

BEANS WITH FETA

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound large dried butter beans (lima beans), or other dried beans
- 10 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large onion, thinly sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 pound ripe tomatoes, peeled, seeded and diced
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano, or 1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano
- 1 bay leaf
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 6 ounces Greek feta, crumbled
- 1½ tablespoons minced Italian parsley

INSTRUCTIONS: Place the beans in a large pot. Add enough water to cover the beans. Soak for at least 4 hours or overnight.

Drain and rinse the beans.

Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat.

Add the onion and sauté until it begins to caramelize, about 5 to 7 minutes.

Add the garlic and sauté 2 minutes.

Add the tomatoes, beans, oregano and bay leaf.

Add enough water to barely cover the beans.

Gently simmer until the beans are just tender, about 1 to 1½ hours, adding salt and pepper the last 30 minutes of cooking.

If the mixture is too soupy, turn up the heat and boil until most of the liquid has evaporated. Cool.

Preheat the oven to 350°.

Transfer the bean mixture to a casserole and top with feta cheese and chopped parsley.

Bake until the beans are warm and the feta melts, about 15 to 20 minutes.

Serves 6.

PER SERVING: 550 calories, 22 g protein, 54 g carbohydrate, 30 g fat (7 g saturated), 25 mg cholesterol, 334 mg sodium, 24 g fiber.

SECRETS OF SUCCESS

■ **Cooking beans with vegetables and seasonings.** This helps to infuse more flavor into the beans.

■ **Cooling the beans before**

baking. This process adds an even more concentrated flavor, with the alluring contrast of the feta cheese melted over the top.