

White Bean and Mushroom Ragout

Dan Ralston's Kitchen

Serves 6

I serve this as a side dish with grilled lamb chops in the winter. In the summer I serve a warm white bean and arugula salad with the lamb chops. I use dried porcini mushrooms but you could use dried shitake also. The soaking liquid from the mushrooms is a key ingredient so you really need find and use dried mushrooms.

1 Lb dried great northern or navy beans, covered with water and soaked overnight

3/4 Cup dried porcini mushrooms

2-3 TBS extra virgin olive oil

1 shallot, finely chopped

5 or 6 fresh crimini mushrooms, washed and thinly sliced

32 oz. (approx.) beef stock or broth

1 7 oz. can tomato paste

2 sprigs fresh thyme

1 tsp crushed rosemary

1 package Swanson Beef Flavor Booster (optional)

Drain the beans well and let them dry while you soak the mushrooms in a cup and a half of very hot water until they are reconstituted. Drain the mushrooms by straining them through a coffee filter or paper towel to catch the grit. Press on the mushrooms to get all of the liquid out of them. Remember to save the soaking liquid! Coarsely chop the porcini mushrooms. Heat the olive oil in a sauce pan then add the shallot and the porcini and crimini mushrooms. Stir until softened. Add the beans and enough beef both to cover. Add the mushroom soaking liquid. Bring the beans to a boil and then stir in the tomato paste. Stir until the paste is dissolved. Add the thyme and rosemary. Reduce to a very low simmer and partially cover. Cook until the beans are al dente and the sauce has thickened. Stir occasionally and add more beef broth if the beans absorb too much of the liquid. Add the flavor booster a little at a time until the beans taste rich enough for you. It is a little salty so be careful.

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