

Spicy Black Beans with Chilies and Lime (“Fields of Greens” Annie Somerville)

Mint leaves, cilantro, and fresh lime give black beans a refreshing lift. We often crumble queso fresco (a Mexican cheese) over the beans and serve them with Jicama-Orange Salad, Pickled Red Onions, and sliced avocado.

1 ½ cups dried black beans, about 9 ounces, sorted and soaked overnight
salt and pepper
½ medium-size carrot, diced, about ¼ cup
½ celery rib, diced, about ¼ cup
zest of 2 limes, minced, about 1 ½ tsp
3 Tbsp fresh lime juice
2 Tbsp Champagne vinegar
1 garlic clove, finely chopped
3 pinches of cayenne pepper
¼ cup light olive oil
1 or 2 jalapeno chilies, seeded and diced
2 heaped Tbsp chopped cilantro
1 Tbsp chopped fresh mint

Drain and rinse the beans and place them in a large saucepan. Cover generously with cold water and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and cook at a gentle boil for 20 to 25 minutes, until the beans are tender yet still hold their shape. Taste the beans to be sure they’re cooked before draining them.

While the beans are cooking, bring a small pot of water to boil with ½ tsp salt. Drop the carrot into the water and cook for 1 minute, adding the celery for the last 30 seconds. Drain immediately and rinse under cold water. Make the dressing by combining the lime zest and juice, vinegar, garlic, cayenne, 1 tsp salt, and ¼ tsp black pepper. Gradually whisk in the oil.

When the beans are tender, drain and toss immediately with the dressing and the jalapenos. If the chilies are very hot, add half the amount to the salad, then add more to taste; the salad should be spicy. Marinate for 30 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper, then add the cilantro and mint before serving.