacon

1 large yellow onion, chopped

2 tablespoons butter

3 to 4 cups thinly sliced green cabbage

2 teaspoons salt, and pepper to taste

Fresh chives or parsley, chopped

In a large pot, sauté the onions, garlic, salt, and bay leaf in the olive oil over medium heat until soft, about 10 minutes. Add the lentils and cover by 2 inches of fresh water. Bring the pot to a full boil over high heat. After 5 minutes, reduce the heat to medium-low, partially covering the pot to maintain a gentle simmer. Cook for about 20 minutes, until the lentils are soft.

Soak the morels in water for about 20 minutes, until soft. Gently remove the mushrooms from the soaking liquid and set aside. Strain the soaking liquid through a paper coffee filter or cheesecloth. Reserve the liquid.

In a large open pan, add the bacon slices and cook over medium heat until cooked, turning once, about 15 minutes. Remove and reserve the slices. Drain all but about 1 tablespoon of the bacon fat. Sauté the onion in the fat until soft, about 7 to 10 minutes. Add the butter and once melted, add the cabbage and stir well. Turn the heat up to medium-high. Add the salt and pepper. Continue cooking until the cabbage is tender yet still crisp, about 15 minutes (you want to avoid overcooking and making it mushy). Add the mushrooms, chopped or whole as you prefer. Add the reserved mushroom soaking liquid.

Drain the lentils, reserving the liquid. Add the lentils to your serving platter and add a little of the reserved broth if it seems to dry or you prefer the dish a little soupier. Gently spoon the cabbage and mushroom mixture over the lentils.

Chop the reserved bacon and lightly add it to the dish with the chives or parsley. Serve with a salad and bread would be a natural addition, and elevate it to something you would be proud to serve to guests.

SUPER LUCKY 2022 BLACK EYED PEA: ROASTED DELICATA SQUASH, BLACK- EYED PEAS, AND MUSTARD GREENS

Reprinted with permission from *Vegetable Kingdom: The Abundant World of Vegan Recipes* by Bryant Terry, copyright © 2020. Published by Ten Speed Press, an imprint of Penguin Random House. Note: Rancho Gordo Black Eyed Peas are so fresh that they don't require soaking. If you do soak as directed here, start checking for doneness after about 30 minutes of cooking.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

BLACK-EYED PEAS

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 cup finely diced white onion
½ cup finely diced carrot
½ cup finely diced celery
1 tablespoon minced garlic
1 tablespoon minced canned chipotle chile
1 bay leaf
1 ½ cups dried black-eyed peas, soaked in water with 1 tablespoon kosher salt overnight
1 teaspoon kosher salt, plus more to taste
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
Freshly ground white pepper

SQUASH

2 medium delicata squash (about 1 pound each), halved lengthwise, seeded (reserved for another use), and cut into ¼-inch-thick slices
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons light agave nectar
¼ teaspoon kosher salt

MUSTARD GREENS

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
4 shallots, minced
2 teaspoons minced garlic
¼ teaspoon kosher salt, plus more as needed
1 pound mustard greens, ribs removed, leaves torn into bite-size pieces
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar

Make the black-eyed peas: In a large pot, warm the olive oil over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add the onion, carrot, and celery and sauté until the vegetables soften, 8 to 10 minutes. Add the garlic, chipotle, and bay leaf and cook until the garlic smells fragrant, 3 to 4 minutes.

Drain the black-eyed peas, add them to the pot, and pour in enough water to cover them by 2 inches. Increase the heat to high and bring the water to a boil, then immediately decrease the heat to medium-low, skim off any foam, cover, and simmer until the black-eyed peas are just tender, about 45 minutes. Stir in the salt and cook for another 5 minutes. Drain the beans, reserving the cooking liquid, and discard the bay leaf.

Return the black-eyed peas to the pot, transferring 1 cup of them to a blender. Pour in 1 ½ cups of reserved cooking liquid and pulse until chunky but not fully pureed, about 30 seconds. Pour the mixture into the pot and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to medium-low, stir in the vinegar, and season with salt and pepper to taste. Simmer for a few more minutes and then remove from the heat.

Make the squash: While the black-eyed peas are cooking, preheat the oven to 425°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

In a large bowl, combine the squash, olive oil, agave nectar, and salt and toss to combine. Spread the squash on the prepared baking sheet and roast until tender and browning, about 30 minutes.

Make the greens: In a Dutch oven, warm the olive oil over medium heat until shimmering. Add the shallots and sauté, stirring often, until soft, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in the mustard greens and 2 cups of the reserved cooking liquid from the black-eyed peas. Decrease the heat to low and cook, partially covered, until the greens are meltingly tender, about 25 minutes. Stir in the vinegar and season with salt to taste.

To serve, present the black-eyed peas, squash, and mustard greens in bowls, pour in a little (about ¼ cup) of the reserved cooking liquid from the black-eyed peas, and generously top with pikliz* or pickled mustard greens (and some of their liquid).

*Haitian pickled-cabbage condiment

CRANBERRY BEAN: POROTOS GRANADOS (CHILEAN CRANBERRY BEAN STEW)

The first volume of our cookbook, *The Rancho Gordo Vegetarian Kitchen*, was such a hit that we couldn't stop there. A second volume will soon be available to order from our website. As I'm sure you've heard, the international ports are a mess, so we don't have an exact eta for the new books but we're hoping for late November.

A tip-off from a customer led us to this seasonal Chilean soup. Rather than just adding basil at the end, you add it throughout the cooking process, which gives the soup a rich, herb-infused quality that's hard to describe.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

½ pound dry Rancho Gordo Cranberry or Marcella beans, picked over and rinsed

½ pound pumpkin or winter squash, cubed (about 2 cups)

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 small bunch fresh basil, stems removed

2 tablespoons vegetable oil 1 small onion, chopped

1 garlic clove, minced

½ teaspoon sweet paprika

½ teaspoon ground cumin

2 ears of corn, kernels removed (about 2 cups)

1 tablespoon butter

Rancho Gordo New Mexican Red Chile Powder (optional)

Cook the beans in plenty of water until tender, 1 to 3 hours. Add the pumpkin, ½ teaspoon salt, a few basil leaves, and more water, if needed.

Cover and cook over medium heat for about 20 minutes, until the pumpkin is soft.

Meanwhile, in a large skillet over medium heat, warm the oil. Add the onion, garlic, more basil leaves, paprika, and cumin, plus more salt and pepper. Fry until the onion is soft and fragrant, about 7 minutes.

Add the corn to the pumpkin and beans; cook until tender, about 5 more minutes. Stir the onion mixture into the pumpkin-corn mixture, and add the butter. Taste and adjust the seasoning. Garnish with fresh basil and chile powder, if desired.

KING CITY PINK: KING CITY PINKS WITH PICKLED SHALLOTS & GOAT CHEESE

Pickled shallots are a quick and easy way to balance the flavors of a heavy dish. A few shallots and some of the brine make a fine dish something to sing about, with very little effort. They last for about a week — after enjoying them with beans, try them in salads or atop steamed vegetables.

Makes 2 servings

2 shallots, thinly sliced

½ of a jalapeño, seeded and thinly sliced (optional)

Rancho Gordo Banana Vinegar or Rancho Gordo

Pineapple Vinegar, or unseasoned rice vinegar

Sea salt

½ teaspoon dried Mexican oregano, preferably

Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio, plus more for

garnish

About 2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo King City

Pink beans in their broth, warmed

Crumbled goat cheese, for topping

To make the pickled shallots: In a glass or ceramic bowl, combine the sliced shallots and jalapeño (if using); add enough vinegar to cover completely. Season with a pinch of salt. Crush the oregano with your hands, and add it as well. Let marinate about 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Divide the warm beans and broth between two bowls; top with a spoonful of pickled shallots, a crumble of goat cheese, and a pinch of oregano.

LARGE WHITE LIMA: LARGE WHITE LIMA & FENNEL STEW

White Lima beans create a rich, creamy cooking broth, and this stew takes full advantage of it. Adding a Parmesan rind will enhance the flavor even more. If you're going to make this stew, be sure you add plenty of water so you have enough broth for the final dish. If you don't, you can always add vegetable or chicken broth to make up for it.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

1 to 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for garnish

¼ pound pancetta, cubed

1 fennel bulb, chopped, fronds reserved for garnish

½ of an onion, chopped

2 garlic cloves, minced

1 carrot, peeled and chopped

½ pound dried Rancho Gordo Large White Lima or Christmas Lima beans, picked over and rinsed

2 sprigs fresh thyme

1 Parmesan rind

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Handful of flat-leaf parsley, minced

Grated Parmesan cheese

In a large soup pot over medium-low heat, warm the olive oil. Add the pancetta cubes and cook, stirring, until lightly browned. Remove the pancetta and set aside. To the pot, add most of the chopped fennel, reserving about 1 tablespoon for the garnish. Add the onion, garlic, and carrot; cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the beans, thyme, and Parmesan rind, and enough water to cover the beans by 3 inches. Increase heat to high and bring to a boil for 10 to 15 minutes. Reduce heat to low; simmer until the beans are tender, 1 to 2 hours.

Meanwhile, in a bowl, combine the reserved chopped fennel, the fennel fronds, and the parsley. Add a splash of olive oil and some grated Parmesan cheese. Stir to combine.

When beans are nearly done, stir in the reserved pancetta. Add salt and pepper to taste. Divide the stew among bowls; top with the fennel-parsley mixture.

MIDNIGHT BLACK: BLACK BEAN POT LICKER WITH SWEET POTATO

Reprinted with permission from the new cookbook *Grist: A Practical Guide to Cooking Grains, Beans, Seeds, and Legumes* by Abra Berens, copyright © 2021. Published by Chronicle Books.

Abra says: “This is my favorite way to use up the inky black pot liquor from cooking black beans. I often remove the beans to use for something else, but you could also keep them in the soup to make it heartier.”

Makes 2 servings

2 lb [900 g] sweet potatoes, cut into chunks

Neutral oil

Salt

1 onion (about 8 oz [225 g]), thinly sliced

6 garlic cloves, minced

4 to 6 cups [1 to 1.5 L] black bean pot liquor, all beans removed

¼ cup [60 ml] sour cream

10 sprigs cilantro, chopped

Preheat the oven to 400°F [200°C]. Toss the sweet potatoes in a glug of neutral oil and a big pinch of salt, then roast until caramelized on the outside and tender on the inside, about 20 minutes.

In a medium stockpot, heat a glug of neutral oil and sweat the onions and garlic with a pinch of salt until soft and tender, about 7 minutes. Add the reserved pot liquor and thin with 2 cups [500 ml] of water or stock, then bring to a boil. Add the roasted sweet potatoes.

To serve, portion the soup into serving bowls, top with a dollop of sour cream, and sprinkle on a handful of the chopped cilantro.

MASOOR DAL (SPLIT RED LENTIL): MUSHOOR DAL, BENGALI STYLE

This recipe comes from our friend Arnab Chakladar. His food blog, *My Annoying Opinions*, includes this and many more dal recipes, and I recommend you take a look.

Arnab says: “Mushoor dal (masoor in Hindi, banal “red lentils” in American) is not a fancy dal and I don’t know of any fancy ways of preparing it (at least not in Bengali cuisine). You boil the dal, you add some tadka/phoron (or maybe you don’t) and that’s it. But subtle variations in the few ingredients can make a big difference in the final result. This version of mushoor dal remains my definition of comfort food and in culinary terms it is the constant link from my childhood to now.”

Makes 4 to 6 servings

1 cup mushoor dal/masoor dal/split red lentils

5 cups water

½ teaspoon turmeric powder

Salt

Ghee or vegetable oil

*¾ teaspoon cumin seeds or panch phoron**

½ cup thinly sliced onion

½ teaspoon minced garlic

1 to 2 hot Thai chillies, sliced lengthwise or minced

3 to 4 tablespoons chopped cilantro/dhania

Rinse the dal in a few changes of cold water until the water is clear. Place the dal in a large saucepan with 5 cups of water, the turmeric, and the salt and bring to a boil. As soon as it boils, reduce the heat to medium and cook above a strong simmer for 20 to 30 minutes or until the dal is almost completely mashed up.

While the dal is cooking, prepare the tadka: Heat the ghee/oil in a small skillet and add the cumin seeds; stir for 20 to 30 seconds, then add the onions, garlic, and chillies. Stir-fry until the onions just begin to brown around the edges. Do not let anything burn/scorch.

Add the tadka to the dal, mix in fully, and remove from the heat. Garnish with the cilantro and serve.

*Panch phoron is a specifically Bengali mix of five seeds used in a lot of recipes. It’s available in every Indian grocery; using just cumin seeds is perfectly fine and it’s what I normally do.

WHIPPLE BEAN: RANCHO GORDO CHILI CON CARNE

You might do a double-take when you read the amount of chile powder called for here. We think the star of any chili should be the chiles, either from pods or ground to a powder.

A note on spelling: The pods are called chiles. The dish is called Chili. When you see Chile Powder, you should expect it to be 100% ground chiles. If you are buying Chili Powder, there's a better than good chance there will be spices and herbs added.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

¼ cup olive oil
2 to 3 lbs chuck roast, cut into ½- to 1-inch cubes
2 white onions, chopped
4 to 6 garlic cloves, minced
1 tablespoon Rancho Gordo Mexican Oregano
¼ to ½ cup Rancho Gordo New Mexican Red Chile Powder
1 teaspoon ground cumin
Salt
3 cups water
1 bottle Negro Modelo (or other dark beer)
1 to 2 cups cooked, drained Rancho Gordo Whipple beans (or Vaquero, Pinto, Santa Maria Piquito, or Domingo Rojo beans)
1 tablespoon Masa Harina (optional)

In a stock pot, heat the oil over medium heat. Brown the meat pieces, removing them as they brown.

When all the pieces are browned and seared, lower the heat and sauté the onions and garlic until soft. Add the oregano, chile powder, cumin, and salt. Fry the spices for a few minutes and then slowly add the water and then the beer. Bring to a boil and then reduce heat to low. Add the meat back to the pot and allow to simmer gently for about 2 hours, stirring occasionally.

Add the beans. Cook for another 10 minutes or so. The texture should be somewhat soupy but if the liquid is too thin, dissolve the masa harina in about ½ cup of water. Stir well to avoid any lumps. Slowly trickle the liquid into the chili. Cook on low for another 15 minutes or so.

Ladle out hot with garnishes of raw chopped onion, chopped cilantro, chile powder, etc. Serve with hot flour tortillas, buttermilk biscuits, or your favorite cornbread.

CASSOULET BEAN: LOUBIA

From *French Beans* by Georgeanne Brennan (Rancho Gordo Press, 2018). Georgeanne says: “If you like spicy beans, you’ll love loubia, a spicy North African dish that’s also popular in France. Deep red and belly warming, it’s thick with white beans, tomatoes, and aromatic vegetables, with or without meat. Like any traditional dish, loubia — which also means “bean” in Arabic — has multiple versions, but the flavor is defined by the array of spices. The beans are served accompanied by extra-virgin olive oil and red wine vinegar to drizzle, a finish that provides amazing results.”

Makes 4 servings

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive, plus more for serving

1 onion, minced

2 garlic cloves, crushed and minced

2 celery stalks with leaves, finely chopped 2 carrots, peeled and finely chopped

½ pound uncooked white beans, such as Cassoulet or Alubia Blanca, picked over and soaked

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1 teaspoon turmeric

1½ tablespoons paprika

1 teaspoon sea salt

1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

2 tablespoon tomato paste

6½ cups water

1 cup chopped canned tomatoes with juice

Red wine vinegar, for serving

In a heavy-bottomed casserole or pot over medium-high heat, warm the olive oil. Add onion and sauté until translucent, 2 or 3 minutes. Add garlic, celery, and carrots; sauté another 2 or 3 minutes. Add beans, cumin, turmeric, paprika, salt, and pepper; cook, stirring until spices are fragrant, about 1 minute. Add tomato paste; continue to stir until well incorporated, about 1 minute. Slowly add ½ cup of water, stirring to make a thin sauce. Add remaining water; bring to a boil while stirring. Reduce heat to low, partially cover, and gently simmer for 1 hour.

Add chopped tomatoes and juice, stirring well. Partially cover and continue to simmer until beans are tender, another 30 to 60 minutes, depending on the size of the beans. Check the liquid level during the last hour of cooking, adding a little more water as needed. The stew should have just enough sauce to hold it all together, but not be soupy.

In a small bowl, combine equal parts olive oil and vinegar. To serve, spoon beans into bowls or onto dinner plates, topped with a teaspoon or more of the oil-and-vinegar condiment.

MAYOCOBA BEAN: WARM BEAN, ARTICHOKE, AND SPINACH DIP

A comforting bean dip recipe from our new cookbook, *The Rancho Gordo Vegetarian Kitchen, Volume 2* (Rancho Gordo Press, 2021). Perfect for a casual weekend gathering, it can easily be scaled up for more servings.

Makes 4 to 6 servings as an appetizer

Oil or butter

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

10 ounces baby spinach

1 cup packed fresh basil

1½ cups drained cooked Rancho Gordo Mayocoba beans, or white beans, plus ½ cup bean broth

6 ounces cream cheese

3 garlic cloves, smashed

1 small jalapeño chile, seeded and chopped (optional)

1 14-ounce can artichoke hearts, drained and finely chopped

½ cup grated Parmesan cheese

¾ cup shredded mozzarella cheese

1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo Castillo Spanish Pimentón or other smoked paprika

Toasted bread or baked chips, for serving

Preheat the oven to 450°F and grease a 1-quart casserole with oil or butter.

Bring a large saucepan of salted water to a boil over high heat; meanwhile, prepare a bowl of ice water. Stir the spinach and basil into the boiling water and cook until bright green, about 30 seconds. Remove with a slotted spoon and immediately plunge in the ice water. Drain and squeeze dry, then roughly chop.

In a food processor or blender, puree the beans and their broth, cream cheese, garlic, and jalapeño (if using) until smooth, scraping the sides as needed. Transfer to a large bowl and add the spinach and basil, along with the artichoke hearts, ¼ cup of the Parmesan, and ½ cup of the mozzarella. Season with the pimentón, ½ teaspoon salt, and black pepper to taste.

Spread the mixture in the prepared dish and top with the remaining Parmesan and mozzarella. Bake until golden and bubbly, 20 to 25 minutes. Serve warm with bread or baked chips.

YELLOW EYE BEAN: YELLOW EYES WITH WILD MUSHROOM

Fresh wild mushrooms have been plentiful lately here in Northern California. They are a perfect match for a bowl of heirloom beans and broth, and a thick slice of toasted bread.

Makes 2 servings

½ pound wild mushrooms

2 tablespoons butter

1 tablespoon olive oil, plus more for serving

2 to 3 garlic cloves, minced

Sprig of fresh thyme (optional)

Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

2 cups cooked, warmed Rancho Gordo Yellow Eye beans, or white beans, with some broth

Chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley (optional)

Wipe the mushrooms with a damp paper towel and cut into bite-sized pieces if they're big.

In a skillet or sauté pan over medium-low heat, warm the butter and olive oil together. Add the mushrooms, minced garlic, and thyme sprig, if using, and cook, stirring, until the mushrooms begin to soften and release their juices, 8 to 10 minutes or so. Salt to taste.

Remove the thyme, if you used it, and ladle into waiting bowls of warm Yellow Eye beans. Drizzle with a little more olive oil and top with black pepper and parsley, if desired.

PINTO BEAN SOUP: PINTO BEAN SOUP WITH MASA AND QUESO FRESCO DUMPLINGS

This recipe comes from cookbook author and TV personality Pati Jinich. If you are a fan of Mexican food, check out her new cookbook, *Treasures of the Mexican Table* (Harvest, November 2021).

Makes 6 servings

4 tablespoons canola or safflower oil, divided
½ white onion, chopped
1 garlic clove
½ pound (about 2) ripe Roma tomatoes, cored and chopped
¾ teaspoon kosher or sea salt divided, or to taste
3 cups cooked Pinto beans, with 1 cup of their cooking broth
8 cups chicken or vegetable broth divided
1 cup corn masa flour, preferably the masa harina mix for tamales, but masa harina for tortillas also works
¾ cup water
2 tablespoons crumbled queso fresco
1 tablespoon chopped cilantro leaves
1 tablespoon chopped mint leaves
Mexican crema optional, for garnish
Sliced scallions mint, cilantro and crushed dried chiltepín chiles or chiles de árbol, optional, for garnish

Note: If you are lucky enough to live next to a tortilleria or store that sells fresh corn masa, already mixed, go for it! You will need about ¾ pound. Just mix it with the queso fresco, oil, mint, cilantro, and salt. If you can't get ahold of fresh masa, rest assured that the corn masa made with masa harina for tamales or tortillas will still be excellent.

In a large, heavy soup pot or casserole over medium-high heat, heat 2 tablespoons of oil. Add the onion and cook for 5 to 6 minutes until it has completely softened and the edges are golden brown. Add the garlic clove and cook for another minute, until the garlic is fragrant. Stir in the tomatoes and ½ teaspoon salt and cook until the tomatoes have cooked down to a soft, thick paste, about 5 minutes.

Add the beans along with 1 cup of their broth, as well as 4 cups of the chicken or vegetable broth. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to medium, cover partially and simmer for 10 minutes. The beans should be completely soft and the broth thick and soupy.

Meanwhile, prepare the masa for the dumplings. In a medium bowl, combine the corn masa flour with the water and ¼ teaspoon salt. Knead together with your hands. The dough will be very coarse and seem dry. Add the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil, queso fresco, cilantro, and mint, and mix together until the dough is very soft and homogenous, about 1 minute. Set aside.

Working in batches, puree the pinto bean soup in a blender until completely smooth. Pour back into the soup pot and whisk or stir in the remaining 4 cups chicken or vegetable broth. Set over medium heat and bring to a simmer. Reduce heat to low.

Begin forming the dumplings. Scoop up enough masa to make 1-inch balls, roll them between your hands (moisten your hands with water if they stick) and, one-by-one, gently drop them into the soup. Once all the masa balls have been shaped and added to the soup, gently stir with a wooden spoon to make sure none stick to the bottom. Cover the pot partially with a lid and let the soup simmer gently for 15 to 20 more minutes until the masa dumplings are cooked through. They will thicken the soup as they simmer.

Taste the soup for salt and add more if need be. Serve hot, garnishing each bowl with a spoonful of fresh Mexican cream if desired. You may also sprinkle on some sliced scallions, mint, cilantro, and crushed chiltepín chiles or chiles de árbol for a punch of heat.

SANTANERO NEGRO DELGADO BEAN: ENFRIJOLADAS

This is a fine recipe from Zarela Martinez' book *The Food and Life of Oaxaca* (McMillan, 1997). If some of the ingredients are hard to find, don't be afraid to improvise, remembering your creation won't be quite authentic. The basic idea is instead of an enchilada, with a focus on chiles, this dish is Enfrijoladas, with the heart of the dish being beans, or rather, *frijoles*.

In December, we got to take a quick breath and celebrate our 20th anniversary at Valley Bar and Bottle, a small restaurant in the town of Sonoma. We loved seeing some of your faces there! Chef Emma Lipp created a thoughtful and delicious menu featuring our beans. Her enfrijoladas were a standout dish.

Makes 4 servings

1 Oaxacan pasilla chile or dried chipotle chile, top and seeds removed, or 1 canned chipotle chile en adobo

1 small onion, halved

1 garlic clove, coarsely chopped

2 dried avocado leaves

1 cup cooked Rancho Gordo Santanero Negro Delgado or Midnight Black beans, with some cooking liquid

3 cups (approximately) bean cooking liquid

1 teaspoon salt, or to taste

2 tablespoons lard or oil

1 tablespoon cider vinegar

½ teaspoon dried Mexican Oregano, crumbled

½ cup vegetable oil, or as needed

12 corn tortillas

8 ounces queso fresco or ricotta salata, crumbled

Place the dried chile in a small bowl and cover with boiling water. Soak for about 20 minutes. Drain well. (It is not necessary to soak canned chipotles.) Coarsely chop half the onion and place in a blender with the drained chile (or canned chipotle chile en adobo), garlic, avocado leaves, beans, and a little of the bean liquid to facilitate blending; reserve the rest. (Alternatively, process in a food processor; the added liquid will not be necessary.) Stir in ½ teaspoon salt, or to taste.

In a small saucepan over medium heat, heat the lard until rippling. Add the puréed bean mixture and cook, stirring constantly, for 2 minutes. Gradually stir in enough of the reserved bean-cooking liquid to thin the mixture to the consistency of heavy cream. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to the lowest possible setting, and keep warm, stirring occasionally, while you make the relish.

Mince the remaining half onion. In a small bowl, combine with the vinegar, oregano, and remaining ½ teaspoon salt, or to taste. Set aside.

In a small skillet just large enough to hold a tortilla, heat the oil over high heat until rippling. Fry the tortillas, one at a time, about 30 seconds. Lift out onto paper towels to drain. Fold each into quarters while it is still hot enough to be pliable; dip into the hot bean purée and place on a platter. When all are done, sprinkle with the onion mixture and the crumbled cheese. Serve immediately.

BUCKEYE BEAN: BUCKEYE BEANS WITH ROASTED PEPPERS & PUMPKIN SEEDS

Roasting poblanos might seem intimidating but they're easy once you get the knack. You can char them right on a gas stove and then let them rest for 15 minutes before peeling them. A lot of instructions will tell you to do it in a plastic bag, but letting them rest in a mixing bowl covered with a dinner plate does the same job without wasting the plastic.

Makes 2 servings

3 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Buckeye beans, or other cooked heirloom beans, in their broth

3 tablespoons olive oil

½ white onion, thinly sliced or chopped

2 cloves garlic, peeled and thinly sliced

2 poblano chiles, roasted, peeled, and seeded, cut into strips (see note above)

1 red bell pepper, roasted, peeled, and seeded, cut into strips (the jarred variety are fine)

1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo Mexican Oregano or Oregano Indio

Salt to taste

4 tablespoons roasted pepitas (pumpkin seeds)

Gently heat the cooked beans over medium heat.

In a skillet over medium-low heat, warm the olive oil, reserving a few drops to finish the dish. Sauté the onion until translucent. Add the garlic and continue cooking until it is soft. Add the poblanos and bell pepper strips and heat through. Add the oregano and stir. Add salt to taste.

Serve the beans in bowls and top with the pepper mixture tableside. Add the pepitas. Drizzle with a scant amount of olive oil.

Notes: If you just have poblanos, you can omit the bell peppers. You could try using only bell peppers if you don't want to bother with the poblanos, but it will be a different dish, and possibly very sweet.

GARBANZO BEAN: LIGURIAN-STYLE ARUGULA, FENNEL, GARBANZO & SHRIMP SALAD

If you wanted to drop the shrimp, this is still a great salad combination, inspired by a recipe from Laura Giannatempo's *A Ligurian Kitchen: Recipes and tales from the Italian Riviera*. The original recipe has you grilling shrimp and indeed you should, if that's handy. I gently pan-sautéed shrimp in tons of garlic with olive oil and added them to the salad. If there were a grill going, I would have used that.

Makes 2 to 4 servings

1 teaspoon honey
2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice 1 tablespoon orange juice
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil Salt and pepper to taste
1 small fennel bulb, thinly sliced with a mandoline
4 cups baby arugula (rocket), washed and dried
1 orange, peeled and cut into segments
½ small red onion, thinly sliced
1 pound of shrimp, cleaned and cooked as you like (see note above)
1 cup cooked, drained Rancho Gordo Garbanzo beans

To make the dressing, in a small bowl, whisk together the honey, lemon juice, orange juice, and olive oil. Season with salt and pepper.

In a salad bowl, combine the fennel, arugula, orange segments, and onion. Add most of the dressing and toss well. Top with the Garbanzos and shrimp, and drizzle with the remaining dressing. Serve.

GARBANZO BEAN: GARBANZO SALAD WITH CUCUMBER, TOMATO, AND CHILE

Nancy in our retail department brought this refreshingly simple yet addictive salad to a work potluck. We loved it so much we included it in the second volume of *The Rancho Gordo Vegetarian Kitchen* cookbook.

If you are serving this to spice-averse eaters, you could dial down the chile flakes!.

Makes 4 servings

3 cups cooked, drained Rancho Gordo Garbanzo beans
1 large tomato, chopped
1 small cucumber, peeled and chopped
½ of a white or red onion, finely chopped
1 tablespoon red chile flakes, or to taste
Juice of 2 lemons
About 1 tablespoon salt, or to taste
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

In a large bowl, combine the cooked Garbanzo beans, tomato, cucumber, and onion; mix to combine. Add the chile flakes, lemon juice, and salt; mix again. Taste and adjust seasoning before serving.

LARGE WHITE LIMA BEAN: BUTTER BEAN GRATIN WITH ROASTED TOMATOES & SALSA FRESCA

We saw a recipe for a vegan lima bean casserole with the béchamel made from tofu. It was nice but we weren't sure if it was worth all the bother. We then tried it with regular béchamel and it was also good, but the leftovers we ate with the roasted tomatoes and salsa were better than either of the fancier (and more time-consuming) versions. We think you will agree.

Makes 2 to 4 servings

About 3 cups sweet ripe cherry tomatoes

½ cup roughly chopped fresh cilantro, leaves and soft stalks

3 to 5 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed with the flat of a knife

5 tablespoons olive oil (divided use), plus more for drizzling

1 tablespoon maple syrup

1 teaspoon flaky salt

Black pepper to taste

3 cups cooked, drained Rancho Gordo Large White Lima Beans

About 1 cup torn bread pieces (preferably a sturdy bread, like sourdough)

Vegetable broth or bean-cooking liquid, as needed

FOR THE SALSA FRESCA:

1 medium tomato, chopped

1 serano chile, finely chopped (optional)

¼ of a white onion, finely chopped

1 tablespoon good olive oil, plus extra to serve

1 tablespoon lime juice, plus lime wedges to serve

¼ teaspoon salt

2 tablespoons finely chopped cilantro

Heat the oven to 475°F. Put the cherry tomatoes in a baking dish large enough to fit them snugly in a single layer. Add the cilantro, garlic, 2 tablespoons of the oil, the maple syrup, salt, and plenty of pepper, and stir to coat. Place the torn bread pieces on a baking sheet and toss with 2 tablespoons olive oil. Roast the tomatoes for 25 to 30 minutes, until softened and slightly charred. Toast the bread until golden, about

10 minutes; remove and set aside.

Once the tomatoes are roasted, stir in the drained beans and enough liquid to almost cover the contents of the dish. Turn the oven to broil (or the highest heat setting on your oven). Top with the toasted bread pieces, pushing some down into the beans and tomatoes, then drizzle generously with oil and bake until golden brown and bubbling. This will take anywhere between 5 and 15 minutes. Remove and set aside to cool.

Meanwhile, make the salsa fresca. In a small bowl, mix the tomato, chile (if using), onion, oil, lime juice, and half a teaspoon salt. Just before serving, stir in the cilantro.

Top the gratin with some of the salsa, then drizzle with oil, sprinkle with salt and black pepper, and serve with lime wedges and the remaining salsa on the side.

MARCELLA BEAN: CREAMY WHITE BEAN & ASPARAGUS SOUP

Recipe adapted from *Fagioli* by Judith Barrett (Rodale, 2004). It's based on a soup served in Umbria in the spring, when asparagus is plentiful in the markets.

Makes 6 servings

5 tablespoons olive oil (divided use), plus more for serving

½ cup chopped shallots or red onion

1 celery stalk, finely chopped

1 garlic clove, minced

1 medium Yukon Gold (or other waxy) potato, peeled and chopped

½ cup tomato puree

1 pound fresh asparagus, bottom 2 inches cut off and discarded, stalks peeled and roughly chopped

2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Marcella beans, cooking liquid reserved

Vegetable or chicken broth, as needed

2 ounces prosciutto, diced (optional)

Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Chopped fresh parsley for garnish (optional)

In a soup pot over medium heat, warm 4 tablespoons of the olive oil. Add the shallots, celery, and garlic, and cook, stirring, about 5 minutes, until the vegetables begin to soften. Add the potato, tomato puree, asparagus, and beans. Stir in 4 cups of the reserved bean-cooking liquid and/or broth and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the asparagus and potatoes are tender, about 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, if using prosciutto, warm the remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil in a small skillet over medium heat. Add the prosciutto and fry until golden and crisp, 5 to 7 minutes. Remove from the heat and set aside.

Transfer the soup to a blender or food processor or use an immersion blender, and process until smooth. Return to the pot, season with salt and pepper, and reheat before serving. Divide among bowls, and top with fried prosciutto and parsley, if using.

SNOWCAP BEAN: SNOWCAP CHOWDER WITH SAGE, BACON & SWEET POTATOES

Based on a favorite chowder recipe from the *Heirloom Beans* cookbook by Steve Sando (maybe you've heard of him!).

Makes 6 to 8 servings

2 to 3 tablespoons olive oil

½ pound bacon or pancetta, chopped (optional)

1 large yellow onion, diced

2 celery stalks, diced

3 cloves garlic, chopped

*1 pound uncooked Rancho Gordo Snowcap,
Cranberry, or Yellow Eye beans, rinsed*

*2 small Garnet sweet potatoes, cut into small dice
(about 2 cups)*

2 tablespoons chopped fresh sage

Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Fresh chopped parsley for serving

In a large soup pot that will accommodate the beans, over medium heat, warm the olive oil. (If using bacon, add that instead of olive oil, and sauté until browned, about 10 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, remove and set aside.) Add the onion, celery, and garlic and sauté, stirring, until soft and fragrant, about 10 minutes.

Add the beans and enough water to cover by 2 inches. Bring to a boil; boil for 10 minutes, then cover partially and simmer until about half done. The beans should still be fairly firm with some give.

Add the sweet potatoes, sage, and salt and pepper. Bring to a gentle simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, until beans are tender but just before they begin to fall apart. Serve immediately, garnished with the reserved bacon (if using) and chopped parsley.

VAQUERO BEAN: CHILI VERDE WITH VAQUERO BEANS

Chili verde is simply a green chile stew. There are countless variations, many calling for Hatch chiles and many without beans. We prefer the flavor of poblano chiles, and the addition of our velvety Vaquero beans. You could easily make this without the pork and up the amount of beans.

Serve with corn tortillas or over rice.

Makes 6 to 8 servings

8 fresh tomatillos, husks removed
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
½ of a medium onion, chopped (about 1 cup)
3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
1 teaspoon ground cumin seeds
One 3-pound boneless pork shoulder, trimmed of excess fat and cut into ¾-inch pieces (optional)
8 poblano chiles, roasted, peeled, seeded, and cut into strips
½ cup chopped fresh cilantro, plus more for garnish
1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo Mexican Oregano
1 to 2 cups chicken or vegetable broth
Salt and freshly ground pepper
2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Vaquero beans, in their broth (if not using pork, increase to 3 or 4 cups)

Bring a medium saucepan of water to a boil. Add the tomatillos and cook until soft, about

5 minutes. Drain and rinse under cold running water, then chop. (If using canned tomatillos, this step isn't necessary.)

In a soup pot or Dutch oven over medium heat, warm the oil. Add the onion, garlic, and cumin and sauté until the vegetables are soft and fragrant, about 10 minutes. Add the pork (if using), roasted chiles, tomatillos, cilantro, and oregano. Pour in enough broth to cover everything. Season with salt and pepper and bring to a simmer.

Cover and cook until the pork is tender and shreds easily with a fork, 1 to 1 ½ hours. (If not using pork, cook until the mixture has thickened to your liking.) Add the beans and some broth and cook for 30 more minutes. Adjust seasoning with more salt if needed. Ladle the chili into warmed bowls and garnish with chopped cilantro. (You can also cook the chili up to the point of adding beans, allow it to cool and then refrigerate overnight and remove the fat that has risen. Add the beans and then gently heat until warmed through.)

FRENCH-STYLE GREEN LENTIL: SALADE DE PONOTES A LA CRÈME (FRENCH LENTIL SALAD WITH CREAM)

Recipe from *When French Women Cook* by Madeleine Kamman. She notes: “The best lentils to use for this are the true ponotes, the tiny green lentils grown and bagged in Le Puy (France). They can be found in the best specialty shops. After you drain the lentils, keep the cooking juices. Blended with cream and chives they make a jolly good soup.”

Makes 6 to 8 servings

*1 pound Rancho Gordo French-Style Green Lentils,
cooked and drained*

2 shallots, chopped fine

*3 tablespoons minced fresh chervil or chopped
parsley*

¾ teaspoon salt

Pepper

3 tablespoons wine vinegar

¼ cup heavy cream

½ cup walnut oil

6 lettuce leaves (large Boston type)

Prepare the dressing: squeeze the chopped shallots in the corner of a towel to extract the bothersome juices. Put the shallots in a small bowl. Add the chervil, salt, pepper to your taste, and the vinegar. Mix well; without waiting, whisk the cream and walnut oil into the vinegar mixture.

Toss the lentils into the dressing and serve on lettuce leaves. The salad is delicious either lukewarm or well chilled. Adapt the temperature to the season and the weather of the day.

CRANBERRY BEAN: WARM CRANBERRY BEANS WITH RADICCHIO AND PECORINO

We collaborated with Emily Nunn on an e-book, and this very simple salad turned out to be a favorite. The e-book is available for download on our site if you'd like more of her recipes.

Makes 2 servings

1 large garlic clove

1 teaspoon kosher salt

½ cup extra virgin olive oil

3 tablespoons sherry vinegar

Freshly ground black pepper

*2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Cranberry beans in
their broth*

*Half a small head of radicchio, sliced crosswise into
pretty ribbons (about 2 cups)*

½ cup pecorino cheese, cut into tiny cubes

To make the vinaigrette: In a mortar, mash the garlic with the salt with a pestle, until a paste is formed. Whisk in olive oil and vinegar. Season with freshly ground black pepper.

Warm the beans; drain and place in a bowl with the radicchio and cheese. Toss with several tablespoons of the vinaigrette, season with plenty of black pepper, and serve immediately.

GOOD MOTHER STALLARD BEAN: SUMMERTIME CHILI SIN CARNE

We reworked my original Chili Sin Carne recipe with our new chili powder blend and agreed this is the vegetarian chili to make this summer.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

4 tablespoons olive oil

2 garlic cloves

½ of an onion, chopped

2 tablespoons Rancho Gordo Chili Powder 2 cups vegetable broth

4 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Good Mother Stallard beans, or other hearty heirloom beans, with about 1 cup of cooking broth

4 small zucchini (or 2 large), sliced into rounds or at a bias

Fresh corn kernels from 3 ears of corn

Salt to taste

Sugar (if needed)

Limes and/or creme fraiche for serving (optional)

In a large pot, like an enameled cast iron Dutch oven, heat the olive oil over medium-low heat until it ripples. Add the garlic and onion and sauté until fragrant, about 5 minutes. Add the chili powder and mix well, stirring constantly, for 3 minutes. You should have a dense paste.

Very slowly, mix in the vegetable broth, stirring constantly until well blended. Gently add the beans and their broth. Mix and cook on medium-low heat for about 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Test seasonings and add salt if needed. If the broth is overly bitter, add sugar, a teaspoon at a time, until the flavor is correct.

Continue simmering on medium-low, stirring occasionally, until the chili has started to thicken and there is no grainy texture from the chili powder. Add the zucchini and corn and cook for another 15 minutes.

Serve with lime wedges and a bowl of creme fraiche, if you like.

MIDNIGHT BLACK BEAN: NOPAL AND BLACK BEAN SALAD

Right after beans, my passions lie with cactus plants. Nopales are succulents in the *Opuntia* family and you spy them all over the Bay Area. You see them pre-cut in plastic bags in the cold section of many Mexican markets and you'll find them in jars with vinegar as well.

Makes 4 servings

2 nopal paddles, or 1½ cups jarred, cooked nopales

1 cup cooked, well-drained Rancho Gordo

Midnight Black beans, warmed slightly

½ red onion, chopped

½ cup crumbled queso fresco, or ½ cup cubed

Monterey Jack cheese

¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro

1 cup mixed salad greens

Salt and freshly ground pepper

2 garlic cloves, minced

2 tablespoons fresh lime juice

2 tablespoons sunflower or grapeseed oil

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

If using jarred nopales, drain and rinse well. If preparing the nopales yourself: Bring a medium saucepan of lightly salted water to a boil. With a sharp knife, cut along the outside rim of the paddle. Next, holding the base with a towel, scrape off the sharp spines on the paddles (I'd suggest wearing gloves if it's your first time). Cut off any bruised or damaged spots. The paddles will ooze liquid; rinse them under cold running water. Cut them crosswise into 1-inch-thick slices. Cut the slices into 1-inch squares. Cook the nopal pieces in the boiling water until very tender, about 15 minutes. Add a few onion slices for extra flavor. Drain and rinse well under cold, running water.

In a large salad bowl, combine the nopales, beans, onion, cheese, cilantro, and greens.

To make the dressing: In a small bowl, whisk together the garlic and lime juice. Slowly drizzle in the sunflower and olive oils, whisking constantly until the dressing comes together.

Pour the dressing over the salad. Toss well and season with salt and pepper.

DOMINGO ROJO BEAN: CELENE'S BEAN-STUFFED PUPUSAS

Celene in our customer service department is from El Salvador and she was gracious enough to share her pupusa recipe. She says our Domingo Rojos remind her of the small red beans that are popular in El Salvador. Black beans are another favorite there.

She usually makes a quick tomato sauce to serve over these. She boils 8 to 10 tomatoes, covered with water, for about 15 minutes, and then purées the mixture until smooth (adding salt to taste).

Makes 18 pupusas

FOR THE CURTIDO

½ head green cabbage, cored and shredded

1 small white onion, sliced

2 medium carrots, grated

4 cups boiling water

1 cup distilled white vinegar

1 tablespoon Rancho Gordo Mexican Oregano

2 teaspoons salt

FOR THE REFRIED BEANS

3 tablespoons olive oil

½ cup chopped white onion

1 garlic clove, minced

1 pound Rancho Gordo Domingo Rojo or Midnight Black beans, cooked, with cooking liquid

1 teaspoon salt

3½ cups grated mozzarella cheese

FOR THE PUPUSA DOUGH

4 cups masa harina

2 teaspoons salt

3 cups cold water

Vegetable oil for frying

MAKE THE CURTIDO: In a large bowl, combine the cabbage, onion, and carrots. Pour the boiling water over the vegetables and toss. Let sit for 10 minutes, then drain.

In a liquid measuring cup or small bowl, combine the vinegar, oregano, and salt. Pour over the slaw and toss to coat. Once thoroughly mixed, transfer the curtido and any leftover liquid in the bowl to an airtight jar or container. Chill for at least 20 minutes in the refrigerator, or chill overnight for best results.

MAKE THE REFRIED BEANS: Heat a large cast-iron skillet over medium-low heat for about 5 minutes. Add the oil to the pan. Once hot, add the onion and cook until soft and translucent, about 3 minutes. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant and softened, about 1 minute.

Add the beans, along with some of their liquid, to the pan and increase the heat to medium. Add the salt. Mash the beans with a potato or bean masher, ensuring no beans are left whole. Cook for 7 to 10 minutes, stirring

frequently, until most of the liquid has evaporated and the beans don't immediately flood the pan when you drag a spatula across the bottom. If you prefer a perfectly smooth consistency, use an immersion blender to purée the beans in the pan, or transfer to a blender and blend until smooth. Season with more salt to taste, then set aside to cool completely before making the pupusa dough. Once the beans have cooled, fold in the mozzarella cheese.

MAKE THE PUPUSA DOUGH: In a large bowl, whisk together the masa harina and salt, then add the water. Use your hands to mix until the dough comes together with a clay-like texture.

Fill a small bowl with water and a bit of oil and set it near your work station. You'll wet your fingers with the mixture as you work to keep the dough from sticking to your hands.

Heat a large pan or griddle over medium-high heat for at least 5 minutes. While the pan heats, form the pupusas: Take a large, golf ball-sized portion (about 3½ ounces) of dough and roll into a ball, then flatten into an even round, using the fingers of your dominant hand to press the dough against the palm of your non-dominant hand (rather than smashing your palms together), about 5 inches in diameter.

Fill the dough round with about 3 tablespoons of the bean mixture, or slightly less than the amount of masa used to make the disc. Gently fold 2 sides of the dough over the filling, then rotate and fold up the other 2 sides until the filling is completely encased. Pinch off any excess dough overlapping at the top and return to the remaining masa. Then, carefully pat out the ball between your hands into a roughly 4-inch disc. If the filling breaks through, patch it with a tiny bit of dough. Repeat with the remaining ingredients.

Lightly brush the hot pan with the vegetable oil, then place 4 to 5 pupusas (or as many as will fit without touching) in the pan and cook for 3 to 5 minutes, depending on thickness, until the bottoms are golden brown. Flip and cook on the other side for 3 to 5 minutes more, until golden brown and cooked through. Repeat with the remaining pupusas.

Serve the pupusas with the curtido. Enjoy!

ROYAL CORONA BEAN: SMOKY CONFIT'D BEANS WITH OLIVES

Lukas Volger's new cookbook, *Snacks for Dinner* (Harper Wave, May 2022), is good for many reasons. It's a wealth of really good food that you'd want in your repertoire. I also love that he gives the option to use canned or homemade beans.

I wish modern food editors would insist on the same and not make a big deal out of it.

Makes 3 to 4 servings

1 ¾ cups cooked white beans (or one 15-ounce can, drained and rinsed), such as Rancho Gordo Royal Corona, Cassoulet, or Large White Lima beans
¼ cup kalamata olives, pitted and coarsely minced
3 plump garlic cloves, smashed
1 ½ teaspoons smoked paprika
1 teaspoon kosher salt
½ cup olive oil
¼ teaspoon dried oregano

Preheat the oven to 400°F.

In a small skillet or other shallow, oven-safe dish, stir together the beans, olives, garlic, paprika, and salt. Pour the oil over the mixture and gently stir to combine. Transfer to the oven and bake for 30 minutes. I don't stir, as I like the chewy crust that forms on the beans at the surface, but you can stir once or twice as it bakes if you prefer a more uniform consistency.

These are best served hot or warm, garnished with the dried oregano. Leftovers can be stored in an airtight container, where they'll continue to marinate for up to 3 days. Bring to room temperature, or warm, before serving.

CHILI POWDER BLEND: RANCHO GORDO CHILI CON CARNE

If you prefer a spicy chili, you might want to add a pinch of your favorite chile powder to this recipe to kick up the heat.

Makes 4 to 5 servings

¼ cup olive oil

2 pounds chuck roast, cut into ½- to 1-inch cubes
2 white onions, chopped

4 to 6 cloves garlic

3 tablespoons Rancho Gordo Chili Powder

3 cups water

1 bottle Negra Modelo (or other dark beer)

*3 cups Rancho Gordo Good Mother Stallard,
Domingo Rojo, Vaquero, or Santa Maria Piquito
beans, cooked and drained*

Salt to taste

1 tablespoon of Masa Harina (optional)

Garnishes of your choice

In a stockpot over medium heat, warm the oil

Brown the meat pieces in batches, removing them as they brown.

When all the pieces are browned and seared, lower the heat and sauté the onions and garlic until soft. Add the chili powder; fry the spices for a few minutes, and then slowly add the water and then the beer. Bring to a boil and then reduce the heat to low. Add the meat back to the pot and allow to simmer gently for about 2 hours, stirring occasionally.

Add the beans and salt to taste. Cook for another 10 minutes or so. The texture should be somewhat soupy but if the liquid is too thin, dissolve the masa harina in about ½ cup of water. Stir well to avoid any lumps. Slowly add the liquid to the chili. Cook on low for another 15 minutes or so.

Ladle out hot with garnishes of raw chopped onion, chopped cilantro, chile powder, etc. Serve with hot flour tortillas, buttermilk biscuits, or your favorite cornbread.

ALUBIA BLANCA BEAN: WHITE BEANS WITH SALSA VERDE

This is one of those recipes where the title is basically the recipe. Creamy white beans topped with an intense green sauce. *Ta da*. We would recommend Alubia Blanca, Royal Corona, or Cassoulet beans.

Makes 4 servings as a side

½ of a garlic clove

1 teaspoon salt

¾ cup mixed fresh flat-leaf parsley

¼ cup fresh sage leaves

About ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

Fresh lemon juice to taste

Freshly ground pepper

3 cups cooked, drained Rancho Gordo heirloom beans, such as Alubia Blanca

To make the salsa verde, on a cutting board, mince the garlic and salt to make a paste. Add the parsley and sage and mince together with the garlic-salt paste. Transfer to a bowl and whisk in enough olive oil to make a sauce. Add lemon juice and ground pepper to taste. (You can also do this in a mortar or a food processor.) Drizzle the sauce over the cooked beans and serve.

BORLOTTO MAGNIFICO BEAN: CLASSIC PASTA E FAGIOLI

We are calling this a classic version of Pasta e Fagioli but there's a good chance your Italian grandmother wouldn't agree. She would add a little more of this and a little less of that. But this version, from Baja Pasta's Dario Barbone, re-ignited my love for this dish.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

3 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Borlotto Magnifico or Cranberry beans, plus 4 cups bean broth from the cooked beans (if you have less than 4 cups, make up the difference with broth)

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil plus more for drizzling

4 ounces pancetta; cubed or roughly chopped (optional)

1 medium onion, finely chopped

1 celery rib, finely chopped

1 carrot, minced or sliced

1 garlic clove, minced

1 tablespoon tomato paste

½ teaspoon red pepper flakes

1 fresh rosemary sprig

1 pound good-quality dried pasta shells

Salt and pepper to taste

Chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley for garnish Pecorino or Parmesan cheese, grated, for serving

In a medium-sized pan, warm the olive oil over medium heat. If using pancetta: Slowly fry the pancetta until fragrant and chewy. Once cooked, remove the pancetta with a slotted spoon and let rest on a paper towel. If needed, add more olive oil so there is enough fat to fry the aromatic vegetables. Add the onion, celery, carrot, and garlic and cook, stirring, until the vegetables are soft and the onion is turning golden colored. Add the tomato paste and pepper flakes and cook for a few minutes until the paste is heated through and the tomato flavor is intensified.

Add the bean broth and rosemary sprig and adjust the salt and pepper to taste. Continue cooking on a gentle simmer for 15 minutes or so. The liquid should start to reduce.

Meanwhile, cook the pasta in a large stockpot in salted water according to package directions. Drain.

Add the drained pasta, beans, and reserved pancetta (if using) to the soffritto mixture, mix well, and gently cook for a few minutes to marry the various flavors.

Serve immediately with a splash of peppery extra-virgin olive oil and a sprinkle of parsley. Serve with grated pecorino or Parmesan cheese for guests to help themselves.

CHRISTMAS LIMA BEAN: CHRISTMAS LIMA AND MUSHROOM “CARNITAS” CASSEROLE

This technique for cooking mushrooms was inspired by an entry on the blog *He Cooks, She Cooks*. I call it “carnitas” because the mushrooms cook in liquid and then fry in residual fat after the liquid evaporates, just like the classic Mexican pork dish.

Makes 6 to 8 servings

FOR THE MUSHROOM CARNITAS:

2 cups sliced button mushrooms

2 garlic cloves, peeled

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

1 bay leaf (optional)

1 teaspoon sea salt

1 teaspoon dried Mexican oregano, preferably

Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio

FOR THE CASSEROLE:

2 cups cooked, drained Rancho Gordo Christmas Lima beans (or other brown heirloom beans)

6 ounces canned whole peeled tomatoes; plus

½ cup juice from the canned tomatoes

1 cup Mushroom Carnitas

2 garlic cloves, minced

1 ½ teaspoons fresh thyme

1 teaspoon salt

5 small fresh mozzarella balls (bocconcini)

To make the Mushroom Carnitas:

Place the mushrooms, garlic, olive oil, bay leaf, if using, salt, and oregano in a large saucepan; add enough water to not quite cover the mushrooms.

Bring the liquid to a hard boil over high heat. Reduce heat to a gentle simmer; cook until the liquid has mostly evaporated, about 15 minutes, stirring to avoid scorching. Watch carefully: Once evaporation starts, things happen quickly. The mushrooms will start to sauté in the residual oil.

Keep stirring until the mushrooms are golden brown. Remove from heat.

To make the casserole:

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Drain and roughly chop the tomatoes.

In a casserole dish, combine about 1 cup of the mushrooms with the beans, tomatoes and juice, garlic, thyme, and salt. Stir well. Taste and adjust seasonings. Arrange the mozzarella balls on the top of the casserole and push them down into the liquid. Bake, uncovered, for about 45 minutes, but start checking after 30 minutes. The liquid should be bubbling and the cheese starting to melt.

JACOB'S CATTLE BEAN: MARGARET ROACH'S RATHER FAMOUS BAKED BEANS

I first heard of Margaret Roach when I saw her singing the praises of Rancho Gordo Cranberry beans on national television. Of course, I instantly fell in love with her! She was showing Martha Stewart how to make this very dish. She was kind enough to share the recipe with us and it's been very popular. The Jacob's Cattle is a natural fit.

Makes 6 to 8 servings as a side dish

1 pound uncooked Rancho Gordo Jacobs Cattle, Cranberry, or Yellow Eye beans, picked over and soaked for 4 to 6 hours (optional)

Extra-virgin olive oil

2 medium onions, cut into quarters

¼ cup molasses (preferably Wholesome Sweeteners organic)

¼ cup dark amber maple syrup

4 tablespoons grainy mustard

4 to 6 Italian-style paste tomatoes, roughly chopped (or substitute another tomato variety, canned tomatoes, or even some red sauce)

Boiling water

Preheat the oven to 350°F. In a large saucepan, add the beans and enough water to cover beans by about 2 inches. Bring the liquid to a hard boil over high heat; cook 10 to 15 minutes. Simmer the beans until barely tender, about 30 minutes.

Coat a large, lidded, oven proof pot — such as a Dutch oven, casserole, or ceramic bean pot — with a splash of olive oil. Lay the quartered onions in the bottom.

Drain the beans and place in a large bowl. Add the molasses, maple syrup, mustard, and tomatoes; toss to coat. Pour the bean mixture over the onions in the pot. Add enough boiling water to cover beans by about an inch.

Cover and bake until the beans are tender, about 2 hours, adjusting the oven temperature to keep the beans at a lazy bubble. Remove the lid occasionally and check the water level, adding more hot water to keep beans submerged.

Once the beans reach an almost-ready tenderness, uncover the pot and raise heat to 375° F. Continue to cook for another hour or so, reducing the liquid to a thick brown syrup, stirring a few times to combine. During this last phase, adjust for sweetness, salt, and tomato flavor, balancing the maple-to-molasses ratio to taste.

RIO ZAPE BEAN: SOPA CAMPESINA

This simple soup is inspired by a meal eaten at the hacienda that hosts much of the activities of our Rancho Gordo-Xoxoc Project.

Save your old tortillas and use them for this dish. They're better when they're a little stale and tend not to absorb much oil.

Makes 2 to 4 servings

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil

½ of a yellow onion, chopped

2 garlic doves, minced

½ pound uncooked Rancho Gordo Rio Zape or Moro beans, picked over and rinsed

Sea salt

3 corn tortillas, preferably a little stale, cut into very thin strips

Oil for frying

1 teaspoon Mexican oregano, preferably Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio

Limes for garnish

In a large pot, warm the olive oil over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic; cook until soft, about 10 minutes. Add the beans and enough water to cover beans by about 2 inches. Raise heat to high and bring the liquid to a hard boil over high heat; cook for 10 to 15 minutes.

Reduce heat to low and allow beans to gently simmer. Make sure the beans are always covered by about 2 inches of liquid, adding hot water as needed. After about an hour, the beans should begin to soften. Add a tablespoon of salt, and allow the beans to continue cooking until done. Total time will be between 90 minutes and 3 hours. If it's taking too long, raise the heat a bit.

Meanwhile, warm the oil in a skillet over medium-high heat. Fry the tortilla strips until crisp; drain on paper towels and salt generously.

When the beans are soft, adjust the seasoning to taste and add the oregano. Ladle into bowls and top with the tortilla strips. Serve with limes.

SUPER LUCKY 2023 BLACK EYED PEA: BLACK EYED PEA STEW

This is the recipe that switched me from passive Black Eyed Pea consumer to a true advocate, It's very simple, traditional, and delicious. New Year's Day (or any day) will be a happy one with this going on in the kitchen.

Makes 3 to 4 servings

¼ pound (4 or 5 pieces) bacon, chopped into rough squares (optional)

2 stalks celery, chopped

2 small carrots, peeled and chopped

2 small to medium white onion, chopped

2 to 3 garlic cloves, peeled and smashed

1 pound uncooked Rancho Gordo Black Eyed Peas, cleaned and rinsed

1 bay leaf

2 tablespoons tomato paste

½ cup whole canned tomatoes with some juice, roughly chopped

Salt and freshly ground pepper

If using bacon: In a soup pot, gently cook the bacon on medium heat, stirring occasionally, until it's just done, about 10 minutes. With a slotted spoon, remove the bacon pieces and let them rest on a paper towel. In the remaining bacon fat (or, if not using bacon, warm 2 tablespoons oil), sauté the celery, onion, carrot, and garlic on medium heat until soft, stirring occasionally, about 15 minutes.

When the vegetables are soft, add the Black Eyed Peas and their soaking water. Add enough water to cover the peas by about an inch. Stir, add the bay leaf and then raise the heat to high and bring the contents to a rapid boil. Keep boiling, partially covered, for 10 minutes. Add 1 tablespoon salt and adjust the water so that the peas are again covered by about an inch. Reduce to a gentle simmer until the peas are soft, about 35 minutes.

Add the tomatoes and the tomato paste. Stir and then gently heat through, about 15 minutes on medium heat. Add pepper to taste and the reserved bacon pieces, if using. Adjust seasonings and serve.

SUPER LUCKY 2023 BLACK EYED PEA: BLACK EYED PEA AND CARROT SALAD WITH SPRING MINT

When we think of Black Eyed Peas, we generally think of stews and pork products, but we also love them in a fresh vegetable and herb salad.

Makes 2 to 4 servings

Juice of 1 lemon

2 tablespoons Rancho Gordo Pineapple Vinegar or white wine vinegar

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

1 garlic clove, minced

Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

3 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Black Eyed Peas, drained and cooled

1 ½ cups shredded carrots (about 3 large carrots)

½ of an English cucumber, peeled and chopped

2 green onions, chopped

¼ of a red onion, minced

¼ cup chopped fresh mint leaves

In a small bowl, whisk together the lemon juice, vinegar, olive oil, and garlic. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

In a large mixing bowl, combine the black eyed peas, carrots, cucumbers, green onions, red onion, and mint. Pour the dressing over the black eyed pea salad. Mix well to combine. Taste and adjust the seasonings, adding more vinegar, salt, and/or pepper as needed. Finish with a sprinkle of feta cheese, if you like.

CRIMSON POPPING CORN: ALTA BAJA POPCORN TOPPING

The ingredient amounts are flexible, but the nutritional yeast should be the main ingredient. Delilah says “Nutritional yeast is the key to all fake cheese flavoring! You can omit either garlic or onion powder, but not both.”

½ cup nutritional yeast

1 tablespoon pink salt

1 to 2 teaspoons garlic powder

1 to 2 teaspoons onion powder

1 to 2 teaspoons hatch Chile powder

½ to 1 teaspoon ground cumin

In a small bowl, stir together all of the topping ingredients. Sprinkle over a big bowl of freshly popped popcorn. Enjoy.

CASSOULET BEAN: FENNEL, POTATO, AND WHITE BEAN SOUP

Serves 4 as a side

½ pound dried Rancho Gordo Cassoulet or Royal Corona beans
4 tablespoons olive oil plus extra for drizzling
4 to 5 small fennel bulbs, about a pound, outside layer removed, halved and finely diced
2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
1 teaspoon fennel seeds (optional)
3 medium waxy potatoes, about 15 ounces, peeled, diced and lightly salted
4 cups bean broth and/or water or stock
About 40 threads of saffron, infused in
2 tablespoons boiling water
2 tablespoons chopped fresh fennel leaves or flat-leaf parsley
Sea salt and black pepper

Bring the beans, covered in about 2 inches of water, to a rapid boil for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to low and maintain a simmer until they're soft, about 2 hours or so. Drain the beans, reserving the bean broth.

In another large saucepan with a heavy bottom, heat the olive oil over a medium heat. Add the diced fennel with a pinch of salt and stir well. Lower the heat and continue to cook for 20 to 30 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the fennel begins to caramelize and become soft. Add the garlic, fennel seeds (if using) and the potatoes, mix well, and cook for another 5 minutes. Add the bean broth and the saffron water. Stir well, scraping the bottom of the pan to release any caramelized bits, and bring to a gentle simmer. Cook for another 10 to 15 minutes or until the potatoes are soft, then add the drained beans. Season with salt and pepper and simmer for a few minutes before stirring in the chopped fennel tops or parsley, and serving with a little drizzle of olive oil.

CHIAPAS BLACK BEAN: BASQUE-STYLE BEAN AND KALE STEW

Makes 4 to 6 servings

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra to finish
1 large onion, peeled and chopped
1 large leek, trimmed and finely sliced
1 bay leaf
A few sprigs each fresh thyme and oregano
2 garlic cloves, peeled and finely sliced
1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo Spanish Pimentón
Pinch of chile flakes
1 cup dry white wine
2 to 3 cups cooked Chiapas Black Beans, Negras de Tolosa, or any other dried black beans, plus about
1 cup bean broth
2 to 3 cups chicken or vegetable stock
Salt and black pepper
1 small bunch Tuscan kale (cavolo nero) or curly kale, thick stalks-removed and leaves shredded
¾ cup shredded smoked ham hock
2 teaspoons Rancho Gordo Pineapple Vinegar or sherry vinegar

In a large pot over medium heat, warm the oil. Add the onion and leek and cook, stirring, until softened, about 10 minutes. Add the herbs, garlic, and spices; fry, stirring, for a few minutes more. Add the wine, raise the heat, and cook until reduced by about half.

Add the beans, bean broth, and stock; reduce the heat, season generously with salt, and simmer gently, uncovered, for 20 to 30 minutes, until the juices have reduced and thickened.

Add the kale, cover the pot, and cook for 4 to 5 minutes, just to wilt the greens. Stir in the shredded ham hock and vinegar and cook to heat through. Ladle into bowls and serve with a drizzle of extra-virgin olive oil, a scattering of chile flakes (if desired) and a good grind of black pepper.

PINTO BEAN: CLASSIC REFRIED BEANS

Serves 2 to 4 as a side

2 tablespoons freshly rendered lard or oil of your choice

¼ of a white onion, very thinly sliced

Salt to taste

2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo heirloom beans, such as Pinto, Rebozero, or Mayocoba, plus at least

1 cup bean broth

In a large skillet over medium heat, melt the lard. Add the onion and a little salt; cook, stirring, until the onion is well cooked and translucent, about 10 minutes. Adjust heat as needed; don't let the onion brown.

Add the beans and 1 cup bean broth to the pan. Take a wooden bean masher (known in Mexico as a machacadora) or a potato masher and, starting at one end of the skillet, rub the beans across the bottom of the pan toward the other side. The mashed beans will meld with the broth and the onions. Keep cooking and mashing until the beans become creamy and thick, and you can drag the masher across the bottom of the pan and it leaves a clear trail. This should take about 30 minutes. You may need to add more broth as you go. Taste and adjust seasoning, as desired.

REBOSERO BEAN: BEANS WITH DANDELION GREENS

Makes 2 servings

½ cup Italian sausage, broken up into small bits (optional)

½ onion, chopped fine

2 cloves garlic, minced

1 tablespoon olive oil, plus more for drizzling

½ cup canned roasted tomatoes

½ cup of bean broth or chicken stock

1½ cups cooked Rebozero or Yellow Eye beans

4 fresh sage leaves, minced

½ bunch dandelion greens, roughly chopped

Salt and pepper

In a large pan over medium heat, sauté the sausage (if using), onion, and garlic in the olive oil. When cooked through, add the tomatoes and bean broth.

Cook until the tomatoes are warmed through, then add the beans, sage, and dandelion greens. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Continue to cook until simmering. Drizzle a little olive oil over the dish before serving.

SANTA MARIA PINQUITO BEAN: RANCHO MELADUCO'S SANTA MARIA-STYLE BEANS WITH MEDJOOL DATES

Recipe by Joan Smith, Rancho Meladuco Date Farm

Makes 6 to 8 servings

For the beans:

1 pound uncooked Rancho Gordo Santa Maria Piquito beans

1 onion, halved

5 large garlic cloves, smashed

2 bay leaves

For the sauce:

1 large Anaheim chile

1 pound smoked thick-cut bacon, diced

1 white onion, minced (reserve some/or garnish)

4 garlic cloves, minced

1 teaspoon pure chile powder, such as Rancho Gordo New Mexican Red Chile Powder

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1 teaspoon mustard powder

2 cups tomato puree

1 cup Mexican-style lager

½ cup brewed coffee

5 Rancho Meladuco Medjool dates, pitted and chopped

Kosher salt and pepper

Mexican crema for serving (optional)

Prepare the beans:

Rinse and sort the beans. If desired, soak the beans in cold water for 4 to 8 hours. Place the beans in a large pot and cover with fresh cold water by 3 inches. Add the onion, garlic, and bay leaves and bring to a boil over high heat; let boil for 10 to 15 minutes. Lower the heat to a simmer and cook gently, uncovered, until the beans are tender, 45 minutes to 2 hours. Add hot water, as needed, to keep the beans covered.

Prepare the sauce:

While the beans are simmering, char the Anaheim chile over a burner on your stovetop or under the broiler until completely charred. Transfer to a resealable plastic bag (or, place in a bowl and cover with a plate) and let sit for 15 minutes. Once cool enough to handle, use a paper towel to remove the skin. Finely chop the chile and discard the seeds and stem.

In a large saucepan or Dutch oven, cook the bacon over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until it's crispy and browned, 10 to 20 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer one-quarter of the bacon to a paper towel-lined plate to drain. Reserve for garnishing. Pour out some of the bacon fat, if desired.

In the saucepan, add the minced onion and cook over moderate heat until translucent, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add the chile powder, cumin, and mustard powder and cook, stirring occasionally, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Stir in the tomato puree, beer, coffee, dates, and diced chile. Season with salt and pepper. Bring the sauce to a boil, then reduce the heat to low and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the sauce is thickened and the dates are beginning to break down, 30 to 40 minutes.

Finish the beans:

Drain the beans, reserving 1 cup of the cooking liquid. Discard the onion, garlic, and bay leaves. Return the beans to the pot. Stir in the sauce and the reserved cooking liquid and cook over low heat until heated through. Season with salt.

Transfer the beans to a serving bowl and garnish with the reserved bacon, white onion, and a spoonful of Mexican crema, if desired. Serve right away.

YELLOW EYE BEAN: YELLOW EYE AND FENNEL CASSEROLE

Makes 6 to 8 servings

2 large fennel bulbs, trimmed
6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided use
½ of a medium yellow onion, chopped
4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
2 bay leaves
Leaves from 4 to 6 stems fresh thyme
½ cup white wine
1 cup vegetable stock
3 to 4 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Yellow Eye beans or Snowcap, drained
Zest of 1 lemon, plus a squeeze of lemon
Salt and pepper to taste

For the topping:

2 tablespoons butter or olive oil
½ cup dried breadcrumbs
½ cup finely grated Parmesan cheese
½ cup minced fresh basil, plus more for garnish

Preheat the oven to 400F.

Cut the fennel bulbs in half; cut crosswise into slices about ½ inch thick, then roughly chop. Rinse well.

Heat a large sauté pan or skillet over medium heat, and add 2 tablespoons of the oil. Add the onion and sauté until soft and caramelized, about 10 minutes. Remove the onion and reserve. Add the remaining oil to the pan, then add the fennel, garlic, bay leaves, and thyme. Sauté until the fennel is soft and beginning to turn golden, another 10 or so minutes. Add the wine and vegetable stock and stir, scraping the bottom of the pan to deglaze it. Let this cook for about 5 minutes. Stir in the onions, beans, and lemon zest and juice. Taste and season generously with salt and pepper. Transfer the vegetable mixture to a wide baking dish.

In a small pan, melt the butter over medium-low heat. Add the bread crumbs, cheese, and basil, and stir to mix well. Sprinkle this mixture over the baking dish.

Cover the dish with foil and bake for 30 to 40 minutes. Uncover and bake until the top is golden, 15 to 20 minutes more. Remove and let sit for 10 minutes before serving. Garnish with fresh herbs before serving.

WHITE CORN POSOLE/PREPARED HOMINY: DECONSTRUCTED POZOLE SALAD

Makes 4 servings

¼ cup olive oil

Juice from 2 limes

1 garlic clove, minced

1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo Sabor Vaquero Chili Powder Blend, or your favorite chili powder blend

¼ teaspoon salt, plus more salt to taste

*3 cups cooked Rancho Gordo White Corn Posole/
Prepared Hominy, drained and cooled*

2 cups shredded cabbage

½ cup thinly sliced radishes

½ cup thinly sliced green onions

*1 to 2 fresh chiles, such as serrano or jalapeno,
seeded and minced*

1 avocado, cubed

2 cups poached or grilled shrimp (optional)

To make the dressing, in a small bowl, combine the olive oil, lime juice, and garlic. Whisk in the chili powder and 1 teaspoon salt. Set aside.

In a serving bowl, combine the cooked, drained posole with the cabbage, radishes, green onions, and chiles. Add about half of the dressing and stir to combine. Taste and season with salt and more dressing as needed. Top with avocado and shrimp, if using.

CRANBERRY BEAN: MINESTRONE GENOVESE (GENOA-STYLE MINESTRONE WITH PESTO)

From the book *Fagioli: The Bean Cuisine of Italy* (Rancho Gordo press, 2023) by Judith Barrett

Serves 4

¼ cup olive oil
1 medium red onion, roughly chopped
1 medium leek, trimmed, rinsed in cold water and chopped
1 medium carrot, roughly chopped
1 celery stalk, roughly chopped
1 large garlic clove, finely chopped
2 cups cooked borlotti, pinto, or cranberry beans, drained
2 small zucchini (about ½ pound) quartered lengthwise and chopped
½ small head Savoy cabbage (about ½ pound), finely shredded
¼ pound green beans, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces
3 large Swiss chard leaves, stemmed, coarsely chopped, and rinsed in cold water
1 medium Yukon gold or yellow Finn potato, peeled and diced
1 Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese rind (about 2 by 3 inches)
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Pesto:

1 cup packed fresh basil leaves
1 cup packed flat-leaf parsley, leaves only, chopped
1 garlic clove, peeled
½ cup olive oil

To Finish:

6 ounces small tubular pasta, such as tubetti or ditalini
Grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, for serving

Warm the oil in a heavy 6-quart pot or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the onion, leek, carrot, celery, and garlic; sauté until the vegetables begin to soften, about 3 minutes. Add the cooked beans, zucchini, cabbage, green beans, chard, and potatoes; stir to combine. Add 8 cups of cold water; increase heat to high and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer partially covered, about 45 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the cheese rind and continue cooking 15 minutes longer. The rind will begin to melt and dissolve into the soup. At this point, the soup should be thick and the beans and vegetables tender. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

While the soup is cooking, prepare the pesto: In a food processor or blender, combine the basil, parsley, and garlic. Pulse a few times to chop. With the machine running, the olive oil in a steady stream; continue processing until the mixture resembles a smooth paste. Set aside.

About 15 minutes before serving, reheat the soup over medium-high heat. When it comes to a low boil, add the pasta. If the soup seems too thick, add more broth or water. Continue cooking, stirring frequently, until the pasta is al dente, 7 to 10 minutes. Stir in the until pesto the pasta and serve with grated cheese.

GARBANZO BEAN (CHICKPEA): SPUMA DI CECI CON CROSTINI DI PANE (WHIPPED CHICKPEA-AND-POTATO SPREAD)

From the book *Fagioli: The Bean Cuisine of Italy* (Rancho Gordo press, 2023) by Judith Barrett

Makes 4 servings

1 small potato (about ¼ pound), preferably Yukon gold or yellow Finn, peeled and quartered
2 cups cooked chickpeas, drained
1 medium red onion, finely chopped (divided use)
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil plus more for serving
1 loaf crusty bread, sliced
1 large garlic clove, peeled

Place the potato in a small saucepan; cover with water and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium; cook until the potato is tender when pierced with a sharp knife, 10 to 15 minutes. Drain the potato and cool for 30 minutes.

In a food processor, combine the chickpeas and potato with 1 heaping tablespoon of red onion, plus salt and pepper. Pulse just to combine the ingredients. With the machine running, add the olive oil; continue processing until the contents are lightly whipped and smooth. Taste and adjust seasoning, as desired, and process to combine.

Meanwhile, toast the bread until lightly browned and rub with the garlic clove to lightly flavor. Serve the chickpea-and-potato spread on individual plates with heaping spoonfuls of the remaining chopped red onion, a drizzle of olive oil, and toast on the side.

LARGE WHITE LIMA BEAN: WHITE BEANS IN A SAVORY TOMATO SAUCE

One of the nicest ways to eat white beans is in a savory tomato sauce. I love adding soft cinnamon (canela) to tomatoes for a rich, woodsy flavor. Don't try this with typical hard American cinnamon, which is somewhat harsh.

Serves 2 to 4

4 tomatoes from a can of whole tomatoes, chopped roughly
½ cup tomato juice, reserved from the can
½ yellow onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 sticks Rancho Gordo canela
1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio or Mexican oregano
2 tablespoons capers, rinsed (optional)
Salt to taste
2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo white beans, such as Large White Lima, Marcella, or Royal Corona

In a blender, combine the tomatoes, tomato juice, onion, and garlic and blend until smooth.

In a large saucepan, heat the olive oil over medium heat until it starts to shimmer, 3 to 5 minutes. Add the tomato mixture and stir well. Add the canela and oregano and bring to a simmer; continue cooking for 15 minutes. Add capers, if using, and test for seasoning. Add salt if needed.

Add the cooked beans and lower the heat to medium-low. Gently stir and continue cooking until the beans are warmed through, about 5 minutes. Remove the canela. Serve, garnished with the parsley and a few drops of lemon juice, as desired.

MARCELLA BEANS: MARCELLA BEANS WITH GREEN GARLIC AND PARSLEY PISTOU

This recipe comes from our neighbors here in Napa, Stevie and Josiah of Bay Grape Wine. They are proud Bean Club members and we appreciate them sharing this recipe with us.

Serves 4 to 6

1 pound uncooked Marcella beans (can also use Cassoulet, Alubia Blanca, or basically any white bean ... Flageolet could be fun and appropriately springy too)

Any general aromatics you like for cooking the beans (I usually go with 1 piece kombu, 1 or 2 carrots, 1 or 2 stalks of celery, the dark green trimmings from 2 leeks, and 2 bay leaves)

1 or 2 Parmesan rinds

1 sprig fresh rosemary

4 to 5 sprigs fresh thyme

Olive oil

2 leeks, white and light green parts only, sliced in half lengthwise and washed thoroughly, then thinly sliced into half-circles

2 to 3 stalks green garlic, both white and green parts, thinly sliced

1 cup chopped parsley

Zest of ½ to 1 lemon

Salt

Freshly ground black pepper

Cook the beans with your aromatics, Parmesan rinds, rosemary, and thyme. When the beans are gorgeously soft and silky and you have a slightly soupy/stewy amount of bean cooking liquid left-over, turn the heat way down or completely off. Fish out and discard your aromatics, Parm rinds, and woody herb sticks.

Now salt the beans to taste. I generally find that right after adding salt I can check the saltiness of the bean liquid. That level of saltiness will soon infuse into the beans, so I just go by taste here. I also add a more-than-most-people-would-think appropriate amount of fresh, coarsely ground black pepper.

In a sauté pan over medium-low heat, sweat the leeks and green garlic in a generous amount of olive oil and a sprinkle of salt. Be careful the heat doesn't get too high, or they will burn easily! You want to cook them for 10 to 20 minutes until they're all melty-like.

In a food processor or blender, blitz the parsley, lemon zest, salt and more black pepper (basically with those last 3 ingredients to taste!) with a generous amount of olive oil. You can also just finely chop the whole show and whisk it together with some olive oil.

Immediately before serving, warm the beans, and then stir your melted leeks and green garlic with the pistou right into the beans.

Serve with crusty bread for sopping up juicy bits, and a green salad dressed simply with a lemon-juice vinaigrette. AND WINE Verdicchio or Nebbiolo, depending on your mood.

PUGLIA LENTIL: LENTICCHIE BRASATE (BRAISIED LENTILS WITH FRESH FENNEL)

From the book *Fagioli: The Bean Cuisine of Italy* (Rancho Gordo press, 2023) by Judith Barrett

Serves 6 as a side

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 carrot, chopped

1 onion, chopped

1 fennel bulb, stalks trimmed and discarded, chopped

1 garlic clove, finely chopped

1 cup Italian small brown lentils, black caviar lentils, or lentilles vertes du Puy

2 cups chicken or vegetable broth

1 bay leaf

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Warm the olive oil in a heavy 4-quart saucepan or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the carrot, onion, fennel, and garlic; sauté until the vegetables begin to soften, about 5 minutes. Add the lentils, broth, and bay leaf; increase heat to high and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook, partially covered, until the lentils are tender but still firm, about 45 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste, and serve warm.

CANELA: TÉ DE CANELA (CINNAMON TEA)

Fill a large pot with 12 cups of water and place over medium-high heat; bring to a boil. Add 3 canela sticks, cover, and boil for 2 to 3 minutes. Lower the heat to a gentle simmer and cook for about 15 minutes. Remove from the heat. Add sugar or sweetener to taste, if you'd like. You can serve it hot, room temperature, or even cold.

Note: Nancy in our retail department makes this tea often at home. For deeper color and flavor, she recommends boiling the canela sticks at least one more time. After the first boil, add more cold water and bring the tea back to a boil for a couple of minutes, then remove from the heat.

ROYAL CORONA BEAN: ZUPPA DI FARRO E FAGIOLI (SOUP OF FARRO AND BEANS)

Recipe from *Supper at Rancho Gordo* (Rancho Gordo Press, 2014), contributed by our pal Judy Witts Francini. Judy notes: “You can enjoy this recipe as pasta e fagioli by substituting about 2 cups cooked short macaroni for the farro.”

Makes 4 to 6 servings

1 ½ cups dried white beans such as Royal Corona or Cassoulet, or Cranberry beans, picked over and rinsed

3 tablespoons olive oil

2 garlic cloves

1 fresh sage sprig

8 cups water

1 tablespoon salt

½ cup semi-pearled farro (or pasta if you prefer)

2 tablespoons tomato paste (optional)

Garnish:

4 tablespoons olive oil

4 tablespoons dried Tuscan herbs such as rosemary and sage

Salt and pepper to taste

In a large pot, combine the beans, oil, garlic, sage, and water and place over medium heat. Bring to a boil, and boil for 10 to 15 minutes; reduce the heat to very low, and simmer gently until the beans are tender, 2–3 hours. Add more water as needed to keep the beans covered by 2 inches of water. The only way to know when the beans are done is to taste them. Add the salt during the last 10 minutes of cooking.

About 30 minutes before the beans are ready, bring a saucepan filled with salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the farro and cook until just tender, about 20 minutes. Drain and reserve.

When the beans are ready, remove from the heat. Transfer half of the beans and bean broth to a clean soup pot. Working in batches if necessary, transfer the remaining beans and bean broth to a blender and puree until smooth. Add the puree to the soup pot and stir to mix well, then stir in the tomato paste, if using.

Place the pot over medium heat and simmer, adding water if the soup is too thick and stirring often, until the soup is piping hot. Add the farro and tear through. To prepare the garnish, in a small skillet or saucepan, warm the oil and herbs over a low heat until the herbs are fragrant. Remove from the heat.

Ladle the soup into warmed shallow individual bowls and drizzle an equal amount of the oil-herb mixture over each serving. Serve immediately.

ALUBIA BLANCA: SUMMERTIME HEIRLOOM BEAN AND TOMATO SALAD

As the best tomatoes of summer are coming in, you can't go wrong with a simple summer salad of marinated heirloom tomatoes, heirloom beans, and fresh herbs piled on toasted bread.

Makes 4 side servings

1 pound ripe heirloom tomatoes, gently chopped into cubes, or cherry tomatoes, halved
2 cups cooked, drained Rancho Gordo Alubia Blanca or other white beans
½ of a red onion, very thinly sliced with a mandolin
1 clove garlic, minced
1 tablespoon Rancho Gordo Pineapple Vinegar or your favorite light vinegar, or to taste
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 teaspoon sea salt, or to taste
Fresh cracked pepper to taste
½ of a cucumber, thinly sliced
½ cup chopped fresh parsley, basil, and/or thyme
Thick slices of country bread, toasted, for serving

In a serving bowl, combine the tomatoes, beans, garlic, onion, vinegar, oil, and the salt and pepper. Allow to sit for at least 30 minutes and up to 2 hours.

Before serving, season to taste with more salt, pepper, and/or vinegar. Gently stir in the cucumber slices, scatter fresh herbs over the top, and serve with toasted bread.

AYOCOTE MORADO: AYOCOTE SALAD WITH NOPALES AND CORN

Nopales are the paddles of the prickly pear cactus, which you can find in most Mexican markets and some supermarkets. You can often buy them precleaned, but if you need to do it yourself: Hold the base of the paddle with tongs or a wad of newspapers. Using a sharp knife, shave off the spines, trying not to remove too much of the skin. Shave in both directions until all spines are gone. Cut along the edge of the cactus paddle, removing a thin strip. Cut off thickest, woody end of the base. Rinse with water. If you should get a spine in your skin, try to remove it with adhesive tape.

Makes 6 servings

2 nopales (cactus paddles), cleaned and cut into ½-inch cubes
¼ of an onion, roughly chopped
1 garlic clove, peeled
Kernels from 2 ears of cooked corn
3 cups drained, cooked Ayocote Morado, Scarlet Runner, or Buckeye beans, at room temperature
1 cup chopped in-season tomatoes
2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Wild Rice, at room temperature
½ bunch radishes, very thinly sliced
Rancho Gordo Banana Vinegar, pineapple vinegar, or white wine vinegar
Extra-virgin olive oil
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

In a large saucepan over medium heat, combine the nopal cubes with the onion and garlic, plus enough water to cover the vegetables by 1 inch. Simmer until the nopales are cooked but still al dente, about 10 minutes. Strain and reserve the vegetables, discarding the water.

In a serving bowl, combine the cooked nopales, corn, beans, tomatoes, wild rice, and radishes. Taste and season as desired with vinegar, olive oil, salt, and pepper.

BAYO GORDO BEAN: FRIJOLE CHARROS (CHARRO BEANS)

Bayo beans are a mild variety and generally depend on sauces and seasonings. The Bayo Gordo is a little bigger than normal and while it would be great in a chile sauce or soup, it can stand on its own as a simple pot bean, especially if made with a lot of aromatics.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

¼ pound bacon (about 4 slices), chopped
¼ pound loose Mexican chorizo or Longaniza
½ of a white onion, chopped, plus more for garnish
2 to 4 garlic cloves, chopped
1 serrano or small jalapeno chile, seeded and minced
½ cup chopped ham (optional)
1 cup chopped canned tomatoes (optional)
3 to 4 sprigs fresh cilantro
4 to 6 cups cooked Bayo Gordo, Pinto, or other mild heirloom beans
½ to 1 cup bean broth, stock, or beer
Salt to taste
Lime wedges for serving

In a pot over medium-low heat, cook the bacon and chorizo, stirring, until slightly browned and the fat has rendered, about 10 minutes. Add the onion and garlic along with the chile, ham (if using), tomatoes (if using), and cilantro. Stir well and cook until the vegetables have softened, about 5 minutes.

Add the beans and liquid. Simmer to allow the flavors to mingle, about 15 minutes. Add more liquid as needed — charro beans are soupy!

Season to taste with salt and serve with fresh onion and lime wedges.

BUCKEYE BEAN: SOUTHWESTERN BEAN, POSOLE, AND VEGETABLE STEW

This colorful posole recipe comes to us from our friends at Native Seeds/SEARCH. Visit them online for rare and indigenous seeds, as well as for unique Southwestern and Northern Mexican products.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

1 cup dried Rancho Gordo prepared hominy
½ pound (1 cup) dried heirloom beans such as Buckeye, Pinto, or Bayo Gordo, picked over and rinsed
Salt, to taste
1 small onion, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 ½ teaspoons New Mexican Red Chile Powder
1 ½ teaspoons whole cumin seeds
¾ teaspoon dried Mexican Oregano
1 tablespoon olive or vegetable oil
1 cup chopped tomatoes
3 calabacitas (small squash) or zucchini, sliced ¼-inch thick
4 oz. fresh or frozen green beans
1 tablespoon vegetable bouillon
2 tablespoon chopped cilantro

Sort and rinse hominy, then soak in cold water for about 8 hours. Drain hominy and discard water. Add hominy to a pot, fill pot with fresh water, and place over medium heat. Bring to a simmer and cook until tender, about 2 hours. Drain.

Meanwhile, pour beans into another pot and add water to cover beans by about 2 inches. Bring to a boil for 10 minutes, and then reduce heat to a low simmer. Cook until tender, adding water as necessary (timing will vary depending on type of bean). Salt when the beans start to soften.

In a 4-quart pan over medium heat, warm the oil. Sauté the onion, garlic, chile powder, cumin seed, and oregano for 7 minutes, until onion is soft. Add squash and tomatoes. Cook 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Stir in cooked beans and cooking liquid, hominy, green beans, and bouillon. Simmer 30 minutes, adding water if stew is too thick. Add cilantro and salt to taste. Serve with warm tortillas.

CECI PICCOLI: CHICKPEA AND OLIVE SALAD (INSALATA DI CECI MEDITERRANEA)

From the book *Fagioli: The Bean Cuisine of Italy* (Rancho Gordo Press, 2023), by Judith Barrett.

Makes 4 servings

2 ounces pancetta, cut into small dice
5 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil (divided use)
2 cups cooked chickpeas, preferably Ceci Piccoli, drained
1 small red onion, finely chopped
½ cup pitted black olives, preferably Gaeta or Kalamata, quartered
8 flat-leaf parsley sprigs, leaves only, chopped
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Combine the pancetta with 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a small saucepan over medium-low heat; cook, stirring frequently, until the pancetta is crisp, about 10 minutes. Turn off the heat, remove pancetta from the pan, and set aside to cool.

Combine the cooked chickpeas with the pancetta, onion, and olives in a mixing bowl. Stir in the remaining olive oil and parsley; season to taste with salt and pepper.

DOMINGO ROJO BEAN: CASAMIENTO SALVADOREÑO

This recipe comes from Rancho Gordo employee, Celene. It's a popular dish in her home country of El Salvador. She told us it's often eaten for breakfast with scrambled eggs.

Makes 4 side servings

2 tablespoons vegetable oil
¼ cup onion, chopped
¼ cup red or green bell pepper, chopped (optional)
2 cups cooked, drained Rancho Gordo Domingo Rojo or Midnight Black beans
1 cup bean broth
2 cups cooked rice
Salt to taste
Grated Parmesan cheese or crumbled feta cheese, for serving (optional)

In a skillet, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the onion and pepper, if using, and fry them for a few minutes without letting them brown.

Add the beans and fry for a few minutes. Add the broth and, when it boils, add the rice and stir well. Continue cooking until it is the texture you like, adding more broth if desired. Season with salt to taste. Garnish with cheese, if desired.

NEW MEXICAN RED CHILE POWDER: ALUBIA BLANCA BEANS IN SOUTHWESTERN CHILE SAUCE

Makes 2 to 4 servings

2 tablespoons olive oil or lard

½ of a white onion, chopped, plus more for serving

2 garlic cloves, minced

2 to 3 tablespoons pure New Mexican Red Chile Powder

1 teaspoon Mexican oregano, plus more for serving

½ teaspoon cumin, or to taste

½ teaspoon salt, plus more to taste

1 to 2 cups chicken or vegetable stock

3 cups cooked Alubia Blanca or other white beans, with about 1 cup cooking broth

In a pot over medium-low heat, warm the olive oil. Add the onion and cook until soft, about 10 minutes. Add the garlic and saute a few more minutes. Add the chile powder and mix; it will be a thick mess but allow the chile to “fry” for a few minutes. Add the cumin, salt, and oregano. Slowly add about 1 cup water; stir well to combine. Let this cook for 10 to 15 minutes, stirring frequently, until it reaches a thick consistency, almost like ketchup.

Slowly add about a cup of stock and stir to thin the sauce. Next, add the beans and their broth. Bring to a simmer and cook for about 10 minutes. Add more stock if you want a soupier dish. Taste and adjust the seasonings. Serve with chopped onion, cheese, and crumbled oregano.

SUPER LUCKY 2024 BLACK EYED PEA: BLACK EYED PEA FRITTERS

If you're feeling adventurous this year, try your hand at these Black Eyed Pea fritters, which we developed in our test kitchen. They are similar to the west-African Black-Eyed Pea fritters called accara, but we've added a Rancho Gordo twist with cornmeal and chiles. To make a quick chipotle aioli, blend together good-quality mayonnaise, canned chipotle chiles, and fresh lime juice.

Makes 4 side servings

*1 cup uncooked Rancho Gordo Super Lucky 2024
Black Eyed Peas*

Kosher salt

1 green onion (scallions) finely chopped

1 to 2 jalapeño chiles, seeded and minced

¼ cup cornmeal

1 teaspoon baking powder

Peanut or vegetable oil, for frying

Chipotle aioli, for serving (optional)

*Rancho Gordo Rio Fuego hot sauce, or your
favorite hot sauce, for serving (optional)*

Place the peas in a large bowl; add 8 cups cool water and 1 tablespoon salt. Soak at room temperature for 8 to 12 hours.

With the peas still submerged in the water, remove as many skins as possible by rubbing the peas between the palm of your hands. Most of the skin will float to the surface. Slowly pour out the water and the skins, leaving the peas in the bowl.

Place the peas in a food processor. Process until smooth, about 2 minutes, adding up to 1 tablespoon water if needed to loosen the mixture. Transfer to a bowl and stir in the green onions, chiles, cornmeal, baking powder, and ½ teaspoon salt. Taste and add more salt if desired. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes and up to overnight.

Set a wire rack on a rimmed baking sheet, or line a baking sheet with paper towels. Pour oil into a cast-iron skillet or other heavy, straight sided pan to a depth of about 1 inch. Heat oil to 350 degrees over medium high heat. Carefully drop heaping tablespoons of the pea mixture into the oil, using a wide spoon or spatula to flatten each ball into a disc. Repeat until there are several dollops in the pan, being careful not to over crowd. Fry until golden brown, about 2 minutes per side, turning the fritters once. Remove with a slotted spoon, drain on paper towel and keep warm. Repeat until all batter is used. You may need to lower the heat to medium to keep the oil from getting to hot.

Serve the fritters immediately with chipotle aioli or hot sauce.

* To make a quick chipotle aioli, blend together good-quality mayonnaise, canned chipotle chiles, and fresh lime juice.

CHRISTMAS LIMA BEAN: CHRISTMAS LIMAS IN A GORGONZOLA CREAM SAUCE

Christmas Limas have an interesting texture, almost potato like, and it gave me the idea to treat them like gnocchi and pair them, with a rich Gorgonzola cheese sauce.

Makes 4 side servings

1 tablespoon olive oil
½ cup cubed pancetta (about 4 ounces)
1 small white onion. chopped
2 garlic cloves. minced
1 cup half-and-half (or to taste)
½ cup crumbled Gorgonzola or blue cheese (or to taste)
1 cups cooked, drained Rancho Gordo Christmas Lima beans
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
Chopped fresh parsley for garnish

In a large pan over medium-low heat, warm the oil. Add the pancetta, onion, and garlic and cook until the pancetta and onion begin to brown, 10 to 15 minutes. Add the half-and-half and whisk until it begins to bubble, Add the cheese and whisk until the sauce reduces and is thick enough to coat the back of a wooden spoon.

Add the beans to the sauce and let them get to know each other for a few minutes, but not too long. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Garnish with a bit of parsley.

Vegetarian Version

Use 8 ounces of mushrooms (wiped clean and roughly chopped) in place of the pancetta, and increase the olive oil to ¼ cup.

KING CITY PINK BEAN: POLENTA INCANTENATA (LIGURIAN POLENTA WITH BEAN AND VEGETABLES)

From *Fagioli: The Bean Cuisine of Italy* (Rancho Gordo Press, 2023), by Judith Barrett. This dish is traditionally served with Borlotti or Cranberry beans, but the King City Pinks have a similar profile and would be a great fit as well. Don't forget we offer Anson Mills Polenta, freshly milled from heirloom corn.

Makes 6 servings

2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo King City Pink, Borlotti, Pinto, or Cranberry beans, drained
1 small bunch green kale (about 4 ounces), stemmed, rinsed, and finely chopped
1 medium carrot, finely chopped
1 medium red onion, finely chopped
1 garlic clove, finely chopped
3 medium Yukon gold or yellow Finn potatoes (about 1 pound total), peeled and chopped
¼ cup olive oil, plus more for serving
1 cup yellow polenta
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
Grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

Combine the beans, kale, carrot, onion, garlic, and potatoes with the olive oil and 8 cups cold water in a heavy 6-quart soup pot or Dutch oven; bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer until the vegetables are tender, about 20 minutes. Add the polenta, a little at a time, stirring well to incorporate each addition into the vegetables. (If you add too much at once, the mixture may become lumpy.) Continue cooking and stirring until the mixture is thick but not stiff, about 30 minutes. You can add small amounts of hot water if the polenta seems too thick.

Serve in warmed dishes with a drizzle of olive oil and a lot of grated cheese on each serving.

COCO BEAN: SLIGHTLY SHORT-CUT CASSOULET

From *French Beans* by Georgeanne Brennan (Rancho Gordo Press, 2019).

Makes 4 to 6 servings

FOR THE BEANS:

1 pound uncooked Rancho Gordo Coco or Cassoulet beans
½ yellow onion, peeled and studded with 2 cloves
1 carrot, peeled and halved
1 celery stalk
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 small ham hock (about 1 pound)
¼ pound chopped pancetta or bacon
2 cloves garlic, peeled
Bouquet garni: 2 thyme sprigs, 4 flat-leaf parsley sprigs, and 1 bay leaf tied with kitchen string
½ teaspoon black peppercorns

FOR THE MEAT:

2 to 3 whole confit duck legs (drumsticks and thighs), fat reserved
4 Toulouse sausages (or substitute Italian mild sausage links), pricked with a toothpick in several places

TO FINISH:

½ cup canned chopped tomatoes and their juices

TO PREPARE THE BEANS: In a large pot, add beans, onion, carrots, celery, ham hock, pancetta or bacon, garlic, bouquet garni, and peppercorns, plus enough water to cover by 3 inches.

Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low; cover and cook until the beans are soft but still have a bit of resistance, 1½ to 2 hours.

TO PREPARE THE MEAT AND FINISH THE CASSOULET: In a skillet over medium heat, cook duck confit in some of its fat until skin is golden, about 4 minutes per side. Remove to a curring board. Separate drumsticks from thighs; set aside. In the same pan, cook sausages until browned, turning often, about 10 minutes. (Do not cook all the way through; they will finish cooking with the beans.) Remove to a cutting board; cut each sausage into 3 or 4 pieces.

Preheat oven to 450°F.

Remove ham hock from the beans. Pick the meat from the bones; set meat aside, discarding skin and bones. Remove and discard onion, carrots, and bouquet garni. With a slotted spoon, remove beans to a bowl and set aside. Strain bean broth into a saucepan, discarding peppercorns and any debris.

Add tomatoes and their juice; simmer to blend the flavors. Taste and adjust seasoning, as desired.

In a large Dutch oven or other casserole, add half the beans in an even layer. Top with a layer of sausages, ham, and duck confit. Cover with remaining beans. Top with just enough broth to cover beans, reserving the rest for basting.

Cook for 30 minutes, then reduce heat to 350°F. Continue to cook, breaking the crust and pushing it into the juices 3 or 4 times, and basting with the remaining broth if the beans appear to be drying out.

Cook until the crust is deep golden and thick bubbles continue to appear around the edges, 1½ to 2 hours. To serve, bring the casserole directly to the table and scoop onto dinner plates. Each serving should include a piece of duck and a sausage.

MAYOCOBA BEAN: CARROT AND MAYOCOBA SOUP

I have enjoyed using Mayocobas in pureed soups, like this one. I encourage you to use this recipe (and what you have in your kitchen and/or garden) as inspiration for your own version.

Makes 2 to 4 servings

¼ pound pancetta, cubed
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus about a spoonful to garnish
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped
1 sprig fresh thyme (or 1 teaspoon dried thyme)
2 bunches of carrots (approx. 1½ to 2 pounds), peeled and chopped
3 cups chicken or vegetable stock
2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Mayocoba or Cassoulet beans (plus 1 cup of bean broth)
Salt and pepper to taste
Chopped fresh parsley for garnish

In a large pot, cook the pancetta in 2 tablespoons of olive oil over medium heat until cooked through and chewy, 7 to 10 minutes. Keep stirring so that the pieces don't burn. Remove the pancetta and reserve, leaving the oil in the hot pan. Add the onion, garlic, thyme, and carrots and cook until soft, about 5 minutes. Add the chicken stock, taking care to scrape any caramelized bits off the bottom of the pot, and stir to incorporate them into the liquid. Continue cooking for 10 minutes.

Add the beans and the broth to the carrot mixture. Stir well and then puree them with an immersion blender or in batches in a blender, taking care not to overfill the blender jar with liquid. You can also puree without the beans and add them later if you want more texture to your soup. Cook the blended soup for another 10 minutes over medium-low. Check for seasoning noting that the pancetta can be salty and possibly your cooked beans as well.

Serve sprinkled with the reserved pancetta, parsley, and drizzled with extra-virgin olive oil.

MIDNIGHT BLACK BEAN: VEGETARIAN BLACK BEAN CHOWDER

Everyone seems to have their go-to black bean soup recipe. This one, from our friend Heidi Swanson, cookbook author and founder of the *101 Cookbooks* blog, gees a flavor boost from orange juice and tomatoes. It's a keeper!

Makes 4 side servings

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 ½ onions, chopped
3 shallots, chopped
4 cloves garlic, chopped
1 teaspoon salt
4 cups of cooked and drained Midnight Black, Ayocote Negro, or Santanero Negro Delgado beans
1 (28-ounce) can crushed tomatoes
2 cups orange juice
¾ teaspoon cayenne pepper (or to taste)
¼ cup rum (optional)

To a large pot over medium heat, add the extra-virgin olive oil, onions, shallots, garlic, and salt. Saute for 5 minutes, or until the onions start to get soft.

Add the black beans, crushed tomatoes, orange juice, and cayenne pepper. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for 10 to 15 minutes.

Remove from the heat and whisk in the rum, if using. Season with salt to taste.

CABALLERO BEAN: TACU TACU

This dish is made for leftovers. You can adjust the ingredient amounts, and the ingredients, based on what you have available. Traditionally, Mayocoba beans and white rice are used, but we tried it with our brown rice and Caballero beans and loved the result. We used Peruvian ají roccoto paste because we had it on hand, but ají amarillo paste seems to be the standard.

Makes 4 to 6 side servings

3 cups cooked, drained Rancho Gordo Caballero, Mayocoba, or Mantequilla beans

2 garlic cloves, chopped

1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio or Mexican Oregano

2 cups cooked rice (white or brown)

3 to 4 tablespoons oil

1 cup thinly sliced onion (about 1 small onion)

½ cup thinly sliced tomato

1 teaspoon ají amarillo paste, or ½ teaspoon ají roccoto paste, or hot sauce of your choice, to taste

Salt and pepper to taste

For the Salsa Criolla:

½ of a red onion, thinly sliced

1 tablespoon Rancho Gordo. Oregano Indio or Mexican Oregano

2 tablespoons fresh lime juice

1 teaspoon ají amarillo paste, or ¼ teaspoon ají roccoto paste, or hot sauce of your choice, to taste

Salt to taste

In a food processor, combine the beans, oregano, and half of the garlic and puree briefly until mostly smooth but still chunky.

In a large bowl, combine the bean mixture with the cooked rice.

In a nonstick skillet over medium-high heat, heat 2 tablespoons of the oil until shimmering. Add the onion and remaining garlic and cook, stirring, until lightly browned, about 5 minutes. Add the tomatoes and ají paste, and continue to cook for a few minutes. Add the mixture to the bowl with the beans and rice and mix well to combine. Add salt and pepper to taste.

In another bowl, make the Salsa Criolla: combine the onion, oregano, lime juice, ají paste, and a generous sprinkle of salt. Stir to combine. Refrigerate until ready to use.

Wipe the skillet clean. Depending on the size of your skillet, you can make one large cake, or divide the bean-rice mixture in half and make two smaller cakes. Have ready a heatproof plate larger than your skillet (preferably with no rim).

Place the skillet over medium heat, add ½ tablespoon oil, and heat until shimmering. Add the bean-rice mixture (all or half, depending on your skillet) and spread it into a cake shape, evenly and lightly packing it down. Cook until deeply browned on the bottom, 7 to 10 minutes. Remove from the heat, invert the plate on top of the skillet, and carefully flip both over to land the bean-rice cake bottom-side up onto the plate. Return the skillet to medium heat, add ½ tablespoon oil, and slide the cake back into the skillet. Cook for another 7 or so, minutes, or until deeply browned on the other side. Invert the plate and flip the skillet over again to land the cake onto the plate. If the cake cracks or breaks apart, just pat it back together. Repeat this process if making a second cake.

Top with the Salsa Criolla and serve hot.

MANTEQUILLA BEAN: MILD BEANS WITH CARAMELIZED LEEKS

As I mentioned, more and more, I find myself cooking and enjoying simple food—the fewer ingredients the better. My newest obsession is slowly cooked leeks dolloped on top of a bowl of warm heirloom beans. It really doesn't get much better than this.

Makes 1 to 2 servings

FOR THE BEANS:

1 tablespoon butter

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 large leek, trimmed, sliced, and rinsed well

Salt to taste

1 to 2 cups cooked Mantequilla, Caballero, or other mild heirloom beans, warmed with some broth

In a saute pan or skillet over medium-low heat, warm the butter and oil. Add the leek and a sprinkle of salt and cook, stirring occasionally, until it is completely soft and caramelized, 20 to 30 minutes.

Place the warm beans and broth in a bowl (or bowls) and top with a scoop of cooked leeks.

PINTO BEAN: GALLINA PINTA

A brothy hominy and bean stew, popular in the state of Sonora, in Northern Mexico. It's traditionally topped with chiltepin chiles, a small, spicy chile that's grown all over the region, but hard to find in the US. If you want to add some heat, you could garnish with minced serrano or habanero chile, or your favorite chile paste.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

1 ½ pounds oxtail

1 ½ pounds chamorro (beef cross-cut hind shanks)

1 pound uncooked Rancho Gordo Pinto beans

1 medium white onion, peeled and halved

2 small anaheim peppers

1 garlic head, cut at the top, plus 2 garlic cloves, ' peeled

2 bay leaves

1 bunch fresh cilantro, tied with kitchen twine

1 pound Rancho Gordo White Corn Posole/ Prepared Hominy, cooked (about 8 cups cooked)

1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio or Mexican Oregano

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 roma tomatoes

2 garlic cloves

1 tsp kosher salt

1 tsp black pepper

1 teaspoon beef or chicken broth

1 cup beef broth from the cooking soup
Chopped onion, cilantro, radish, and/or minced serrano or habanero chile for garnish

Lime wedges for serving

In a very large pot over high heat, bring 16 cups water to a boil. Add the beef. Continue to boil, removing the foam that forms on the surface. Once the foam has been removed, add the beans along with the half of the onion, a whole anaheim chile, the garlic head, bay leaves, and cilantro. Cover and cook over medium heat until the beans are just tender, 1 to 2 hours.

Remove the onion halves, green chile, garlic, bay leaves, and cilantro. Discard.

Meanwhile, stem and roughly chop the remaining chile. In a blender, combine the chile, tomatoes, remaining onion half, 2 garlic cloves, 1 teaspoon each salt and pepper, and 1 cup of the beef broth. Blend until smooth.

To the stew, add the cooked posole, oregano, and tomato salsa. Cover and cook for 20 to 30 more minutes to blend the flavors. Taste, and season with salt and pepper. Serve with desired garnishes and lime wedges.

RIO ZAPE BEAN: BEANS AND RICE WITH ROASTED SWEET POTATO AND GREEN SAUCE

From The Rancho Gordo Vegetarian Kitchen, Volume 1 (Rancho Gordo Press, 2019).

Makes 6 servings

3 large sweet potatoes, peeled and sliced into rounds or wedges

4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

Rancho Gordo Stardust Dipping Powder or New Mexican Chile Powder

Salt and pepper

2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Rio Zape or Midnight Black beans

2 cups cooked brown or white rice

For the Green Sauce:

1 ½ cups plain yogurt (or sour cream)

1 small bunch fresh cilantro, stems removed

2 green onions, chopped

1 garlic clove, chopped

1 small jalapeño chile, seeded and chopped (optional)

Juice of 1 to 2 limes

Salt

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Line a large baking sheet with foil and coat with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil. In a bowl, toss the sweet potatoes with the remaining 3 tablespoons olive oil and a liberal amount of Stardust, salt, and pepper. Spread the sweet potatoes on the baking sheet in a single layer; bake until soft, about 30 minutes. Raise the oven temperature to 450°F and bake until the edges of the sweet potatoes are caramelized, about 10 more minutes. Check the sweet potatoes often and move them around on the sheet to make sure they don't stick or burn!

In a small saucepan, warm the beans over low heat. Add the rice and stir to combine. Keep warm.

To make the Green Sauce, place the yogurt, cilantro, green onion, garlic, and chile (if using) in a blender; blend until smooth. Add lime juice and salt to taste.

Divide the rice-and-bean mixture among plates, top with sweet potatoes and drizzle with the green sauce. Serve extra sauce at the table and drizzled with extra-virgin olive oil.

SPLIT RED LENTIL (MASOOR DAL): RED LENTIL SOUP

This is about the simplest soup you could imagine. You could get creative with the garnishes: add a homemade crouton or two, a swirl of yogurt, or a sprinkle of fresh cilantro. We blended the soup and appreciated the smooth consistency, but it's not necessary if you prefer more texture.

Makes 4 servings

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 celery stalks, chopped

2 carrots, peeled and chopped

1 small white onion, chopped

3 garlic cloves, chopped

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo New Mexican chile powder

1 teaspoon cumin

½ teaspoon ground black pepper

½ pound uncooked Rancho Gordo Masoor Dal (Split Red Lentils), rinsed

In a soup pot over medium-low heat, warm the olive oil. Add the celery, carrot, onion, and garlic, and cook, stirring, about 5 minutes, until the vegetables begin to soften. Add 1 cup water, cover, and cook for 5 minutes to soften the carrots.

Uncover and stir in the salt, chile powder, cumin, and pepper. Add the red lentils along with 4 cups water and stir well. Bring to a simmer, then lower the heat, cover, and cook for 20 minutes, until the soup has thickened.

Transfer the soup to a blender or food processor or use an immersion blender, and process until smooth. Return to the pot, adjust seasoning, and reheat before serving.

VAQUERO BEAN: LEMON-GARLIC VAQUERO BEAN DIP

Reprinted from *The Complete Beans & Grains Cookbook: A Comprehensive Guide with 450+ Recipes* by America's Test Kitchen. The book will be released on February 6, 2024, and it's sure to be a valuable recipe resource calls for The People of the Beans! The original recipe calls for Orca beans, but we're suggesting our Vaquero beans, which are similar.

Makes 4 side servings

For the dip:

*1 ½ tablespoons table salt for brining.
8 ounces (1 cup) Rancho Gordo Vacquero beans
(or Orea beans), picked over and rinsed
1 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil
3 scallions
2 teaspoons table salt for cooking beans
2½ tablespoons lemon juice
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 teaspoon ground cumin*

For the Tatbeeleh Topping:

*2 jalapeño chiles, stemmed, seeded, and finely
chopped
¼ cup finely chopped onion
2 scallions, sliced thin
1 tablespoon lemon juice
¼ cup minced fresh parsley
½ teaspoon table salt
4 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra for
drizzling
Flake sea salt*

1. Dissolve 1 ½ tablespoons salt in 2 quarts cold water in large container. Add beans and soak at room temperature for at least 8 hours or up to 24 hours. Drain and rinse well. (RG Note: We don't recommend soaking Rancho Gordo beans for more than 8 hours.)

2. Heat oil in Dutch oven over medium-high heat until shimmering. Reduce heat to medium, add scallions, and cook until spotty brown, 4 to 6 minutes, flipping halfway through cooking. Add soaked beans and 7 cups water to Dutch oven with scallions and bring to simmer. Simmer, partially covered, over medium-low heat until beans are very tender, about 40 minutes. Off heat, stir in 2 teaspoons salt, cover, and let sit for 15 minutes.

3. Drain beans, reserving 3 tablespoons cooking liquid and discarding charred scallions. Return beans to Dutch oven and stir in lemon juice, garlic, and cumin. Transfer 1½ cups bean mixture to food processor along with reserved cooking liquid and process until mostly smooth with some small pieces visible, about 10 seconds. Return processed beans to Dutch oven with remaining whole beans and stir to combine.

FOR THE TOPPING: Combine all ingredients in bowl. Transfer warm dip to serving bowl and top with tatbeeleh topping. Drizzle with extra oil and sprinkle with sea salt. Serve.

CALIFORNIA BROWN RICE: MEXICAN RICE PUDDING

In Mexico, arroz con leche is a popular sweet dish made with white rice, canela, and milk. We tried it with our brown rice and while it was different from the classic, it was quite delicious.

Makes 4 servings

¾ cup Rancho Gordo California Brown Rice

1 stick canela (soft cinnamon)

¾ cup whole milk

½ cup condensed milk

¼ cup raisins (optional)

Ground cinnamon for garnish

Rinse the rice. In a saucepan over high heat, bring 2 cups water to a boil. Add the rice and canela, stir, then cover and simmer over low heat for 35 to 40 minutes, until the rice is tender.

In a bowl, combine the whole milk with the condensed milk. Add the milk mixture and the raisins (if using) to the rice and stir. Cover and cook over low heat, stirring occasionally, until the mixture thickens, 10 to 15 minutes. The rice should have a soft, pudding-like consistency. If it is too dry, you can stir in ¼ cup of warm milk.

If serving warm, place in small bowls and dust with cinnamon. If serving cold, transfer the rice to a container and refrigerate. Dust with cinnamon before serving.

BORLOTTI LAMON BEAN: FAGIOLI ALLA VENEZIANA (VENETIAN SWEET-AND-SOUR BEANS)

Recipe from *Fagioli: The Bean Cuisine of Italy* by Judith Barrett (Rancho Gordo Press, 2023).

Barrett writes: “The sweet-and-sour flavoring in this dish is typical of Venetian cooking; the beans from Lamon, which is not that far away, often appear in Venetian dishes. Serve these beans as a first course or as an accompaniment to grilled meat or chicken.

Makes 4 servings

¼ cup olive oil

1 whole salt-packed anchovy, rinsed in cold water, filleted, and chopped; or 4 oil-packed anchovy fillets

1 large red onion, peeled, halved, and thinly sliced

¼ cup red wine vinegar

½ cup cold water

2 cups cooked Lamon, corona, borlotti, pinto, or cranberry beans, drained

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

10 flat-leaf parsley sprigs, leaves only, chopped

In a large skillet, warm the olive oil over medium heat. Add the anchovy and mash with a wooden spoon until it dissolves into the oil. Add the onion and continue cooking, stirring, until onion becomes translucent, about 5 minutes.

Add the vinegar and water; cook about 5 minutes longer. Stir in the beans, season to taste with salt and pepper, and continue cooking until the sauce is thick, about 10 minutes longer. Transfer to a serving bowl, and garnish with chopped parsley.

GARBANZO/CHICKPEA: PASTA E CECI (CHICK-PEAS)

I’ve been going through my old books, and I came across a copy of Sophia Loren’s *In the Kitchen with Love*. She has a pasta e fagioli recipe with garbanzos, and while it’s not untypical, it’s Sophia and that’s enough for me!

Makes 6 servings

“For 6 people, soak 2 pounds of chick-peas overnight in 2 quarts of water: the little secret here is to add a pinch of baking soda which will make them much more amenable in the cooking.

In the morning, drain peas, measure soaking water, and add enough water to total 2 quarts. Boil peas in the water with a couple of pinches of salt added.

After an hour or so when peas are half cooked, ladle out a part of the water leaving only enough to cover the peas. Cook for another hour at least, then add 2 or 3 tablespoons of olive oil, a clove of chopped garlic, half a chopped onion, some minced basil leaves, a cut-up tomato, and a sprinkling of salt and pepper.

Cook for another ½–1 hour and finally the chick-peas will be tender enough to add to the pasta: spaghetti or bucatini broken short or cannolicchi. Now turn up the flame, adding more boiling water if necessary, so the pasta won’t stick. The soup will be very thick, but not too solid. Serve at once.

When soup is already on the table in the soup plates: a few drops of crude olive oil and one last sprinkling of pepper.

GOOD MOTHER STALLARDS BEAN: GOOD MOTHER STALLARDS WITH MUSHROOMS AND LEEKS

I've talked about this before, but I'm lucky enough to have a few generous friends who forage for wild mushrooms. I think the secret with mushrooms is that you need to cook them very high or very low. I wrote in the last newsletter about my obsession with slow-cooked leeks. It turns out Good Mother Stallards, mushrooms, and leeks are a happy trio. Serve over a bed of wild rice for a truly satisfying meal.

Makes 2 servings

1 tablespoon butter
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 large leek, trimmed, sliced, and rinsed well
Salt to taste
2 garlic cloves, minced
6 ounces wild mushrooms, cleaned and roughly chopped
1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo Mexican Oregano
1 to 2 cups cooked Good Mother Stallard beans, or other mild heirloom beans, warmed with some broth
Cooked wild rice for serving (optional)

In a saute pan or skillet over medium-low heat, warm 1 tablespoon each butter and oil. Add the leek and a sprinkle of salt and cook, stirring occasionally, until it is completely soft and caramelized, 20 to 30 minutes. Remove the leeks from the pan and wipe the pan clean for cooking the mushrooms (or use a different pan).

Place the pan over medium-high heat and add 2 tablespoons olive oil. Add the mushrooms and a pinch of salt and saute, stirring, until the mushrooms have released most of their liquid, 8 to 10 minutes. Add the garlic and oregano and cook for another minute or so.

Place the warm beans and broth in a bowl (or bowls) and top with a scoop of cooked leeks and a scoop of mushrooms. Serve over wild rice, if desired.

GREEN BABY LIMA BEAN: SPANISH-STYLE BAKED BUTTER BEANS

A Rancho Gordo employee looked at this recipe and declared, "Spanish Pizza Beans!" Like the infamous Smitten Kitchen Pizza Beans recipe, this one can be adapted based on your preferences. You could even add some Spanish chorizo if you were so inclined.

Makes 2 to 4 servings

2 tablespoons butter or olive oil
1 onion, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 tablespoon Rancho Gordo Castillo Spanish Pimentón
1 pint cherry or grape tomatoes
½ cup chopped jarred roasted red bell peppers
¼ cup chopped manzanilla olives
3 cups cooked, drained Rancho Gordo Green Baby Lima Beans or Large White Lima beans
1 cup bean broth or chicken stock
2 tablespoons tomato paste
2 oz manchego cheese, grated
½ cup breadcrumbs
Salt and pepper to taste
Freshly chopped parsley to serve

Preheat the oven to 400°F. In a large oven-safe skillet over medium-low heat, warm the butter or oil. Add the onion and cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic, pimenton, tomatoes, bell peppers, and olives and cook for another 5 or so minutes.

Add the beans, broth, and tomato paste. Bring to a simmer, stirring gently. Taste and adjust the seasonings, taking into account that the cheese topping will add salt. Sprinkle the cheese and breadcrumbs on top. (You can also transfer the mixture to a baking dish and then add the toppings.)

Carefully transfer to the oven and bake uncovered for 20 to 25 minutes, or until the topping is browned. Serve garnished with chopped fresh parsley and a drizzle of olive oil.

SANTANERO NEGRO DELGADO BEAN: BLACK BEAN SALAD WITH CABBAGE AND RADISHES

As much as I love bean broth, I don't appreciate it in the salad. Make sure your beans are well-drained. As soon as you have the inkling, let your beans strain in some type of colander as you make the rest of the ingredients. Save the bean broth, though!

If you soak your sliced (or chopped) radishes in salt water, they take on an almost buttery flavor. Not more than a few hours, though, or they go limp.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

½ of a small red onion, finely chopped Pineapple or white wine vinegar, for pickling

4 cups cooked, well-drained black beans such as Santanero Negro Delgado

4 radishes, diced, soaked in salt water (see note)

2 green onions, white and light green parts only, chopped

2 cups shredded red cabbage (about ½ of a small head of cabbage)

½ cup chopped fresh cilantro or parsley

2 pickled jalapeños, chopped, or to taste

Lime vinaigrette, for dressing (recipe follows)

½ cup pepitas (pumpkin seeds), toasted (optional)

Cotija cheese for garnish (optional)

In a small bowl, combine onion and enough vinegar to just cover. Let stand for at least 15 minutes.

Drain onions and set aside.

In a large bowl, combine the beans, radishes, scallions, cabbage, marinated onions, jalapeños, and cilantro. Drizzle with vinaigrette, about a tablespoon at a time, tossing, until ingredients are lightly coated. Season with salt and pepper.

Just before serving, garnish with pepitas and/or crumbled cheese. Salad can be refrigerated for up to 3 days.

For the LIME VINAIGRETTE:

1 small clove garlic, minced (about ½ teaspoon)

2 tablespoons lime juice 1 tablespoon white wine vinegar or Rancho Gordo Pineapple Vinegar

Splash of jalapeño brine

½ cup extra-virgin olive oil

Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

To make the LIME VINAIGRETTE, In a jar with a lid, or in a small bowl, combine all ingredients and shake or whisk until combined.

YELLOW EYE BEAN: ASPARAGUS-BEAN NESTS FOR BREAKFAST

Here's a perfect spring meal, not just for breakfast but for any time of day. It's adapted from *The Rancho Gordo Vegetarian Kitchen* (Rancho Gordo Press, 2017).

This is what you might call a rustic showstopper. If you're making asparagus for dinner, make some extra to use in this dish for breakfast the next morning. It beats Corn Flakes, and it's easy enough to poach eggs and rearrange some leftovers on a plate.

Makes 2 to 4 servings

2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Yellow Eye or white beans in their broth

4 very fresh eggs

1 bunch of slender asparagus, tough ends trimmed roasted or blanched until tender

Italian Salsa Verde to finish (recipe follows)

For the ITALIAN SALSA VERDE:

2 garlic cloves

Salt and pepper to taste

½ cup minced fresh parsley

2 tablespoons minced fresh sage

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 tablespoons drained capers, roughly chopped

1 tablespoon lemon juice

1 teaspoon lemon zest

In a small saucepan, warm the beans over low heat. Bring a pot of water to a simmer over medium-low heat. Add a small dash of vinegar. Crack the eggs individually into the ramekin or cup. Slowly tip each egg into the water, swirling a spoon around the egg a bit to help keep its shape. Repeat with remaining eggs. Let cook until the whites have set around the edges, about 3 minutes. Remove eggs with a slotted spoon and drain on a paper towel. Arrange a few asparagus spears in a circle on each plate. Fill each nest with about ½ cup of beans. Top with a poached egg and a generous amount of salsa verde.

FOR THE ITALIAN SALSA VERDE: On a cutting board, or using a mortar and pestle, mince or pound the garlic with about ¼ teaspoon salt. In a small bowl, combine the parsley, oil, capers, lemon juice and zest, and garlic.

CASTILLO SPANISH PIMENTÓN: GARBANZO BEANS WITH SPINACH AND SMOKED PAPRIKA

There was about a cup of garbanzos and a cup of their broth sitting in the refrigerator. I was starving. Well, quite hungry. I added some frozen spinach, olive oil and a teaspoon of our Smoked Pimentón Paprika. Once heated through, a drizzle of my best olive oil and a scant squeeze of lemon. Holy cow.

There is a temptation to add even more pimentón but a teaspoon is perfect. I am not the biggest spinach fan so I only had frozen on hand. I don't dislike it but I prefer it when other people make things with it. I plopped some of the frozen spinach into the simmering garbanzos and waited while they made friends. I reached for the Parmesan but thought, so far so good, let's make this vegan. The lemon was the kicker.

Makes 1 servings

About 1 cup cooked Rancho Gordo Garbanzo beans, plus 1 cup cooking broth

About 2 cups frozen spinach (or chopped fresh spinach)

1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo Castillo Spanish Pimentón

Extra-virgin olive oil for drizzling

Squeeze of fresh lemon juice

In a saucepan over medium heat, bring the Garbanzos and their broth to a simmer. Stir in the spinach and pimentón. Let cook until the spinach is heated through and the flavors have married. Transfer to a bowl and top with a generous drizzle of olive oil and a squeeze of lemon.

BUCKEYE BEAN: NOAH GALUTEN'S HIPPIE CALIFORNIA SALAD

We've been enjoying Noah Galuten's *The Don't Panic Pantry Cookbook: Mostly Vegetarian Comfort Food That Happens to Be Pretty Good for You* and his very entertaining YouTube cooking show.

He says: "This is my version of the 'health food restaurant' salads I enjoyed for most of my life."

He calls for Garbanzo beans, but we think our Buckeye beans would be another good option.

Makes 2 big salads or 4 to 6 side salads

1 head lettuce or about 4 cups loosely packed leaves

3 ounces sprouts, such as alfalfa, broccoli, daikon, or onion

8 ounces cucumber (any type will work), cut into bite-size pieces

1 medium carrot, grated

1 cup cooked Rancho Gordo Buckeye beans or chickpeas, drained and rinsed

2 small or 1 medium seedless tangerine or orange, divided into segments

Vegan Tahini Dressing (see below)

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 medium avocado

2 tablespoons sunflower seeds or pumpkin seeds, freshly toasted or purchased already roasted

For the Vegan Tahini Dressing:

2 tablespoons tahini

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

2 teaspoons rice vinegar

2 teaspoons red wine vinegar

2 teaspoons tamari

Salt (optional)

Makes about 6 tablespoons

If you are starting with a head of lettuce, tear it into large rough pieces and then wash and thoroughly dry the leaves. Add them to a large bowl, followed by the sprouts. Break up the sprouts in the bowl a bit and try to disperse them into the lettuce without too much clumping. Add the cucumber, carrot, chickpeas, and tangerine to the bowl. Add the dressing and toss it thoroughly to combine the salad, being careful again of large sprout clumps. Taste the salad for seasoning and then adjust it with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Divide the salad into individual bowls or one large serving bowl. Halve and pit the avocado, then use a spoon to carve out thin little slices and lay them on top of the salad(s). Season the avocado with a sprinkling of salt. Top the salad(s) with a relatively even coating of sunflower seeds. Serve immediately.

VEGAN TAHINI DRESSING:

If it is an especially dry brand of tahini, you can increase the olive oil slightly to thin it, and then season it with more salt to compensate as well.

In a small bowl, combine the tahini, olive oil, rice vinegar, wine vinegar, and tamari and whisk them vigorously. Taste for seasoning and add salt if needed. Use the dressing immediately or store in the refrigerator for a few days.

FLAGEOLET BEAN: RAW ZUCCHINI SALAD WITH FLAGEOLET BEANS AND BASIL

Makes 4 side servings

2 slender zucchini or other summer squash
1 garlic clove, minced
Fresh zest and juice from 1 lemon
Salt and freshly ground pepper
1½ cups cooked, drained Rancho Gordo Flageolet beans
Handful of cherry or grape tomatoes
3 tablespoons olive oil
¼ cup chopped fresh basil or other herb of choice
Fresh Parmesan shavings (optional)

Slice the zucchini crosswise with a mandoline or chef's knife as thinly as you can. In a bowl, combine the zucchini, garlic, lemon juice, lemon zest, and a sprinkle of salt and pepper, and marinate, refrigerated, for at least 15 minutes and up to 2 hours. Stir the mixture at least once as it marinates to make sure the ingredients are distributed.

To serve, arrange the zucchini on a serving platter or individual plates. Top with beans and tomatoes. Sprinkle with salt and pepper, drizzle with olive oil, and top with herbs. If you wish, add Parmesan shavings.

MARCELLA BEAN: RADICCHIO SALAD WITH PARMESAN-BALSAMICO VINAIGRETTE

This salad from Chef Hiro Sone was a favorite at his restaurant, Terra, in St. Helena, and featured in *Terra: Cooking from the Heart of Napa Valley* by Hiro Sone and Lissa Doumani (Ten Speed Press, 2013). Hiro was kind enough to share this recipe with us, and he even added beans to it, to humor us! He used two types of white beans, but feel free to use just one variety if you prefer.

Makes 4 servings

¼ baguette, or enough for ¾ cup croutons

Parmesan-Balsamico Vinaigrette
¼ teaspoon grated garlic
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
1 tablespoon sherry wine vinegar
2 tablespoons sunflower seed oil
¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
Salt and freshly ground white pepper to taste

2 heads radicchio, about 4½ inches in diameter, halved and cored
2/3 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
1 cup cooked, drained Royal Corona beans
1½ cups cooked, drained Marcella or Alubia Blanca beans

To make the croutons: Preheat the oven to 350°. Cut the baguette into ½-inch cubes. Spread on a rimmed baking sheet pan and bake until golden brown, 4 to 5 minutes. Set aside.

To make the vinaigrette: Whisk together the garlic, Dijon mustard, balsamic vinegar, and sherry vinegar in a small bowl. Mix together the corn oil and extra virgin olive oil in a separate bowl, then slowly whisk the oils into the vinegar mixture. Season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Separate the radicchio leaves and soak them in cold water for 10 minutes, or longer if necessary. Drain and dry (with a lettuce spinner, if you have one). Cover with a damp towel and refrigerate until ready to use. Combine the radicchio and 1/3 cup of the Parmesan cheese in a large bowl. Slowly add about half of the vinaigrette, tossing well so each leaf is coated. Add the croutons and Royal Corona beans and stir to combine. Taste and adjust the seasonings. Spread the Marcella beans out on a serving platter. Top with the radicchio salad.

Drizzle with remaining dressing and sprinkle with the remaining Parmesan and pepper.

FRENCH-STYLE GREEN LENTIL: DUCK BREAST, LENTIL, AND GREEN HERB SALAD

A classic lentil dish from *French Beans* by Georgeanne Brennan (Rancho Gordo Press).

Makes 4 servings

½ pound uncooked green French lentils, picked over and rinsed

1½ teaspoons sea salt (divided use)

4 tablespoons pistachio oil

1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

1 tablespoon sherry vinegar

2 tablespoons minced shallot

1 tablespoon minced flat-leaf parsley, plus

4 sprigs for garnish

1 tablespoon minced chives

½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper (divided use)

1- to 1¼-pound skin-on duck breast, at room temperature

1 tablespoon unsalted butter, at room temperature

1 teaspoon minced tarragon

In a saucepan over medium-high heat, add lentils plus enough water to cover by about 2 inches. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to low. Add ½ teaspoon salt; partially cover and cook until the lentils are tender to the bite, 20 to 30 minutes. Drain and set aside.

In a large bowl, combine pistachio oil, mustard, vinegar, shallot, minced parsley, chives, 1 teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper; whisk into a vinaigrette. Add lentils and gently toss; set aside.

Using a sharp knife, cut a crosshatch pattern through the skin of the duck breast and into the fat — but not into the meat — allowing about ½ inch between cuts. Pat meat dry and season both sides well with remaining salt and pepper.

Spread butter in a cool skillet. Place duck breasts in the skillet, skinside down, then place the pan over medium heat. (Slow cooking in the unheated pan will allow the fat between the skin and the meat to render, while creating the crisp skin you're looking for.) Continue to cook until skin is crisp and golden, about 7 to 8 minutes for large, thick breasts.

Turn duck breasts and sear the other side, cooking until skin is browned and meat is cooked medium to medium-rare, 4 to 6 minutes. Using tongs, turn and hold the breasts to sear the sides as well. Remove meat to a clean cutting board; let stand for 5 minutes before carving into ½-inch slices.

To serve, divide lentils among four plates and arrange duck slices on top. Drizzle with cutting board juices, if desired, and garnish with minced tarragon and parsley sprigs.

MAYAN RED BEAN: HUEVOS MOTULENOS

This recipe from Mely Martinez's cookbook, *Mexico In My Kitchen*, is based on the traditional eggs made in the picturesque small town of Mot in the State of Yucatán. The eggs at the local market in Motul are served on top of a corn tortilla spread with refried beans and then topped with another tortilla and tomato sauce.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

4 eggs
4 corn tortillas, a day old
1/3 cup vegetable oil
1 habanero pepper
½ medium red onion, minced
½ cup refried black or red beans
2 medium tomatoes, diced (about 3 cups)
Salt to taste
½ cup cooked green peas
1 cup of queso añejo or fresh crumbled cheese
4 slices of cooked ham diced
1 plantain, cut in diagonal slices and fried

In a skillet at medium-high heat, warm one teaspoon of oil and add the onion and habanero pepper (whole). Fry until onion is transparent, making sure the Habanero pepper doesn't burst. The Habanero pepper will render its flavor to the sauce this way without adding spiciness.

Add the diced tomatoes and cook for about 7 minutes until the tomatoes have released all their juices and formed a thick sauce. Season with salt and set aside.

Start gathering all your ingredients to assemble the dish and have them ready for serving once the eggs and tortillas are fried.

Heat the rest of the oil in the frying pan and start frying the tortillas one by one. Fry the tortillas until they are a little crispy, this way they will hold the egg and sauce without breaking into pieces. Place each tortilla over a paper towel to drain any excess oil.

Once all your tortillas had been fried, arrange 2 on each plate and spread the refried beans over the tortillas.

In the same skillet where you fried the tortillas start frying the eggs, you can cook them over easy or sunny side up, that will be your personal choice. Place an egg over each tortilla. When all the eggs are cooked, cover them with the tomato sauce, leaving the egg yolk uncover if you wish. Garnish with the ham, peas, cheese and fried plantains. Serve warm.

ROYAL CORONA BEANS: CREAMY WHITE BEANS WITH HERB OIL

Colu Henry is a writer and cookbook author, and a Friend of the Bean. She shared one of her favorite Royal Corona recipes with us.

Makes 4 servings

½ cup roughly chopped chives
½ cup roughly chopped cilantro leaves and tender stems
½ cup tightly packed basil leaves
½ cup olive oil
Squeeze of lemon
Kosher salt to taste
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
3 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Royal Corona Beans
Freshly ground black pepper
½ chicken stock, vegetable stock or water
Flaky salt for serving, optional

In a food processor combine the chives, cilantro and basil and pulse together until finely chopped. Add the olive oil and pulse again until the mixture is silky and emulsified. Transfer to a small bowl, stir in the lemon juice and salt to taste.

In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium-low heat. Add the garlic and cook until translucent, about 1 minute. Add the beans to the skillet and season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally until the flavors have melded, about 2 to 3 minutes. With the back of a spoon or spatula, smash about 1/3 to ½ cup of the beans and stir until they are incorporated into the rest of the bean mixture. A good portion of the remaining beans should maintain their structure.

Add in the stock or water and bring to a gentle simmer. Cook until the sauce becomes thickened and creamy and is reduced by about half, 1 to 2 minutes. Smash additional beans, if needed, to reach desired consistency and stir again to combine. Transfer the beans to a bowl and swirl the herb oil on top. Season with flaky salt, if desired.

STARDUST DIPPING POWDER: ESQUITES (MEXICAN STREET CORN)

Makes 1 servings

4 tablespoons butter
5 corn cobs, shucked
2 cups water
Salt and pepper to taste
To serve: mayonnaise, sour cream, grated Cotija cheese, Rancho Gordo Stardust, lime juice

In a large saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the corn kernels and water; season with salt and pepper to taste. Increase the heat to medium-high and cook for 8 to 10 minutes, until the kernels are well cooked but still firm.

Serve the hot esquites in a cup and accompany them with mayonnaise (or sour cream), grated cheese, Stardust, and lime juice to taste.

CASSOULET BEAN: WHITE BEAN STEW WITH HERB PESTO

Recipe from my first cookbook, *Heirloom Beans* (Chronicle Books, 2008), contributed by Chef Dan Barber of Stone Barns in New York.

Makes 4 servings

2 thyme sprigs
2 fresh flat-leaf parsley sprigs
1 bay leaf
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
½ medium carrot, peeled and cut into pieces ½
celery stalk, cut into 2 or 3 pieces
½ medium yellow onion, quartered
¼ medium fennel bulb
One 3- to 4-ounce piece of pancetta
1 pound uncooked Rancho Gordo white or mild
heirloom beans, picked over and rinsed
3 cups chicken or vegetable broth
Salt and freshly ground pepper

PESTO:

4 cornichons
2 teaspoons capers
¾ teaspoon Dijon mustard
½ teaspoon finely chopped garlic
1 soft-cooked egg
1 oil-packed anchovy fillet
1 cup extra-virgin olive oil
2 cups arugula leaves, roughly chopped
2 cups spinach leaves, roughly chopped
1 cup fresh chervil leaves, roughly chopped
½ cup fresh tarragon leaves
Salt and freshly ground pepper

1 tablespoon fresh tarragon leaves for garnishing
1 tablespoon chopped parsley for garnishing

Put the thyme sprigs, parsley sprigs, and bay leaf on a piece of cheesecloth, gather the corners, and tie the bundle securely.

In a soup pot over medium heat, warm the olive oil. Add the carrot, celery, onion, fennel, and pancetta and sauté until the vegetables begin to soften and caramelize, about 10 minutes. Add the beans, cheesecloth bundle, chicken broth, and enough cold water to cover by 1 inch. Bring to a simmer and season with salt and pepper. Cook uncovered until the beans are just tender, about 1½ hours.

Transfer beans and their broth to large bowl and let cool. Remove the vegetables, pancetta, and cheesecloth bundle, and discard. Drain the beans, reserving the broth.

MAKE THE PESTO:

Put the cornichons, capers, mustard, garlic, egg, and anchovy in a blender. With the motor running, slowly add the oil until it is completely incorporated. Add the arugula, spinach, chervil, and ½ cup tarragon. Puree until smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Put the beans and the reserved broth in a medium saucepan and warm gently over medium heat. Add about 1 cup of the pesto and stir to incorporate, making sure not to let the stew boil. Taste and adjust the seasonings. Ladle the stew into warmed bowls and garnish with the tarragon and parsley.

CHRISTMAS LIMA BEAN: HEIDI SWANSON'S CHRISTMAS LIMA STEW

Recipe from our newest cookbook, *The Bean Book* (Ten Speed Press, 2024).

Makes 8 servings

1 cup extra-virgin olive oil

2 large heads celery, preferably with leaves, trimmed then sliced into ¾-inch chunks (leaves reserved for making celery salt)

3 bunches green onions or 12 spring onions if in season, green parts included, sliced into 1/3-inch rounds

8 garlic cloves, very thinly sliced

Scant 2 teaspoons caraway seeds, lightly crushed

Fine sea salt and flaky sea salt

One 28-ounce can whole plum tomatoes, drained, rinsed, cored, and roughly chopped

4 to 6 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Christmas Lima beans, bean broth reserved

Oily black olives, pitted and roughly chopped, for garnish

1 lemon, cut into eighths

Preheat the oven to 250°F.

Heat ¾ cup of the olive oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add the celery and stir until coated with oil. Cook for 10 minutes, stirring often. Add two-thirds of the green onions, the garlic, caraway seeds, and a couple big pinches of fine salt. Cook for 10 to 15 minutes, or until the vegetables soften and begin to caramelize a bit.

Make sure the celery leaves are as dry as possible if you've recently washed them. Spread out the leaves on a baking sheet and bake for 15 to 25 minutes, tossing once or twice, until dried out. Alternately, you can toast them in a large skillet over low heat, tossing regularly, for about 30 minutes. Crumble the dried celery leaves with an equal part flaky salt.

Add the tomatoes and 2 teaspoons of the celery salt and cook for another few minutes. Add the beans along with 5½ cups of liquid (ideally 2 cups bean broth plus 3½ cups water) and the remaining ¼ cup olive oil.

Bring to a simmer, taste, and season with more salt or celery salt if needed. Ladle the stew into bowls and top with a spoonful of chopped olives and a squeeze of lemon. Garnish with the remaining green onions.

DOMINGO ROJO BEAN: COGOLLOS ASADOS Y FRIJOLES ROJOS (GRILLED LITTLE GEMS AND RED BEANS)

Recipe from *My Mexico City Kitchen: Recipes and Convictions* by Gabriela Cámara (Ten Speed Press, 2019).

Makes 4 to 6 servings

2 cups (1 pound) uncooked small red beans
1 garlic clove
1 sprig epazote, 1 avocado leaf, or 1 Tbsp dried oregano or marjoram
4 tsp sea salt, plus more as needed
¾ cup plus 1 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
¾ cup freshly squeezed lime juice
2 large garlic cloves, finely minced
½ cup flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped
4 to 6 heads Little Gem lettuce, rinsed and damaged outer leaves discarded
8 to 12 Tortillas de Maiz (corn tortillas)

Rinse the beans thoroughly, removing any debris, then place them in a medium pot and cover with about 4 inches of water. Add the garlic and the epazote, avocado leaf, oregano, or marjoram. Bring the water to a boil, then immediately decrease the heat to maintain a low simmer and cover the pot with a lid. After 30 minutes, stir the beans, because the ones at the bottom of the pot will cook faster and you want them all done at the same time. Add more water if needed to maintain 2 to 3 inches over the top of the beans. Cover and let simmer for another 15 minutes, then taste a bean for doneness. The beans probably will not be finished yet, but at this point, you should start checking them every 10 minutes, stirring gently each time and adding more water if needed. Let the beans cook until they are just a bit softer than you think they should be but still whole, with their skins intact.

At the very end of the cooking time, add 3 tsp of the salt to the cooking water and turn off the stove. Let the beans cool in the pot of water for about 20 minutes.

In a large bowl, whisk ¾ cup of the oil with the lime juice and the remaining 1 tsp salt. Add the garlic and parsley. Cover and set aside. Once the beans are cool, drain them. I encourage you to reserve the broth, which makes a simple and delicious soup or can be added to another soup as a base. Transfer the beans to the bowl of vinaigrette and stir gently. Let the beans marinate for at least 1 hour and up to 4 hours before serving.

Cut the lettuce heads in half lengthwise, brush their cut sides with the remaining 1 Tbsp oil and sprinkle with salt.

Warm the tortillas on an ungreased comal or in a skillet over medium heat and place them in a basket or other container with a lid to keep warm. Heat a grill pan or cast-iron skillet over high heat. When you lay the heads of lettuce face down on it, you should hear a sizzle. Let them cook for about 1 minute before flipping. Cook for about 1 minute on the other side. Press lightly with a spatula. You want them to wilt slightly, and—if using a grill pan—for the cut surface of each head of lettuce to have nice dark lines. But they should also hold their shape and remain crisp and sweet.

Serve the lettuce cut-side up, topped with a scoop of bean salad and dressing from the bottom of the bowl, passing the tortillas at the table.

MIDNIGHT BLACK BEAN: SMOKY BLACK BEAN BOWLS WITH HERBY EGGS & AVOCADO

Recipe from *The Weekday Vegetarians: Get Simple* by Jenny Rosenstrach (Clarkson Potter, 2024).

Makes 4 servings

SMOKY BLACK BEANS

3 tablespoons neutral oil, such as canola or vegetable (or extra-virgin olive oil in a pinch)
½ small yellow onion, finely chopped
1 cup chopped fresh tomatoes (any kind)
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
1 large garlic clove, minced
2 teaspoons tomato paste
1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
¼ teaspoon ground cumin
Pinch of cayenne pepper (optional)
3 cups cooked black beans (½ cup cooking liquid reserved)

FOR THE BOWLS

1 tablespoon unsalted butter (or oil, if you'd like it to be dairy-free)
4 large eggs
1/3 cup finely chopped fresh cilantro
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
Cooked rice (optional)
¼ small red onion, minced
1 avocado, chopped

1. Make the smoky black beans: In a medium pot, combine the oil, onion, tomatoes, and salt and black pepper and cook over medium heat, stirring, until the onion is soft, about 3 minutes. Add the garlic, tomato paste, smoked paprika, cumin, and cayenne (if using), stirring everything together and allowing the tomato paste to sizzle and toast for about a minute. Toss in the beans and reserved bean cooking liquid (or ½ cup water if using canned beans) and heat until everything has warmed through and the beans have soaked in the spices, 10 to 15 minutes. (The beans should be slightly stewy; if they aren't, add a little more water to loosen them up.)

2. Meanwhile, for the bowls: In a nonstick skillet, heat the butter (or oil) over medium-low heat. In a bowl, whisk together the eggs, cilantro, and salt and pepper and pour into the skillet. Let sit without stirring to allow the eggs to set. Flip once the eggs are mostly cooked around the edges. (You can also cut the omelet in half with your spatula if it's easier for you to flip that way.) Slide the eggs from the skillet onto a cutting board and slice into bite-size pieces.

3. Divide the beans and the eggs among four bowls (or over four bowls of rice, if using) and serve with the red onion and avocado.

SPLIT YELLOW PEA: GARLICKY GREEK YELLOW SPLIT PEA DIP

Recipe from *Mastering The Art Of Plant-Based Cooking* by Joe Yonan (Ten Speed Press, 2024).

Makes 6 servings

1 1-pound bag of black-eyed peas
½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 medium red onion, chopped
1 fennel bulb, trimmed and chopped, feathery fronds set aside
4 scallions, trimmed and thinly sliced
2 carrots, peeled and diced
2 garlic cloves, chopped
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 star anise
2 bay leaves
1 navel orange, preferably organic, unpeeled and cut into 8 wedges
Sea salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
½ cup chopped fresh parsley
1 cup chopped fresh dill fronds

Place the black-eyed peas in a large pot with ample water and bring to a boil. As soon as they come to a boil, remove and drain.

In the same pot, heat 4 tablespoons of olive oil and saute the onion, fennel, scallions, and carrots until translucent and lightly browned, about 10 minutes. Stir in the garlic, add the blanched black-eyed peas, and toss to coat in the olive oil.

Add the tomato paste and stir all together. Add enough water to come about an inch—not more—above the black eyed peas, then add the star anise and bay leaves and squeeze the orange wedges into the pot. Simmer over low-to-medium heat until the black-eyed peas are tender, about 40 minutes, checking the liquid content and adding a little more water as needed. About 10 minutes before removing from the heat, season with salt and pepper.

Remove from heat, then remove and discard the bay leaves and star anise. Stir in the herbs and remaining olive oil, and serve with the cooked orange wedges.

SUPER-LUCKY 2025 BLACK EYED PEA: BLACK EYED PEAS BRAISED WITH ORANGES, TOMATO & ANISE

Recipe from *The Ikaria Way* by Diane Kochilas (St. Martin's Press, 2024).

Makes about 3 ½ cups

4 tablespoons olive oil, plus more for drizzling

1 medium red onion (7 ounces/200g), finely chopped

¾ teaspoon fine sea salt, plus more to taste

4 garlic cloves, finely grated or pressed

½ teaspoon ground cumin

1 cup (225g) dried yellow split peas, rinsed thoroughly and drained

3 cups (710ml) water

2 ½ tablespoons fresh lemon juice, plus more to taste

Chopped capers, minced fresh flat-leaf parsley, smoked paprika, for garnish

Warm bread, for serving

IN A MEDIUM SAUCEPAN, heat 1 table-spoon of the olive oil over medium heat until it shimmers. Measure out 2 tablespoons of the red onion and set aside for garnish. When the oil shimmers, add the rest of the red onion and ¼ teaspoon of the salt and sauté until translucent, about 4 minutes. Stir in the garlic and cumin and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add the split peas, water, and remaining ½ teaspoon salt. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat until the liquid is at a simmer and cook until the split peas are soft, about 30 minutes.

Reserving the cooking liquid, use a slotted spoon to transfer the split peas, onion, and garlic to a blender. Measure out ¾ cup (180ml) of the cooking liquid, adding water if necessary to reach that amount, and transfer it and the lemon juice to the blender. Cover with the lid and remove the center cap. Hold a kitchen towel over the hole to avoid splattering and blend, beginning at low speed and gradually increasing to medium. Drizzle in the remaining 3 tablespoons olive oil while blending and puree until the dip is creamy, about 30 seconds. If the puree is too thick, add a little more of the cooking liquid or water and blend until it is the texture of thick pancake batter. Taste and adjust seasoning. The dip will thicken as it sits. Serve the dip warm or at room temperature. (You might taste it and season again with more salt or lemon juice just before serving if it has cooled, as the flavors will have muted.) Spoon onto a plate, spread it into a swoosh, and garnish with the reserved minced red onion, capers, parsley, smoked paprika, and a drizzle of olive oil. Serve with warm bread.

ALUBIA BLANCA BEAN: EL BULLI'S WHITE BEAN SOUP

This delicate white bean is a dream to cook and to eat. It's one of our quickest-cooking beans we recommend checking for doneness after about 30 minutes of cooking, to be safe.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

FOR THE PICADA:

1 cup roughly chopped fresh parsley leaves
1 garlic clove, chopped
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
¼ cup whole hazelnuts, skin on (or almonds)
½ teaspoon kosher salt, or to taste

FOR THE SOUP:

1 pound cooked Rancho Gordo Alubia Blanca beans (about 6 cups cooked beans); broth reserved for soup, if desired
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 large garlic clove, minced
1 yellow onion, finely chopped
¼ teaspoon fresh minced thyme (or 1/8 tsp dried)
¼ teaspoon fresh minced rosemary (or 1/8 tsp dried)
1 fresh bay leaf (or ½ dried)
1/3 cup tomato passata (often labeled "tomato puree")
About 1½ cups vegetable stock and 1½ cups bean broth (3 cups total liquid)

First, make the picada:

Place a small skillet over medium heat. Add the hazelnuts and toast, shaking the skillet regularly, until the nuts are golden and fragrant, 5 to 10 minutes. Transfer the hazelnuts to a clean tea towel. Bundle up and rub vigorously with hands to remove most of the skin. (No need to do this with almonds.) Roughly chop the hazelnuts, then add to a blender, or into a vessel large enough to fit the head of a stick blender. Add the parsley, garlic, oil, and salt. Blend until the mixture has a consistency similar to pesto. Set aside.

In a large pot over medium heat, warm the oil. Add the garlic, onion, herbs, and bay leaf and cook, stirring, until the onion is a deep golden brown, about 8 minutes. Add the tomato passata, reduce the heat to low, and cook until the tomato thickens and darkens in color, another 8 minutes or so. Stir in the beans and the vegetable stock. Simmer very gently, uncovered, for 15 minutes.

Transfer about a cup of the soup to a blender, or into a vessel large enough to fit the head of a blender stick. Blend until smooth, then stir back into the soup. Remove the bay leaf.

Just before serving, stir in 2 tablespoons of the picada. Taste the soup and add more salt if needed. Divide among bowls, topping each with a spoonful of remaining picada.

BLACK CALYPSO BEAN: BLACK CALYPSO AND CAULIFLOWER SPREAD ON TOASTED BREAD

Back to Calypsos, I know of three Calypso beans: black, yellow, and red. The black are the most striking and I think taste the best. They have a slight potato flavor and texture and are soft but hold their shape.

Makes 8 to 10 appetizer servings

1 pound cauliflower, cut into florets

1 cup drained, cooked Rancho Gordo Black Calypso beans

1 tablespoon capers with juice

1 oil-packed anchovy fillet (optional)

Salt and freshly ground pepper

½ inch-thick slices crusty artisan bread (1 per person if the loaf is fat or round, 2 if the loaf is smaller)

Extra-virgin olive oil for brushing and drizzling

Chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley for garnishing

Preheat the oven to 400F.

Place a steamer rack over (but not touching) water in a large saucepan. Add the cauliflower, bring to a boil, and cook until soft, about 6 minutes. Remove the cauliflower from the pan, reserving some of the water, and let the cauliflower cool slightly.

Put the cauliflower, beans, capers, anchovy (if using), and a pinch each of salt and pepper in a blender. Blend until smooth. You may need to stir the mixture with a rubber spatula to get the blades going but try to avoid adding more liquid. If you need more liquid, use the reserved steaming water. Transfer to a bowl. You will have about 2 cups. Taste and adjust the seasonings.

Brush the bread slices with olive oil. Arrange the slices on a baking sheet and toast in the oven until crisp but still tender inside, about 7 minutes. Spread the bean mixture on the toasted bread. Sprinkle with parsley and then drizzle with olive oil. Serve on a large platter.

Substitution note: Any of the cranberry or runner beans make a fantastic spread for bread, and all will pair well with the flavors here.

CHIAPAS BLACK BEAN (FRIJOL NEGRO DE VARA): HUATAPE DE FRIJOL (BLACK BEAN SOUP WITH CORN DUMPLINGS)

These rare black beans from the Mexican state of Chiapas have become a staff favorite (even for those of us who don't love black beans). They hold their shape well when cooked, making them ideal for a salad, but don't toss the flavorful bean broth. You can use it to poach eggs!

Adapted from *Culinaria Afrodescendiente de Tamiahua* by Dora Elena Careaga Gutierrez.

Makes 4 servings

1½ cups masa

2 cups water

2 tablespoons lard (can be substituted with olive oil)

Salt

¼ of an onion, sliced

2 garlic cloves, cut into halves or thirds

3 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Chiapas Black beans

4 cups bean broth from the Chiapas beans

3 sprigs fresh epazote

In a mixing bowl, add 1 cup of masa and mix in ½ cup of water, 1 tablespoon of lard or oil, and 1/8 teaspoon of salt. Knead the masa into a ball to ensure the ingredients are well-mixed. The masa will be ready when there is no visible flour and it holds together without falling apart. This will be used to make the orejitas (masa balls).

To make the orejitas, use the masa to make small balls, about the size of ping-pong balls, and make a dent in the center with your thumb. In a medium saucepan, boil 2½ cups of water. Once the water is boiling, lower the heat to a simmer and add the orejitas; let them cook for 10 minutes. Once the 10 minutes is over, leave the orejitas in the pot. You will use them later on.

In a blender, combine ½ cup of masa with 1½ cups of water and blend until there is no masa visible. Set aside; this will be used in the beans.

In a soup pot, warm 1 tablespoon of lard or oil over medium-low heat. Add the sliced onion and garlic; saute until golden brown. Add the 3 springs of epazote, the beans, and the 4 cups of broth. Using a strainer, pass the masa-water mixture from the blender into the pot of beans, removing any lumps that may have formed. The color of the broth will become a bit lighter. Cook for 5 to 10 minutes, stirring, then add the masa orejitas. Bring the pot to a simmer, and cook for another 5 to 10 minutes.

Taste and adjust the seasonings, then serve.

CRANBERRY BEAN: ZUPPA DI ORZO E FAGIOLI / BORLOTTI BEAN AND BARLEY SOUP FROM THE VENETO

Borlotti beans are thought to have originated in Colombia, but they have been bred around the world and go by many names, including Cranberry, Madeira, Tongues of Fire, Wren's Egg, and Cacahuate.

Makes 6 servings

¼ cup pearl barley
1 tablespoon olive oil, plus more for serving
3 ounces smoked or plain pancetta, diced
1 medium yellow onion, finely chopped
1 medium carrot, peeled and chopped
1 medium potato, preferably yellow Finn or Yukon gold, peeled and diced
1 celery stalk, finely chopped
1 garlic clove, very finely chopped
3 to 4 cups cooked borlotti, pinto, or cranberry beans, drained
1 large sage leaf
8 flat-leaf parsley sprigs, leaves only, chopped (divided use)
1 fresh rosemary sprig, leaves only, chopped
3 large fresh basil leaves, chopped
1 bay leaf
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Combine the barley with 4 cups cold water in a small saucepan and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer, uncovered, until the barley is tender, about 45 minutes. Drain and set aside.

Meanwhile, combine the olive oil and pancetta in a heavy 6-quart soup pot or Dutch oven over medium heat. Sauté until the pancetta renders most of its fat and begins to brown, about 10 minutes. Add the onion, carrot, potato, celery, and garlic; continue cooking until the vegetables begin to soften, about 3 minutes longer. Add the beans, sage, 1 tablespoon of the parsley, rosemary, basil, bay leaf, and 8 cups cold water; increase heat to medium-high, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, partially covered and stirring occasionally, for about 45 minutes.

Transfer the soup to a food processor or blender (or use an immersion blender in the pot) and process until mostly smooth; there should be some pieces of beans remaining. Return the puree to the pot, season to taste with salt and pepper, and add the cooked barley. Bring to a simmer over medium heat; cook 15 minutes, stirring frequently to prevent the barley from sticking to the pot.

Top each serving with a drizzle of olive oil and a sprinkling of chopped parsley.

MORO BEAN: HEIDI SWANSON'S SOPA DE FRIJOL CON LONGANIZA

Moro were a long sought-after bean from Mexico. I just loved the way they looked and tasted so much that I knew we had to figure out how to get them into the U.S. Luckily, they're produced right in Hidalgo, where our partners at Xoxoc are based, and we have a somewhat steady supply.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Moro beans, drained, plus 6 cups bean broth (or a combination of bean broth and chicken or vegetable stock)

2 roma tomatoes

½ medium onion, roughly chopped

5 tablespoons olive oil

3 corn tortillas, cut into strips

Salt to taste

1 pound good-quality Mexican longaniza (similar to chorizo), casing removed

Crumbled Mexican cotija cheese for serving

Heat a nonstick skillet or comal over medium-high heat. Place the tomatoes on the skillet and cook, turning occasionally with tongs, until charred on all sides, 10 to 15 minutes. Remove the tomatoes from the pan and transfer to a blender or food processor, along with the onion; puree until smooth.

Heat a heavy-bottomed pot (such as a dutch oven) over medium-high heat. Add 2 tablespoons of the oil and heat until shimmering. Add the tortilla strips and fry, stirring, until crisp. Remove to a paper towel-lined plate and set aside.

In the same pot, add the remaining oil, and heat over medium heat. Add the longaniza and cook, stirring, until cooked through and slightly crisp, 10 to 15 minutes. Remove the longaniza using a slotted spoon; set aside.

To the pot with the remaining longaniza grease, add the tomato-onion mixture. Cook until the mixture reduces to a thicker consistency, about 8 minutes.

In the blender, combine the beans and the 6 cups of bean broth and puree until smooth. Add to the pot with the tomato mixture. Bring the mixture to a simmer, then reduce the heat to a very gentle simmer and cook until it reaches a creamy consistency, about 10 minutes. Taste and add salt if needed.

Remove the pot from the heat and stir in the longaniza and tortilla strips. Serve the soup in bowls, topped with cotija cheese.

KING CITY PINK BEAN: CABBAGE AND PINK BEAN SALAD WITH LA PALOMA DRESSING

King City has become a key spot in central California's agricultural landscape. It's also connected to author John Steinbeck, thanks to his father, who was said to be one of the area's early settlers. Steinbeck mentions King City Pinks in his novel *Tortilla Flat*.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

FOR THE DRESSING:

3 tablespoons Rancho Gordo La Paloma sauce (or your favorite hot sauce)

3 tablespoons olive oil

Juice from 1 large lime

To make the dressing, in a small bowl, whisk together the hot sauce, olive oil, and lime juice. Whisk until the mixture emulsifies, forming a thick and creamy dressing. Set aside while you prepare the salad.

FOR THE SALAD:

3 cups cooked, drained Rancho Gordo King City Pink beans

1 yellow bell pepper, diced

1 red bell pepper, diced

2 cups shredded red cabbage

¼ red onion, chopped or thinly sliced

1 serrano chile, seeded and minced (or to taste)

2 avocados, diced

½ cup roughly chopped parsley

2 cups cooked, chopped chicken (optional)

1 cup cotija queso, crumbled or grated

Fresh lime juice to taste

Salt and pepper to taste

In a large mixing bowl, combine the beans, peppers, cabbage, onion, and serrano chile. Before serving, add the chicken, if using, followed by the avocado and parsley. Gently toss the ingredients to distribute evenly. Pour the dressing over the salad mixture. Sprinkle the cotija cheese over the top of the salad. Give everything a final toss, then taste and adjust the seasonings as needed, adding salt, pepper, and/or more lime juice.

JUMBO PERUVIAN LIMA BEAN: PERUVIAN BEAN SALAD (ENSALADA DE PALLARES)

In Peru, the fresh chile of choice is ají amarillo, but you'll have a hard time finding those in the U.S.

Manzano, habanero, or serrano chiles would all be great substitutes.

Makes 2 to 4 servings

*3 cups cooked, drained Rancho Gordo Jumbo
Peruvian Lima Beans or Large White Lima Beans
2 tomatoes, diced, or 1 cup cherry tomatoes,
halved*

½ red onion, cut into thin strips

*1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio
(or Mexican Oregano), plus more for sprinkling*

Juice of 2 limes

*1 ají amarillo chile pepper (or habanero, serrano,
or manzano chile), julienned*

*1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley, plus more for
garnish*

2 tablespoons olive oil

Salt and pepper to taste

In a small bowl, combine the onion, chile, oregano, and lime juice. Let stand for 30 minutes in the refrigerator.

In a serving bowl, combine the beans, tomato, pickled onion and chile, parsley, and olive oil. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Mix well. Refrigerate for at least an hour before serving.

AYOCOTE MORADO: RED ALMOND MOLE (PIPIÁN ROJO DE ALMENDRA)

Dora Ramírez is a Mexico-born chef and the voice behind the popular blog and Instagram account @dorastable. She is also a Bean Club member! She shared this recipe from her new book *Comida Casera: More Than 100 Vegan Recipes, from Traditional to Modern Mexican Dishes* (Hachette, 2025).

Makes 4 servings

PIPIÁN

15 dried guajillo chiles (116 g), stems and seeds removed
5 dried árbol chiles (5g), stems and seeds removed
¾ cup raw almonds (114 g)
2 whole cloves
¼ large white onion (65g), roughly chopped
2 garlic cloves (6 g), peeled
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
2 teaspoons avocado oil
1 cup (236 mL) vegetable broth
1 dried bay leaf

VEGETABLES

2 cups red-skin potatoes (296 g), cut into quarters
1 large chayote (316g), peeled and diced (about ¾ cup)
½ teaspoon salt
2 medium carrots (169g), cut into half-moons (about 1½ cups)
1½ cups (266 g) cooked Ayocote Morado beans

TO SERVE

Freshly cooked white rice or Mexican Red Rice
Corn tortillas, warm

1. Heat a large, heavy-bottomed skillet over medium heat. Put in the chiles and toast for 30 seconds on each side. Transfer to a medium pot and fill with enough water to cover them by 2 inches (5 cm). Bring to a boil over high heat, turn the heat off, and let them soak for 15 minutes. Drain, but reserve 2½ cups (590mL) of the soaking liquid. Transfer the chiles and reserved soaking liquid to a blender.

2. Heat a small skillet over medium-low heat. Put in the almonds and toast for 2 to 3 minutes, stirring occasionally, until brown spots appear and the almonds begin to crack. Transfer to the blender.

3. In the same small skillet, toast the cloves over medium-low heat for 1 minute, or until they become fragrant; transfer to the blender. Add the onion, garlic, salt, and pepper to the blender and puree until smooth.

4. Heat the oil in a large pot over medium-low heat. Reduce the heat to low and pour in the puree while stirring, taking care as it may splash. Simmer for 5 minutes, or until the puree thickens and darkens in color. Add the vegetable broth and bay leaf and simmer for 10 to 12 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the sauce is thick enough to coat the back of a spoon.

5. While the pipián is simmering, place the potatoes and chayote in a medium pot and pour in enough water to cover the vegetables by 2 inches (5 cm). Add the salt and bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer for 9 minutes. Add the carrots and simmer for 6 minutes, or until the vegetables are tender. Drain and transfer to the pot with the pipián. Add the ayocotes and stir.

6. Serve immediately with rice and warm corn tortillas.

7. Store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 4 days or in the freezer for up to 3 months.

GOOD MOTHER STALLARD BEAN: GOOD MOTHER STALLARDS IN CHILE SAUCE WITH POACHED EGGS

Makes 2 to 4 servings

2 tablespoons olive oil or lard

½ of a white onion, chopped, plus more for serving

2 garlic cloves, minced

2 to 3 tablespoons pure New Mexican Red Chile Powder

1 teaspoon Mexican oregano, plus more for serving

½ teaspoon cumin, or to taste

½ teaspoon salt, plus more to taste

1 to 2 cups chicken or vegetable stock

3 cups cooked Good Mother Stallard or other heirloom beans, with about 1 cup cooking broth

4 to 8 eggs (depending on how many servings)

1 tablespoon vinegar

Chopped white onion and/or crumbled cheese for serving

In a pot over medium-low heat, warm the olive oil. Add the onion and cook until soft, about 10 minutes. Add the garlic and saute a few more minutes. Add the chile powder and mix; it will be a thick mess but allow the chile to "fry" for a few minutes. Add the cumin, salt, and oregano. Slowly add about 1 cup water; stir well to combine. Let this cook for 10 to 15 minutes, stirring frequently, until it reaches a thick consistency, almost like ketchup.

Slowly add about a cup of stock and stir to thin the sauce. Next, add the beans and their broth. Bring to a simmer and cook for about 10 minutes. Add more stock if you want a soupier dish. Taste and adjust the seasonings.

Meanwhile, fill a medium saucepan with water and add the vinegar. Heat the water over medium heat. When the water is barely simmering, carefully crack 2 eggs and slide them one at a time into the water (or you can crack them into a bowl first, and then gently tip the bowl over the hot water). Cook until the whites are just set and the yolks are still soft, 2 to 3 minutes. Repeat with the remaining eggs.

Serve the beans topped with poached eggs, chopped onion, and/or crumbled cheese.

CRANBERRY BEAN: ZUPPA DI ORZO E FAGIOLI / BORLOTTI BEAN AND BARLEY SOUP FROM THE VENETO

Borlotti beans are thought to have originated in Colombia, but they have been bred around the world and go by many names, including Cranberry, Madeira, Tongues of Fire, Wren's Egg, and Cacahuat.

Makes 6 servings

¼ cup pearl barley
1 tablespoon olive oil, plus more for serving
3 ounces smoked or plain pancetta, diced
1 medium yellow onion, finely chopped
1 medium carrot, peeled and chopped
1 medium potato, preferably yellow Finn or Yukon gold, peeled and diced
1 celery stalk, finely chopped
1 garlic clove, very finely chopped
3 to 4 cups cooked borlotti, pinto, or cranberry beans, drained
1 large sage leaf
8 flat-leaf parsley sprigs, leaves only, chopped (divided use)
1 fresh rosemary sprig, leaves only, chopped
3 large fresh basil leaves, chopped
1 bay leaf
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Combine the barley with 4 cups cold water in a small saucepan and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer, uncovered, until the barley is tender, about 45 minutes. Drain and set aside.

Meanwhile, combine the olive oil and pancetta in a heavy 6-quart soup pot or Dutch oven over medium heat. Sauté until the pancetta renders most of its fat and begins to brown, about 10 minutes. Add the onion, carrot, potato, celery, and garlic; continue cooking until the vegetables begin to soften, about 3 minutes longer. Add the beans, sage, 1 tablespoon of the parsley, rosemary, basil, bay leaf, and 8 cups cold water; increase heat to medium-high, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, partially covered and stirring occasionally, for about 45 minutes.

Transfer the soup to a food processor or blender (or use an immersion blender in the pot) and process until mostly smooth; there should be some pieces of beans remaining. Return the puree to the pot, season to taste with salt and pepper, and add the cooked barley. Bring to a simmer over medium heat; cook 15 minutes, stirring frequently to prevent the barley from sticking to the pot.

Top each serving with a drizzle of olive oil and a sprinkling of chopped parsley.

MAYOCOBA BEAN: ROASTED CHICKEN THIGHS WITH POBLANO-BEAN SAUCE

From our most recent book, *The Bean Book* by Steve Sando with Julia Newberry. You can roast or grill the chicken, depending on the season.

Makes 4 servings

FOR THE CHICKEN

4 to 6 bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for the roasting pan
Salt and freshly ground pepper

FOR THE SAUCE

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 white onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
4 poblano chiles, roasted, peeled, and seeded
1 cup cooked, drained white or light beans, such as Rancho Gordo Mayocoba, Alubia Blanca, or Marcella beans
1/4 cup beer or half-and-half, or as needed
Small bunch fresh epazote leaves, chopped (optional)
Corn kernels from 1 ear of corn

TO MAKE THE CHICKEN:

In a bowl, combine the chicken, olive oil, and salt and pepper to taste.

Toss well and arrange, skin-side up, in an oiled roasting pan. Roast for 30 to 40 minutes, until the skin is browned and an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the thighs reaches 165°F.

TO MAKE THE SAUCE:

Meanwhile, in a medium skillet over medium-low heat, warm the olive oil. Add the onion and garlic and cook until softened, about 10 minutes.

In a blender, combine the chiles and beans and just enough beer to make the blades move and blend well. Puree until smooth.

Add the blended sauce to the onion mixture. Add more beer if needed to reach the desired consistency. Increase the heat to medium and cook, stirring, for 10 minutes. Add the epazote (if using), corn, and salt to taste, and continue to cook until the corn is tender, another 5 or so minutes.

Spoon some of the sauce on a serving platter or individual plates, then top with the chicken. Serve additional sauce on the side.

RIO ZAPE BEAN: RIO ZAPE TOSTADAS WITH GUACAMOLE AND PICKLED ONIONS

Making tostadas at home is easy, and you have the option of frying or baking. I've been baking them recently and I urge you to give it a try!

Makes 4 servings

*¼ cup plus 1 tablespoon olive oil or vegetable oil
(divided use)*

8 corn tortillas

*2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Rio Zape beans,
plus 1 cup of their broth*

GUACAMOLE:

2 ripe avocados

¼ onion finely chopped

1 jalapeno, finely chopped (optional)

¼ cup finely chopped cilantro

1 to 2 teaspoons fresh lime juice

Salt to taste

GARNISHES:

Pickled onions or shallots (recipe below)

Queso fresco or Cotija cheese, crumbled or grated

PICKLED ONIONS

1 small red onion or 3 shallots, thinly sliced

1 jalapeño, seeded and thinly sliced (optional)

*Banana vinegar, pineapple vinegar, or unseasoned
rice vinegar*

Pinch of sea salt

½ teaspoon dried Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio

In a glass or ceramic bowl, combine the onions and jalapeño (if using). Add enough vinegar to cover completely. Season with a pinch of salt. Crush the oregano with your hands, and add it as well. Let marinate for about 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Garnish with additional oregano.

FOR FRIED TOSTADAS:

In a medium skillet over medium heat, warm 1/4 cup oil. Using tongs, carefully dip a tortilla into the oil until it gets golden brown and crispy. Set aside on a paper towel-lined plate to absorb excess oil; repeat this process with the rest of the tortillas.

FOR BAKED TOSTADAS:

Preheat the oven to 400F. Lightly brush both sides of the tortillas with oil, then bake, turning once, until crisp, about 4 minutes per side.

In the same pan (if you fried the tostadas), pour off excess oil, and add the beans and a little bit of their broth; you can lightly smash the beans with the back of a spoon or leave them whole. Once the beans have reached the desired consistency, remove the pan from heat and set aside.

TO MAKE THE GUACAMOLE:

Peel the avocado and remove the core. Mash the avocado in a bowl or molcajete until it reaches your desired consistency. Add the onion, jalapeno, and cilantro, and mix well. Add lime juice and salt to taste.

To prepare the tostadas, spread 1 to 2 tablespoons of the guacamole, add the beans, and top each tostada with pickled onions. Sprinkle with grated cheese.

SPLIT RED LENTIL (MASOOR DAL): LEMONY LENTILS

Based on a recipe from film producer Ismail Merchant, who wrote a cookbook called *Passionate Meals: The New Indian Cuisine for Fearless Cooks and Adventurous Eaters* (Chrysalis Books, 1994). You can adjust the amount of liquid depending on how soupy you want it

Makes 4 servings

5 tablespoons neutral oil
1 medium onion, ½ halved and thinly sliced,
½ chopped
1 (2-inch) cinnamon stick
½ pound Rancho Gordo Split Red Lentils
(Masoor Dal), picked over and rinsed well
1 teaspoon minced ginger
2 cups chicken or vegetable stock
4 to 5 cups water
½ teaspoon red chile powder
1 lemon, preferably organic, halved, plus more
lemon juice to taste
1 garlic clove, minced
½ serrano or jalapeno chile, minced, with seeds
Salt
Chopped fresh cilantro for garnish

Heat 3 tablespoons oil in large, deep saucepan over medium-low heat. Add the sliced onion and cook, stirring, until tender, 8 to 10 minutes. Add the cinnamon stick, lentils, and ginger. Cook, stirring often, until fragrant, 10 minutes. Add the stock, water, and chile powder. Squeeze juice from 1 lemon half, removing the seeds, and add the lemon juice and lemon half to the lentils. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a gentle simmer; cook until completely soft, 40 to 50 minutes, stirring often. Add up to 1 cup more water if needed.

Heat the remaining 2 tablespoons oil in a small pan over medium-low heat. Add the chopped onion, garlic, and chile. Cook, stirring, until the onion is browned, about 10 minutes. Stir in salt to taste. Add the mixture to the lentils and stir. Squeeze in the juice from the remaining lemon half. Taste and adjust seasonings, adding more lemon juice if desired. Transfer to bowls and sprinkle with cilantro. Serve hot.

BLACK CAVIAR LENTIL: BLACK CAVIAR LENTILS WITH ROASTED TOMATOES AND GARLIC

This seems like a great side dish to serve with fish or chicken, but could also be delicious tossed with fresh pasta. Roast some extra cherry tomatoes if you can—they are flavor-packed jewels that can be used in salads, pasta, and of course, with your favorite legumes.

Makes 4 side servings

1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
2 tablespoons olive oil, plus more for drizzling
2 garlic cloves, minced, plus 1 whole garlic clove
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
1 cup uncooked Rancho Gordo Black Caviar Lentils, picked over and rinsed
1 bay leaf
6 to 8 ounces fresh mozzarella balls (bocconcini)
2 tablespoons good-quality balsamic vinegar, plus more if needed
1/4 cup chopped fresh basil

Preheat the oven to 350F. In a baking dish large enough to hold the tomatoes in a single layer, mix the tomatoes with about 2 tablespoons olive oil, the minced garlic, and a generous pinch of salt. Arrange the tomatoes cut side up and roast until they start to shrivel and caramelize, 30 to 45 minutes.

Meanwhile, cook the lentils: Place in a pot and add enough water to cover by about 2 inches. Add the bay leaf and whole garlic clove. Bring to a full boil, then reduce heat to a gentle simmer, using a lid to help regulate the heat, and gently cook until done, 25 to 35 minutes. Drain excess liquid, then salt to taste.

Remove the baking dish from the oven and add the cooked lentils, cheese, and vinegar; gently combine. Drizzle with more olive oil. Bake for another 15 minutes.

Remove from the oven and sprinkle with salt, pepper, and more balsamic vinegar, if desired. Add the basil and gently toss. Serve warm.

BUCKEYE BEAN: BUCKEYE BEAN SOUP WITH CORN AND POBLANO STRIPS

One of my favorite ways to eat beans is with roasted poblano chiles. It's easy to roast them straight on the fire on a gas range, or you can roast them on a comal or well-heated cast-iron skillet. Once the chiles are soft and charred, let them rest in a covered bowl for about 20 minutes, then scrape off the skins, and remove the stems and seeds.

Makes 4 servings

2 tablespoons olive oil

3 cloves garlic, minced

½ yellow onion, finely chopped

3 ears of corn, kernels removed, or about 1½ cups frozen corn

1 poblano chile, roasted, skins and seeds removed, and sliced into strips

1 tablespoon Mexican oregano, such as Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio

2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Buckeye Beans, or white beans

3 cups liquid (we like half water and half bean broth)

Salt and pepper to taste

Minced fresh flat-leaf parsley or cilantro for garnish

Lime wedges for serving

In a soup pot, warm the olive oil over medium-low heat. Add the garlic and onion and saute until soft, about 5 minutes. Add the corn, poblano strips, oregano, beans, and liquid, stirring to mix all of the ingredients.

Raise the heat to medium and continue cooking, stirring occasionally, until the corn is tender and the flavors have blended, about 20 minutes.

Season with salt and pepper. Right before serving, you can add some heavy cream if you like.

Allow the soup to cook another 2 or 3 minutes to reheat if necessary. Serve in bowls, garnished with fresh herbs and lime wedges.

CALIFORNIA CORONA BEAN: BIG WHITE BEANS WITH KALE AND ORZO

This recipe from *A Grain, A Green, A Bean: One Simple Formula, Countless Meatless Meals* by Gena Hamshaw (Ten Speed Press, 2025) calls for White Lima or Gigante beans. Our California Coronas or Royal Coronas would also be good options.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

½ cup / 70g unsalted raw whole cashews
1/3 cup / 20g nutritional yeast
½ teaspoon fine salt
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 small white or yellow onion, chopped
2 small celery stalks, chopped
2 small carrots, scrubbed, or peeled and chopped 4
garlic cloves, minced
1 (28-ounce / 800g) can whole peeled tomatoes,
with juices
3 cups / 480g cooked butter beans, drained (or
Rancho Gordo California Corona beans)
1 cup / 225g orzo
1½ cups / 360ml vegetable broth
1 small bunch Tuscan kale, stemmed, leaves torn
into pieces (about 4 cups / 135g)
1 cup / 30g chopped fresh parsley 1 tablespoon
chopped fresh oregano Salt
Red pepper flakes
4 tablespoons / 30g Cheesy Topping

TO MAKE THE CHEESY TOPPING:

Place cashews, nutritional yeast, and salt in a food processor fitted with the S blade and process until finely ground. The cashew should be broken down, but not quite powdery. (Can be stored in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 4 weeks.)

Heat the olive oil in a large, deep skillet (with a lid) over medium heat. Add the onion, celery, and carrots and cook for 5-7 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are tender and the onion is translucent. Add the garlic. Continue to cook, stirring constantly, for 1 more minute, until the garlic is fragrant.

Add the tomatoes to the skillet. Using the back of a spoon, gently crush the tomatoes (careful, they'll spatter!). Add the beans, orzo, and broth. Bring the mixture to a vigorous simmer, then reduce the heat to low. Cover and simmer for 10 to 12 minutes, until the orzo is cooked al dente, stirring a few times during cooking.

Uncover the skillet, give it a stir, then pile the kale on top of the orzo mixture. Recover and steam the kale for another 5 minutes, until the greens are tender.

Add the parsley and oregano to the skillet, then stir everything well, so the steamed kale and herbs are mixed into the orzo and bean mixture. Taste and add salt and red pepper flakes as needed.

Divide the beans and kale among serving bowls and top each portion with as much Cheesy Topping as you like. Serve at once. The beans, kale, and sauce can be stored in an airtight container, or place the components into individual containers, and kept for up to 5 days in the fridge.

FLOR DE JUNIO BEAN: TRADITIONAL TARASCAN SOUP

A regional specialty in the town of Pátzcuaro, in the Mexican state of Michoacán, Tarascan soup is most likely named for the local indigenous people, now correctly referred to as Purépecha. It's usually a combination of tomatoes, chicken stock, and pureed beans (often Flor de Junio). We added Oregano Indio, which is not traditional.

Serves 4

3 large tomatoes

1/4 onion

1 garlic clove, peeled

4 tablespoons vegetable oil (divided use)

1 dried pasilla chile, stemmed and seeded

1 cup cooked Rancho Gordo Flor de Junio beans

4 cups chicken or vegetable broth

1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio

Salt to taste

4 corn tortillas, sliced into strips

Crumbled fresh Mexican cheese (optional)

Cream to taste

Diced avocado (optional)

Heat a nonstick skillet or comal over medium-high heat. Roast the tomatoes, onion, and garlic, turning occasionally, until they are charred on all sides, 10 to 15 minutes. Set aside.

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a skillet over medium heat. Quickly fry the pasilla chile (just a few seconds per side). Remove before it burns. Add 1 more tablespoon oil, let heat, then add the tortilla strips and fry until crisp, about 2 minutes. Set aside to drain on paper towels. Once the chile is cool, slice into thin strips; reserve some strips to for garnish.

In a blender, combine the tomatoes, onion, garlic, fried pasilla chile, and beans with a bit of the broth; blend until smooth.

In a pot over medium heat, warm the remaining 2 tablespoons oil; pour in the blended mixture. Cook for about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the rest of the broth, the oregano, and salt to taste. Cook for another 10 to 15 minutes, until slightly thickened.

Serve the soup hot, in deep bowls. Top with fried tortilla and pasilla chile strips, crumbled cheese, cream, and optionally, avocado.

GARBANZO BEAN: GARBANZO DE AGUACHILE VERDE

Aguachile is a Mexican dish usually made with raw seafood in a spicy marinade (“chile water”). We tried a version with our Garbanzos and wow! It's hard to stop eating this, especially with thick tortilla chips on the side.

Makes 4 servings

MARINADE:

1 cup fresh lime juice

1 cup cilantro

1/4 large red onion, chopped

1 garlic clove

1 to 2 serrano peppers, seeded and minced

1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo Pineapple Vinegar or rice vinegar

1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1 teaspoon salt (or to taste)

SALAD:

3 cups cooked, drained Rancho Gordo Garbanzos

1 cup cucumber, peeled and diced

½ large red onion, minced

1 serrano pepper, seeded and minced

1/3 cup cilantro, chopped

1 avocado, chopped or sliced (optional)

Tortilla chips, tostadas, or crackers for serving

In a blender, combine the lime juice, cilantro, red onion, garlic, serrano pepper, vinegar, salt, and black pepper. Blend until smooth.

In a large bowl, combine the Garbanzos, red onion, cucumber, serrano pepper, and cilantro. Pour the marinade over the garbanzo salad, toss to mix, then let sit in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes before serving.

Add the avocado, if using, and toss gently. Serve with tortilla chips, tostadas, or crackers.

PINTO BEAN: THREE SISTERS SUMMER SALAD

This recipe comes from *Chími Nu'am: Native California Foodways for the Contemporary Kitchen* by Sara Calvosa Olson (Heyday, 2023). She calls for fresh cranberry beans, shelled and simmered in water for about 30 minutes, or cooked beans.

Serves 4

Juice of 2 limes
2 tablespoons of balsamic vinegar, preferably Seka Hills Elderberry Balsamic Vinegar
2 tablespoons maple sugar or honey
1/4 cup sunflower oil
1 or 2 jalapenos, stems, seeds, and ribs removed (or use sweet peppers for a less spicy dressing)
Salt and pepper
1/2 cup sunflower seeds
2 or 3 small pattypan squashes, sliced thinly, or a medium zucchini, diced
1 1/2 cups fresh corn cut from the cob
2 diced lemon cucumbers
1 cup purslane
1 cup sunflower sprouts
1 cup shredded kale
1 cup leaves, seed flowers, and/or chopped stems of amaranth (aka pigweed or wild spinach)
1 tablespoon lemon thyme leaves
1/2 cup toasted sunflower seeds for serving.

Using a blender, blend the lime juice, vinegar, maple sugar, sunflower oil, and jalapenos. Add salt and pepper to taste. Pour the dressing into a mason jar and store in the refrigerator until ready to use.

In a small cast-iron pan, toast the sunflower seeds lightly over medium heat.

In a large bowl, toss together the squash, cooked beans, corn, cucumbers, purslane, sunflower sprouts, kale, and amaranth, and lemon thyme leaves. Dress it with salad dressing to taste and sprinkle sunflower seeds on top to serve.

BLACK GARBANZO (CECI NERI): CECI NERI AND CHARD SOUP

Inspired by a recipe from Liguria in *Cucina: The Flavours of Liguria* by Enrica Monzani (SIME BOOKS, 2023).

Makes 4 servings

1 oz dried porcini mushrooms
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for finishing
1 carrot, chopped
1 small onion, chopped
1 celery stalk, chopped
1 tablespoon tomato paste
3 cups cooked, drained Rancho Gordo Black Garbanzos or Classic Garbanzos
1 bunch of chard, stemmed, rinsed, and chopped
4 to 5 cups vegetable broth
Salt and freshly ground pepper
4 slices rustic bread, toasted

Soak the dried mushrooms in hot water for at least 15 minutes. Once they are rehydrated, drain and squeeze with your hands, then finely chop them. Reserve at least 1/2 cup of the mushroom-soaking liquid.

In a soup pot or Dutch oven, heat the olive oil over low heat. Add the carrot, onion, and celery and cook, stirring, until soft, about 10 minutes.

Add the tomato paste and cook for another minute. Add the garbanzos, reserved mushrooms, and chard, and cook for a couple of minutes. Add the vegetable broth and mushroom-soaking liquid, raise the heat, and bring to a simmer. Lower the heat to low and cook, partially covered, for about 45 minutes, adding more liquid if needed. Add salt to taste.

Place a slice of bread in the bottom of each soup bowl and top with soup. Finish with freshly ground black pepper and a drizzle of olive oil.

CASSOULET BEAN: GRATIN OF CASSOULET BEANS

This is a favorite dish, inspired by a Jacques Pepin recipe I came across. I think it's great as a main course, maybe with a salad and good bread. Others might like it as a side dish with a roast.

Makes 2 to 4 servings

1 tablespoon butter for greasing the dish, softened
2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Cassoulet beans, drained (or other heirloom beans—I've also tried Moro, Royal Corona, and Cranberry beans)
2 large eggs
2 garlic cloves, peeled and chopped
1/2 cup heavy cream (whipping cream)
Salt and pepper to taste
1 tablespoon grated Swiss cheese
2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 350F. Butter a small gratin or baking dish.

Place the beans, eggs, garlic, cream, salt and pepper in a mixing bowl. Blend well with an immersion blender. You can also use a standing blender or even a food processor.

Pour the mixture into the buttered mold and top with the grated cheeses. Bake for 20 to 30 minutes, until the top is browned and the center is set. If the center is still liquid, keep baking for 10 more minutes.

DOMINGO ROJO BEAN: LOBIO (GEORGIAN BEAN STEW)

Excerpted from *Silk Roads: A Flavor Odyssey with Recipes from Baku to Beijing* © 2025 by Anna Ansari. Used with permission of the publisher, DK Red. All rights reserved.

From the author: "These beans are excellent when eaten the traditional way as a loose, soupy stew, but I also like them a bit heavier, almost refried bean-like in texture, and eaten as a dip or slathered across a piece of toast, topped with a slice of tomato, flaky sea salt, and some more fresh herbs."

Serves 4 to 6

1 onion, quartered

3 garlic cloves, 1 minced, 2 whole

1 bay leaf

13/4 tsp fine sea salt

2 tbsp olive oil

1 tsp ground coriander

1 tsp dried thyme

1/2 tsp dried chili flakes

1/2 tsp coarsely ground black pepper

4 tbsp fresh parsley, dill, or cilantro, or a combination of all three, chopped

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Add your drained and rinsed beans to a large pot for which you have a lid. Pour in enough water to cover the beans by 2 inches (5cm), then place over high heat and bring to a boil. Cook for 10 minutes at a boil before reducing the heat to low. Add one onion quarter, two whole garlic cloves, and the bay leaf, then partially cover the pot with its lid and leave to cook for 1–3 hours, or until your beans are tender, checking on them occasionally and adding 1 teaspoon of the salt when they reach a just tender/al dente firmness. Note that the cooking time depends on the type and age of the beans.

While your beans are cooking, finely dice the remaining onion quarters. Heat the oil in a large sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add the diced onion, along with 1/4 teaspoon of the salt. Reduce the heat to medium and cook the onion, stirring occasionally, for 8–10 minutes, or until it is soft and golden. Add the minced garlic, ground coriander, thyme, chili flakes, and black pepper. Stir and cook for 60 seconds, or until fragrant. If necessary, take the pan off the heat and set aside while you wait for your beans to finish cooking.

Once your beans are ready, drain them from their pot, making sure to reserve the cooking water. Discard the garlic, onion, and bay leaf. Add half the beans and 1/2 cup (120ml) of the bean cooking water to the pan with the onions and spices. Use the back of a fork or a wooden spoon to mash the beans, water, and onions into a paste. Add the remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt to your bean paste, along with your chopped fresh herbs. Place over medium heat and cook for 5–7 minutes so that everything warms up and the flavors meld. Mash any intact beans you encounter — or don't. It's up to you.

Return your whole, intact beans to their cooking pot, then add the maybe-mashed bean, onion, and herb mixture, and stir everything to mix. Place over medium heat and begin adding the bean cooking water, 1/3 cup (100ml) at a time, until the contents of your pan reach your desired consistency. You can use water instead of the bean cooking water if you don't have enough of the latter, or if you accidentally tossed it, or if you (gasp!) used canned beans instead of dried ones. Cook for 5–7 minutes more, or until the lobio is nice and warm and begging to be eaten.

## NEGRO DE SUELO BEAN: BLACK BEANS WITH CHIPILÍ

Chipilín is a leafy green plant native to Southern Mexico and Central America, with a watercress-like flavor. We were able to find some in a local Mexican market, but if you can't source it, you can substitute arugula or spinach.

Serves 4

### FOR THE SOFRITO (FLAVOR BASE):

*1 tablespoon olive oil*

*1/2 onion, chopped*

*1 garlic clove minced*

*1/2 teaspoon dried thyme*

*1 bay leaf*

*1 large tomato, chopped*

*1 serrano chile, minced (optional)*

*3 cups cooked black beans such as Rancho Gordo Negro de Suelo beans, in their broth*

*1/2 teaspoon dried thyme*

*6 oz chipilín, thawed if frozen, stems removed (or substitute arugula or spinach)*

*Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste*

*Cooked white rice for serving*

### *To make the sofrito:*

In a skillet, heat the oil over medium-low heat.

Add the onion, garlic, thyme, bay leaf, and serrano pepper (if using) and sauté until soft and fragrant, about 5 minutes. Add the tomato. Sauté for 3 minutes. Smash the mixture with a bean masher or potato masher until it reaches a smooth consistency.

Add the chipilín and simmer, stirring, for 5 to 10 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

In a separate pot, warm the beans over medium heat. Stir in the tomato-chipilín mixture and let it all simmer gently for 10 to 15 minutes so the flavors come together. Adjust the salt and pepper to taste. Serve over white rice.

## **SUPER LUCKY 2026 BLACK EYED PEA: BLACK EYED PEAS EXTREMADURA STYLE (CARILLAS EXTREMENAS)**

In Spain, black-eyed peas are called carillas, or “little faces.” This dish gets a smoky kick from Pimentón de la Vera, a specialty of Extremadura. You can add Spanish chorizo for extra flavor.

Makes 4 servings

*3 tablespoons olive oil*  
*2 garlic cloves, minced*  
*1 onion, chopped*  
*1 green bell pepper, chopped*  
*1/2 red bell pepper, chopped*  
*2 carrots, chopped*  
*1 leek, chopped*  
*3 cups cooked, drained Rancho Gordo Black Eyed Peas*  
*1 cup tomato sauce*  
*1 bay leaf*  
*1 cup white wine*  
*1 cup vegetable or chicken broth*  
*Salt and freshly ground pepper*  
*2 teaspoons Pimentón de la Vera, such as Rancho Gordo Castillo Pimentón*

In a skillet, heat the olive oil over medium-low heat. Add the garlic, bell peppers, and onion and sauté until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the carrots and leek and continue to cook for another 5 or so minutes

Add the Black Eyed Peas, heat for 3 minutes, and stir everything well, making sure nothing burns. Next, add the wine, broth, tomato sauce, bay leaf, salt, and spices.

Simmer, stirring occasionally, for approximately 20 minutes. Taste and adjust the seasonings with salt and pepper.

## YELLOW EYE BEAN: JAÍNE MACKIEVICZ'S CREAMY BEAN AND CARAMELIZED ONION SOUP

Jaïne Mackievicz is a Brazilian food writer, recipe developer, and Le Cordon Bleu-trained chef based in California. She originally called for Marcella beans in this recipe, but we think Yellow Eye beans would be a great fit as well.

Serves 4 to 6

*1 pound uncooked Rancho Gordo Yellow Eye beans, or white beans such as Marcella or Cassoulet, picked over and rinsed*  
*2 large bay leaves*  
*6 yellow onions, peeled, halved, and thinly sliced*  
*4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) salted butter*  
*2 tablespoons Better Than Bouillon base in beef, or caramelized onion flavor, if vegetarian*  
*3/4 cup dry vermouth*  
*6 to 8 sprigs of fresh thyme*  
*2 quarts (1.9 liters or 8 cups) water*  
*3/4 cup fortified wine such as Port, Marsala, Sherry, or 3 tablespoons balsamic or sherry vinegar*  
*1 teaspoon salt (adjust to taste)*  
*1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, about 20 to 25 turns of your pepper mill (adjust to taste)*

### FOR THE TOPPING:

*12 to 16 slices of baguette, or 6 slices of sourdough bread*  
*1 garlic clove to rub the bread (optional)*  
*3 to 4 cups Queso Asadero or Chihuahua cheese, grated (Gruyère, Comté, or Emmental cheeses are classics and can be used as well)*  
*Extra thyme, green onions or chives, to mix in with the cheese (optional)*

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In a large pot, combine the beans, bay leaves, and enough water to cover the beans by about 2 inches. Bring to a boil and boil for 15 minutes, then lower the heat and simmer while you work on the soup base.

In a large, heavy-bottomed pot, such as a 5-quart Dutch oven, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the sliced onions and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onions are soft, golden, and deeply caramelized, 30 to 40 minutes. If they start sticking, add a tablespoon of water to loosen things up. You can also turn down the heat if needed and cover the pot for a couple of minutes, then uncover and continue stirring.

Stir in the Better Than Bouillon paste and cook for a minute. Add the vermouth to deglaze the pot, scraping up all the delicious bits stuck to the bottom. Add 8 cups of water and thyme, then bring to a boil. Lower the heat to a gentle simmer and cook for about 45 minutes to one hour, occasionally skimming any foam from the top.

Keep an eye on the beans as they cook. When they turn soft and creamy, drain them, reserving their cooking liquid.

Gently add the beans into the soup, and with the back of a spoon, mash a handful against the pot's side. Let the beans simmer for a bit to soak up all those flavors.

About 15 minutes before the soup is ready, preheat your broiler. Lightly toast the bread under the broiler. If using the garlic, rub the slices with a cut before toasting. Keep an eye on them—broilers work fast, and so should you! Set aside the croutons and leave the broiler on.

Turn off the heat and fish out the thyme sprigs. Taste the soup and adjust the seasoning. Stir in the fortified wine or vinegar and taste again. If the soup feels too thick, add a bit of the reserved bean cooking water to loosen it up.

Ladle the soup into ovenproof bowls. Float three baguette croutons or a slice of sourdough on top, and generously sprinkle each bowl with about 1/2 cup of grated cheese (and herbs, if using). Ideally, the extra cheese will hang over the edges, crisping up as it sticks to the outer side of the bowls. I consider that the best part of French onion soup, and I believe you might agree.

Slide the bowls under the broiler for 3 to 5 minutes, until the cheese is bubbling and the color indicates that it's crisp. Be careful when rescuing those bubbling bowl from the oven, as well as while eating them. The soup will be piping hot, and the bubbling cover of cheese — irresistible, I know — adds an extra layer of caution.

LARGE WHITE LIMA BEAN: ALISON ROMAN'S CARAMELIZED BEANS WITH TOMATO AND CABBAGE

Reprinted with permission from Alison Roman's incredible new book, *Something from Nothing* (Ten Speed Press, 2025).

Serves 4

4 tablespoons unsalted butter

4 tablespoons olive oil

*½ small head (about 1½ pounds) cabbage,
cut into 1-inch wedges*

Kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper

1 large shallot, thinly sliced

*3 cups cooked, drained Rancho Gordo Large White
Lima beans or other large white beans*

*8 ounces tomatoes, preferably small, halved if
small, quartered or chopped if large*

*1 tablespoon white wine vinegar, sherry vinegar, or
white distilled vinegar*

*A hunk of Parmesan cheese for grating on top,
ricotta for spooning over, or feta for crumbling
(optional)*

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F.
2. Heat the butter and olive oil in a large skillet (preferably oven-safe) over medium heat. Add the cabbage, cut-side down, and season with salt and pepper. Cook, without disturbing or peeking, until the cabbage is deeply golden brown on one side, 8–10 minutes. Using tongs or a fish spatula, carefully flip and repeat on the other side, another 8–10 minutes.
3. Once the cabbage is well browned on both sides, add the shallots and season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring or shaking the skillet occasionally to make sure the shallots can make contact with the pan, until they are nicely browned and totally tender, 5–7 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, place the beans in a 1½- to 2- quart baking dish. Once the cabbage and shallots are nicely browned and tender, add them to the baking dish, along with the tomatoes, vinegar, and 1 cup water. Season well with salt and pepper and rearrange the goods, adjusting some of the wedges of cabbage and pieces of tomato so that they make their way to the top. (They will get so delicious in the oven.)
5. Place in the oven and bake until the liquid has reduced by quite a bit, everything is bubbling up the sides of the dish in a sticky, caramelized way, and the top is delightfully browned, bordering on crisp, 50–60 minutes.
6. Remove from the oven and let cool slightly. Serve with or without cheese.

MIDNIGHT BLACK BEAN: WARM SKILLET BLACK BEAN DIP WITH PICKLED CHILES

Here's an example of a simple dish you can elevate with a pantry staple: pickled chiles. You can pickle any sturdy vegetable, and have them ready for when inspiration hits.

Serves 4 to 6

FOR THE PICKLED CHILES:

1 cup distilled white vinegar, rice vinegar, or pineapple vinegar, plus more as needed
½ cup water, plus more as needed
1 bay leaf
½ teaspoon dried Mexican oregano, preferably Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio
1 garlic clove, smashed
1 sprig thyme or marjoram
2 teaspoons sea salt
10 jalapeño chiles, stems removed, sliced

FOR THE BEAN DIP:

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
4 garlic cloves, minced
½ of a white onion, minced
1 tablespoon tomato paste
1 cup canned diced tomatoes
1 or 2 chipotle chiles in adobo, depending on taste, minced, or Rancho Gordo Felicidad Chopotle Sauce, to taste
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon dried Mexican oregano, preferably Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio
3 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Midnight Black beans, plus ½ cup bean broth
Kosher salt and black pepper
2 cups grated Queso Chihuahua or Fontina cheese
Chopped fresh cilantro and onion for garnish
Thick tortilla chips for serving

TO MAKE THE PICKLED CHILES:

In a medium sauce-pan over high heat, combine the white vinegar, water, bay leaf, oregano, garlic, thyme, and salt. Bring to a boil. Decrease the heat to a gentle simmer and cook for 5 minutes. Turn off the heat.

In a medium glass or ceramic bowl, combine the chile slices with the vinegar mixture. Add more vinegar and water in equal parts, as needed, to cover the chiles. Allow to cool, then cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours. Remove the bay leaf before serving.

TO MAKE THE BEAN DIP:

Preheat the oven to 450°F. In a 10-inch oven-proof skillet over medium heat, warm the olive oil. Add the onion and cook until softened, 5 to 7 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for 1 to 2 minutes. Stir in the tomato paste, tomatoes, chipotle, cumin, and oregano, and cook, stirring, for another minute or so.

Add the beans, bean broth, and salt and pepper to taste, and stir to combine. At this point, you can mash the beans in the pan, or leave them whole. Sprinkle the cheese evenly over the top then bake until the cheese has melted, about 10 minutes. Top with cilantro, onion, and pickled chiles. Serve with tortilla chips.

PARDINA LENTIL: SPANISH-STYLE PARDINA LENTILS WITH SERRANO HAM AND PIMENTÓN

Pardina lentils are used in all kinds of dishes in Spain, including Lentejas, a rustic stew that has become a national dish. This version is more of a braise than a stew, but you can easily adjust the amount of liquid depending on your preference. You could also use Spanish chorizo in place of the Serrano ham, or leave the meat out altogether!

Makes 4 to 6 servings

½ pound dried Rancho Gordo Pardina Lentils
1/4 cup olive oil
5 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1 carrot, finely chopped
4 ounces Serrano ham, finely chopped
1 tablespoon Spanish pimentón, such as Rancho Gordo Castillo Pimentón
2 large tomatoes, chopped
½ cup dry white wine
1½ cups chicken or vegetable stock (or more, depending on your preference)
1 teaspoon red wine vinegar or sherry vinegar
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1/4 cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

Check the lentils carefully for debris, and rinse thoroughly. Because of the size and color of these lentils, pebbles and other natural debris may remain despite our best efforts to sort them before packaging.

Place in a pot and add enough water to cover by about 2 inches. Bring to a full boil, then reduce heat to a gentle simmer, using a lid to help regulate the heat, and gently cook until done,

25 to 35 minutes. Strain and set aside, reserving the cooking liquid.

In a wide, shallow pan over a medium heat, warm the olive oil. Add the garlic, onion, and carrot and cook until softened, 10 to 15 minutes. Add the Serrano ham and cook for another 5 or so minutes.

Stir in the pimentón, tomatoes, and wine and simmer, stirring, until the mixture cooks down into a thick sauce, 5 to 7 minutes.

Stir the lentils into the sauce with about ½ cup of the reserved cooking liquid and the stock. If you prefer a stewier dish, you can add more lentil-cooking liquid or stock. Season to taste with vinegar, salt, and pepper. Simmer until the lentils are heated through, 5 to 10 minutes. Garnish with parsley.

ROJO DE SUELO BEAN: CONGRÍ (CUBAN RED BEANS AND RICE)

Nearly every culture has its own way of preparing beans and rice. Congrí is similar to Moros y Cristianos, but the beans are cooked with the rice, rather than separating them on the plate. It has deep roots in Cuban cuisine — especially in eastern Cuba — shaped by Caribbean and African influences, with strong ties to Haiti. It can be made with red or black beans, and a variety of meats and seasonings.

Serves 6 to 8

¼ cup pearl barley

1 pound uncooked Rancho Gordo Rojo de Suelo, Domingo Rojo, or Midnight Black beans

2 bay leaves

Salt and freshly ground pepper

1 pound bacon, chopped (or 2 tablespoons oil if not using bacon)

1 onion, chopped

5 garlic cloves, minced 1 green bell pepper, diced

1 red bell pepper, diced

¼ cup dry white wine

1 teaspoon dried oregano

½ teaspoon ground cumin

2 cups uncooked Rancho Gordo California White Rice, rinsed well

2 cups reserved bean broth

Check beans for debris, and rinse thoroughly. In a large pot, combine beans and enough water to cover by about 2 inches. Add the bay leaves. Bring to a full boil for 10 to 15 minutes. Reduce heat to a gentle simmer, using a lid to help regulate the heat, and gently cook until done, 1 to 3 hours. Salt when the beans start to soften.

While the beans are cooking, make the sofrito. If using bacon, in a large pot over medium-low heat, gently cook the bacon until the fat is rendered and bacon is cooked through, about 10 minutes. You should have about 2 tablespoons fat. If there is less, add oil as needed. If you are not using bacon, add 2 tablespoons oil to the pot.

Add the onion, garlic, and bell peppers; cook gently, stirring occasionally, until the bell peppers are soft, about 8 minutes. Add the white wine and cook over medium heat for 7 to 8 minutes, until the onions are translucent and the wine has evaporated. Taste and adjust the seasonings.

Once the beans have cooked, drain them, reserving the bean broth.

To the pot with the sofrito, add the oregano, cumin, rice, and beans. Gently stir, then add 2 cups of the reserved bean broth and 1 cup of water. Place over high heat and bring to a gentle boil, then reduce the heat to low, cover, and allow to cook for 20 minutes, untouched.

Uncover, fluff the rice with a fork, and check for seasonings. Serve.

SCARLET RUNNER BEAN: SCARLET RUNNER BEAN AND POTATO CHOWDER

Tanya Holland is one of our favorite chefs and we appreciate the fresh tweaks she gives to classic dishes. This chowder is inspired by one she created. We love the richness from the half-and-half, but you could always leave it out.

Makes 4 servings

1 tablespoon unsalted butter
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 medium onion, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 jalapeño chile, seeded and minced
1 celery stalk, chopped
1 carrot, chopped
3 cups chicken or vegetable stock, plus more if needed
1 teaspoon Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio or Mexican Oregano
1 bay leaf
2 medium Yukon gold potatoes, peeled and diced
½ cup half-and-half
2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Scarlet Runner beans, plus 1 cup bean broth
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
Grated zest from 1 lemon
Chopped fresh parsley for garnish

In a large pot, melt the butter and oil over medium heat. Add the onion, garlic, and jalapeño. Cook until softened, 5 minutes. Add the celery and carrot and cook for another 5 minutes. Add the stock, oregano, and bay leaf. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes.

Add the potatoes and simmer until soft, about 20 minutes. Stir in the half-and-half and the beans. Add the bean broth and additional stock, if desired. Return to a simmer. (After adding the half-and-half, do not allow the chowder to boil.) Season with salt and pepper and stir in the lemon zest. Garnish with parsley.

ZIPPER CREAM FIELD PEA: ZIPPER CREAM PEAS WITH BROCCOLINI

Serves 2 to 4

1 large bunch broccolini (about 1 pound), woody stems trimmed
5 tablespoons olive oil
Salt
2 garlic cloves, sliced
½ teaspoon red pepper flakes
1 cup cooked, shredded chicken (optional)
2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Zipper Cream Peas, with a little broth
Freshly ground pepper
Fresh lemon juice to taste

Cut the broccolini into thirds, then spread it out on a baking sheet and toss with 3 tablespoons of the olive oil. Season with salt. Roast the broccolini, shaking the pan often, until tender, about 12 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a large Dutch oven or other ovenproof skillet over medium-low heat, warm the remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil. Add the garlic and red pepper flakes, and sauté until the garlic is fragrant, 2 minutes. Add the chicken (if using) and Zipper Cream Peas and cook, stirring gently, to heat through. Add the broccolini. Stir gently to combine. Season to taste with salt, pepper, and a squeeze of lemon.

ALUBIA BLANCA BEAN: ALUBIA BLANCA AND POTATO SOUP WITH HERB OIL

Like many good dishes, this was born of left-overs. Some beans, some potatoes, and Voila! The herb oil is a nice accent to the mild flavors of the beans and potatoes. If you wanted a little heat, you could add some chile flakes, as well.

Serves 4

1½ cups cooked Rancho Gordo Alubia Blanca beans, or other white beans
3 medium potatoes, cooked and cubed (about 2½ cups)
2 cups liquid (leftover bean broth, potato cooking water, or combination)
3 tablespoons sour cream (optional)
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 garlic clove, minced
1 tablespoon Bean Club Blend No. 1
Salt and pepper to taste

1. In a large saucepan, combine the beans, potatoes, and cooking liquid. Puree the mixture with an immersion blender until smooth. Heat the puree over medium-low heat; simmer gently until the soup is hot, about 10 minutes. Add more liquid if desired. Stir in the sour cream, if using. Season with salt and pepper.
2. Meanwhile, in a small pan, warm the olive oil over medium-low heat. Add the garlic and saute until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add the Bean Club Blend No 1. and stir to combine.
3. Stir the herb oil into the pureed soup, or divide the soup among individual bowls and top with the herb oil.

CRANBERRY BEAN: CREAMY CHIPOTLE BEANS (FRIJOLES ENCACAHUATADOS)

Reprinted with permission from Dora Ramírez, chef, recipe developer, and photographer at dorastable.com, and author of *Comida Casera*.

Serves 4 to 6

5 large Roma tomatoes, chopped
½ large white onion, cut in half
2 garlic cloves, peel on
1 to 2 chipotle peppers in adobo
½ cup unsalted peanuts, roasted
½ cup vegetable broth
1 teaspoon dried Mexican oregano
½ teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon freshly ground pepper

BEANS

2 teaspoons avocado oil
3 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Cranberry, Royal Corona, or Large White Lima beans
1 cup frozen spinach

TO SERVE

Corn tortillas or rice

1. Heat a comal or heavy-bottomed skillet to medium-high heat.
2. Place the tomatoes, onion, and garlic right on the hot skillet. Let them char until they become soft and have black spots all over, flip-ping them frequently, for about 8 to 9 minutes. The garlic will be done about 2 minutes in, remove it, and peel it.
3. Transfer the roasted vegetables to the blender, add the chipotle peppers, peanuts, vegetable broth, oregano, cumin, salt, and pepper, and puree until completely smooth.
4. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-low heat. Reduce heat to low, pour in the sauce, while stirring, be careful it may splash, and simmer for 5 to 6 minutes or until the sauce thickens slightly and becomes a deeper shade of orange.
5. Add the beans and spinach and simmer for 5 to 6 minutes or until the spinach is warm. Serve with corn tortillas or with rice.

FRENCH GREEN LENTIL: RITZY “MEATBALLS”

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Serves 4 (makes about 2 dozen meatballs)

Olive oil, 2 tablespoons, plus more for drizzling
dried fennel seeds, 1 tablespoon

Crushed red pepper flakes, ½ teaspoon

Garlic cloves, 4, minced

Dried lentils (green or brown), ½ pound
(heaping cup)

Sweet potato, 1 medium (½ pound), peeled and cut
into bite-size chunks

Kosher salt, ½ teaspoon

White miso paste, 1 tablespoon

Ritz crackers or other butter crackers, 1 cup
crushed (from about 28 or 30 crackers)

Flat-leaf parsley leaves, large handful, finely
chopped (or other combination of herbs)

Wild Blueberry BBQ Sauce (below) and/or five-
spice glaze, or sauce of choice, for coating

Wild Blueberry BBQ Sauce Makes about 1 cup
1 cup (5 ounces) frozen wild blueberries or regular
fresh blueberries

½ cup light brown sugar or coconut sugar packed

¼ cup tomato paste

1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger

1 teaspoon yellow mustard

½ teaspoon kosher salt

½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

½ teaspoon garlic powder

2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar

COOK THE SAUCE: In a medium saucepan, combine the blueberries, brown sugar, tomato paste, ginger, mustard, salt, black pepper, garlic powder, vinegar, and ½ cup water. Cook for 15 to 20 minutes over medium heat until thick, stirring occasionally.

PUREE: Remove the pan from the heat and, using an immersion blender, puree the sauce until completely smooth. Alternatively, you can puree the sauce in a blender or food processor, placing a clean dish towel over the lid to prevent hot liquid from splattering.

STORE: Allow to cool and transfer to a squeeze bottle or jar with a lid and keep refrigerated for up to 3 weeks.

COOK THE LENTILS AND POTATOES: In a medium saucepan over medium-high heat, heat the olive oil. Once the oil starts to shimmer, add the fennel seeds, red pepper flakes, and garlic and cook, stirring constantly, for about a minute until the fennel seeds are fragrant and lightly toasted.

Stir in the lentils, sweet potato, and salt, and cover with 2 cups water. Bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to a simmer, and cook, until both the lentils and sweet potato are tender and all the liquid has absorbed, about 15 to 20 minutes. Transfer the lentils and sweet potatoes to a large bowl.

PREHEAT THE OVEN to 450°F and have a well-oiled sheet pan nearby. Alternatively preheat your air fryer (or toaster oven on the air fryer setting) to 400°F.

MIX THE MEATBALL MIXTURE: In the bowl with the lentils and sweet potato, add the miso paste, Ritz crackers, and parsley. Using clean hands, mix everything together until thoroughly combined.

ROLL: Using a medium ice cream scoop or your hands, scoop golf ball-size chunks of the mixture and drop them onto the prepared sheet pan. Oil your hands, and then roll the mounds lightly between your palms to make balls, and place them back on the sheet pan or in the basket of the air fryer (or toaster oven).

BAKE OR AIR-FRY: Drizzle their tops with a little more olive oil, and cook them for 18 to 20 minutes (7 to 10 minutes in the air fryer), flipping them over with tongs halfway through, until they're crunchy on the sides, deeply golden brown, and cooked through. Remove from the oven and allow to cool for 10 minutes to firm.

SERVE: Once cool and firm, using a pastry brush, generously brush the tops and sides with the Wild Blueberry BBQ Sauce. Transfer the meatballs to a platter and serve with cocktail forks or frilly-topped toothpicks.

GOOD MOTHER STALLARD BEAN: LEMONY HEIRLOOM BEAN SOUP

Reprinted with permission from *REVEL: A Maximalist's Guide to Having People Over* by Mariana Velásquez © 2026. Published by Ten Speed Press, an imprint of Penguin Random House. Note: The original recipe calls for fresh Cranberry beans, but if you don't have access to those, we suggest our Good Mother Stallards or dried Cranberry beans.

Serves 16

3 leeks, cut into ¼-inch-thick slices
2 yellow onions, chopped
6 large garlic cloves, sliced
4 parsley stems
2 fresh bay leaves
1 smoked ham hock (optional)
2 pounds fresh Cranberry beans (about 6 cups shelled) or 1 pound dried Rancho Gordo Good Mother Stallard or Cranberry beans
1 tablespoon kosher salt
Zest and juice of 4 lemons, plus 6 lemons for serving
Tangy Green Sauce (below), white rice or crusty bread, and avocado slices, for serving

1. Heat the oil in a large Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the leeks and onions and cook, stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon, until they soften, 4 to 5 minutes. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant. Stir in the parsley stems and bay leaves and add the ham hock (if using) and the beans.
2. If using fresh beans: Add 5 quarts of water and bring to a full rolling boil over medium-high heat. Cook for 10 minutes, then lower the heat to medium-low. Cover and cook until the beans are tender but still hold their shape, about 25 minutes. If using dried beans: Add enough water to cover by about 2 inches. Bring the pot to a rapid boil for 10 to 15 minutes, then lower the heat to a gentle simmer until the beans are done, between 1 hour and 3 hours. If the bean-cooking water starts to get low, add hot water.
3. Season with the salt. Taste and adjust the seasoning. Turn off the heat, remove and discard the parsley stems and bay leaves, cover, and keep the soup warm until ready to serve.
4. Finish the soup by stirring in the lemon zest and juice. Transfer to a soup terrine or serve from the Dutch oven (remember to protect the table from the heat!). Slice the 6 lemons into wedges, put them in a bowl, and serve alongside the green sauce, rice, and avocado.

TANGY GREEN SAUCE

Serves 14 to 16

4 cups chopped cilantro stems and leaves
2 ripe tomatoes, grated
2 green bird's eye chiles or jalapeños, stemmed and minced
8 garlic cloves, grated
1 1/2 cups white wine vinegar
1 tablespoon sugar
1/2 cup cold water
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. In a medium bowl, stir together the cilantro, tomatoes, chiles, garlic, vinegar, sugar, and water. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
2. Add a couple of large ice cubes to dilute the sauce a bit and chill it; reserve until ready to serve. The sauce will keep in the fridge in an airtight container for up to a week.

GREEN BABY LIMA BEAN: SARAH SCOTT'S SUCCOTASH SALAD

Reprinted with permission from Sarah Scott, chef, culinary consultant, and writer based in Napa. She was kind enough to bring in a big bowl of salad for our staff to enjoy. What a pal!

Makes 6 servings

¼ small red onion, finely diced
3 Tbsp red wine vinegar
3 ears of corn (white or yellow), shucked
2 Tbsp olive oil
1 bunch scallions, trimmed of root ends, finely minced
1 basket multi-colored cherry tomatoes, quartered
3 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Green Baby Limas
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling
1½ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
1 bunch basil, leaves picked
2 Tbsp finely chopped Italian parsley

Combine the diced red onion and red wine vinegar in small bowl and let macerate for at least 15 minutes. Cut the corn kernels from the cobs.

Place the 2 Tbsp of olive oil in a medium saute pan over medium-high heat. When the oil is hot, add the corn kernels and saute for 2-3 minutes, or until just cooked. Spread out onto a baking sheet to cool to room temperature.

In a large bowl, combine the red onion, corn, scallions, cherry tomatoes, beans, oil, salt, and pepper and stir together. Just before serving, thinly slice the basil leaves and stir into the salad. Taste for seasoning, adding additional salt and/or vinegar, if needed. Drizzle with the additional extra virgin olive oil and top with the chopped parsley. Serve room temperature or chilled.

SAN FRANCISCANO BEAN: FRIJOLES BORRACHOS (DRUNKEN BEANS)

Bacon, beer, and beans are a fine group of friends. You can really alter the flavor of borrachos by changing the kind of beer you use. Our preference is a dark lager, like Negro Modelo, but if you have a bottle of Corona sitting around, use that if you like.

Serves 2 to 4

2 cups cooked heirloom beans such as San Franciscano, Pinto, Rio Zape, Bayo Chocolate, Eye of the Goat or Occhio della Capra
½ bottle beer
1 piece bacon
½ onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
3 whole serrano peppers, minced
½ pound mushrooms, sliced
Limes

Warm the cooked beans over medium-low heat. Stir in the beer. The beans should be somewhat soupy. Add more beer if too thick; or turn up the flame and cook off excess liquid if too thin.

Cook bacon in an ungreased frying pan over medium-low heat until fat is mostly rendered. Remove bacon and excess fat, leaving about a tablespoon. Add onion, garlic, and chiles and sauté until soft, then add mushrooms. Cook until soft. Chop bacon and add to mixture.

Add mushroom/bacon mix to the pot of beans. Mix thoroughly and cook for another 10 minutes. Test for seasoning.