

Snapped Up: Black Bean Soup



TIP: Start with Dried Beans: it saves money, cupboard space, and creates no recycling trash. Freeze extras for later.

FUN FACT: Inside a 15 oz. can of beans only 9 oz. is actual beans, the other 6 oz. is water. That's because manufacturers put dried beans and water into a can, seal it, and then pressure cook it to give you the product you experience straight from the can. If they had a full can of dried beans, it would explode from expansion when pressure cooked, but by starting with a mere 4 oz. of dried beans, adding water and cooking, the result is what you get when you open the can.

Yes, you read that correctly—4oz. of dried beans is all you're really getting out of 15 oz. can of beans! **2 cups dried = 1 pound and yields 5 cups cooked.**

Cooking from Scratch

What if you started with your own dried beans? It takes soak/cook time, but few minutes of *your* real time.

Stove Top Method:

1. Wash dirt from beans.
2. Soak overnight (8 hours) in double or more of the water. (beans will swell to double their size)
3. Rinse off water.
4. Boil for 30-45 minutes in fresh water.
No need to measure, just cover the beans with enough water an inch higher than the beans. They will expand further while cooking. Experiment. Taste. Find out what you like.

Pressure Cooker Method: Wash beans. Use 2 cups dried beans (1 pound) to 3 cups water and pressure cook for 30 minutes allowing 20 minutes with natural release. All liquid will absorb into the beans.

PREP 5 mins **COOK** 25 mins **TOTAL** 30 mins

A quick and easy Black Bean Soup to warm our damp NW days. Because it's free of dairy, eggs, gluten, refined sugar, and soy it's the perfect potluck dish that will fit into anyone's diet.

Ingredients

- 1 medium onion (diced)
- 2 cloves garlic (minced) (or ½ tsp garlic powder)
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1/2 tsp dried oregano
- 1/2 tsp smoked paprika (or ½ tsp pepper flakes)
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 red bell pepper diced (or 2 carrots diced)
- 4 cups cooked black beans (or about 3 cans, rinsed and drained.)
- 14.5 oz can diced tomatoes (or 3 fresh tomatoes diced)
- 3-4 cups vegetable broth (*Better than Boullion* brand preferred)

Garnish/Toppings, use what you like:

Diced avocado, Sliced green onion, Chopped tomato, Fresh lime juice, Hot sauce, Crushed tortilla chips... be creative.

Instructions

In a soup pot over medium heat, sauté the onion, garlic, and red bell pepper in 1/4 cup water until softened, about 5-6 minutes. Add water as necessary to prevent sticking. *TIP: The lower the heat, the more flavors will release. High heat creates a bitter garlic taste.*

Add the cumin, oregano, smoked paprika, and salt and sauté another minute or two until the spices are fragrant.

Add black beans, tomatoes and vegetable broth. (Start with 3 cups of broth, you can add more later if you like a thinner soup). Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer 15-20 minutes.

Using an immersion blender, puree as much as the soup as you like (go for about 1/2). Alternately, you can carefully transfer 1/2 of the soup to a blender, purée, and add back to the pot. Or mash with potato masher, or just eat as is. All good. Add the other cup of broth if you like a thinner soup.

Serve on top of rice or another grain.

CHEF SECRET: If you add a squeeze of lime to top it off, it will "brighten" the flavors and go from good to amazing.

Credits: <https://www.veggieinspired.com/simple-black-bean-soup/>

1 Cup of Black Beans provides:

