

An Impressionistic Recipe for Pot Beans

Derived from the Rancho Gordo recipe here:

https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/0685/2511/files/Rancho_Gordo_Basic_Bean_Cooking.pdf?3059619513102046408

Ingredient list can be doubled or tripled, and amounts are purely a starting point. You can also skip stuff. Do what feels right and yields the consistency you want.

You'll need:

A big pot

Cheesecloth and kitchen twine or a giant mesh container – like if a tea ball took steroids.

The basics:

1c dried beans, preferably fresher ones

3-6c water (see below)

1 celery stalk

2 medium carrots

Half a medium onion

Other options: anything aromatic

Bouquet Garni:

1 sprig rosemary – no need to take it off the stem

A few sprigs thyme – no need to take it off the stem

Some parsley – feel free to use the stems

Do you have basil, tarragon,

1t coriander seeds

1t fennel seeds

(other options: cumin seeds, black peppercorns, other tasty seeds)

1 garlic clove

Optional: 1 dried red pepper, or crushed red pepper

The End:

Salt to taste. Try 1t at a time.

The Night Before:

Are your beans old? Soak them in 2-3 times their volume of water. Cover and leave overnight.

Noonish the next day:

Drain your soaking old beans, or if using fresher dried beans, rinse them off and check for stones, dirt, etc. Dump them into a large pot. Add 6c water if you didn't soak them, 3c water if you did. I like to boil the water first in my kettle while I'm getting them together.

Dice the celery, carrot, onion and dump into the pot.

Make the bouquet garni:

Cut a large piece of cheesecloth, big enough to be closed around everything you're going to put in it and tied closed. Rinse and assemble your herbs and garlic. For the seeds (and dried red pepper if you're using), they're best if you take a small pan, dump them in, and apply medium heat while swirling them around. Once they start to give off a little smell, they're done. It happens really fast. Dump it in on top of the hhhhhhhherbs. Add the crushed red pepper if you're using it. Now pick up the four corners of the cheesecloth, pull them together and tie them tight with kitchen twine. Put the bouquet garni in with the beans and liquid.



Now cover, bring everything to a boil, then turn down to a simmer. Turn on your exhaust fan if you have one and it works. If you are using less than 6c water, you'll want to check it every hour, otherwise, if you go full 6 cups, you can walk away for like 4-5 hours if you want.

Once the beans are tender, and I mean *tender*, add salt to taste. It'll take a minute for the salt to be absorbed and distributed, so don't rush it.

Serve with fresh baked no knead bread (or a baguette, or garlic toasts), and/or roasted vegetables, and/or a salad, or by themselves. Even better the next day, and freezes well.