

RANCHO GORDO BEAN CLUB NEWS

A HAPPY PLACE FOR
BEAN PEOPLE

3RD QUARTER 2022

"BEANS ARE A ROOF OVER YOUR STOMACH."
—JOHN STEINBECK

I recently read *Tastemakers: Seven Immigrant Women Who Revolutionized Food in America* by Mayukh Sen (Norton & Co, 2022) and there was a fascinating chapter on Madeleine Kamman. It was a wonderful book on many levels but I'd almost forgotten about Kamman. In the 1980s, PBS had her show "When French Women Cook" and I loved it. At that point, Julia Child was not as focused on French food and there was a natural ease that Kamman had with the cuisine that I might argue only a native would have. There was a practical no-nonsense approach to French food that touched me. She's one of those cooks that makes me want to run to the kitchen and cook something.

There was also a book that predated the show, *When French Women Cook* (10 Speed Press, 1976). I think the real title should have been, *When French Women Cook, They Add Heavy Cream*. The food is rich, simple, and substantial. I've cooked a lot from it and while maybe you don't follow all the recipes literally, there is good inspiration on every page. David Lebovitz wrote about her White Chocolate-Chartreuse Bavarian on his blog recently. Local friends in Napa recounted the other night at a dinner party what a terror she could be, but also an inspiration. I didn't know her but I adored her and I'm so glad *Tastemakers* inspired me to open up a few of her very good books.

We have a lot of "superstar" beans in this shipment but reading about Madeleine Kamman inspired me to look for some bean recipes. Her lentil salad (Salade de Ponotes a la Crème) looked very simple but worth a try. I wasn't disappointed. I would insist you use shallots and you're likely to ignore me but use all the olive oil and the heavy cream that she calls for in the recipe. It's for a full pound (six cups!) of beautiful Puy-style lentils and they deserve this indulgence. — Steve

FRENCH-STYLE GREEN LENTIL

Out of respect for the French farmers who grow the acclaimed Puy lentils in France, we call ours, somewhat awkwardly, French-Style Green Lentils. The seed is from Puy, France, and I think the lentils benefit from our irrigation, which is controlled and produces an excellent legume. Lentils are versatile, delicious, and maybe best of all, fast cooking.

SALADE DE PONOTES A LA CRÈME (FRENCH LENTIL SALAD WITH CREAM)

Recipe from *When French Women Cook* by Madeleine Kamman (see above). She notes: "The best lentils to use for this are the true ponotes, the tiny green lentils grown and bagged in Le Puy (France). They can be found in the best specialty shops. After you drain the lentils, keep the cooking juices. Blended with cream and chives they make a jolly good soup."

1 pound Rancho Gordo French-Style Green Lentils, cooked and drained

2 shallots, chopped fine

3 tablespoons minced fresh chervil

or chopped parsley

¾ teaspoon salt

Pepper

3 tablespoons wine vinegar

¼ cup heavy cream

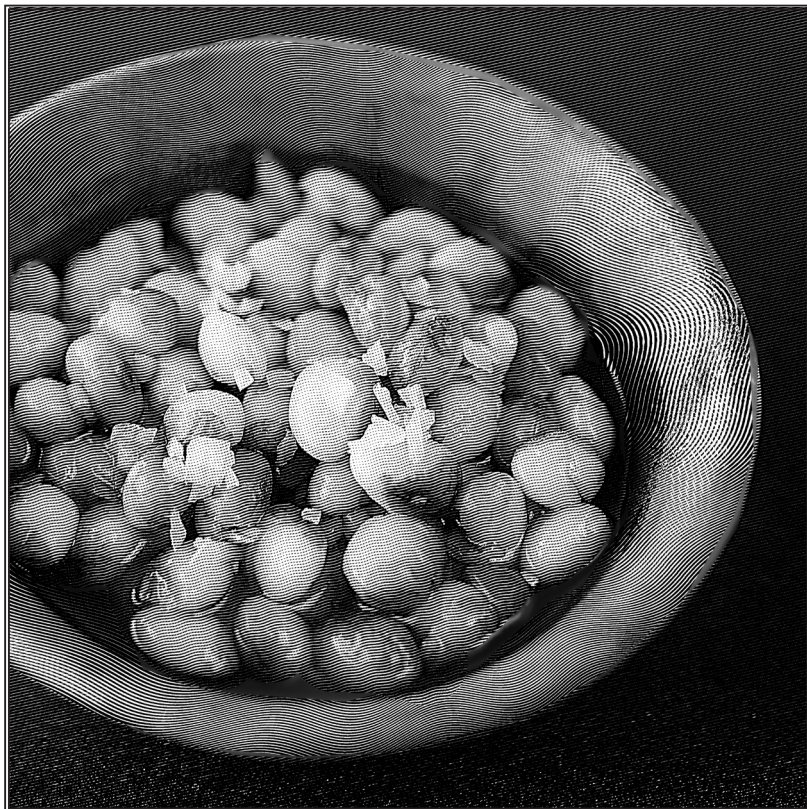
½ cup walnut oil

6 lettuce leaves (large Boston type)

Makes 6 to 8 servings

Drain the lentils until very dry.

Prepare the dressing: squeeze the chopped shallots in the corner of a towel to extract the bothersome juices. Put the shallots in a small bowl. Add the chervil, salt, pepper to your taste, and



the vinegar. Mix well; without waiting, whisk the cream and walnut oil into the vinegar mixture.

Toss the lentils into the dressing and serve on lettuce leaves. The salad is delicious either lukewarm or well chilled. Adapt the temperature to the season and the weather of the day.

CRANBERRY BEAN

You'll see a lot of Italian recipes call for Borlotti beans and there are dozens of varieties, all somewhat similar but with slight variations. The reality is they are Cranberry beans and we also have some distinct variations, like Wrens Egg and Bayou. All the beans are interchangeable in recipes and some of the differences are very subtle, but it's a tribute to the excellence of Cranberry beans that each type has its fans. Just to confuse things further, there's a solid red bean called True Cranberry that has nothing to do with the others.

WARM CRANBERRY BEANS WITH RADICCHIO AND PECORINO

We collaborated with Emily Nunn on an e-book, and this very simple salad turned out to be a favorite. The e-book is available for download on our site if you'd like more of her recipes.

1 large garlic clove

1 teaspoon kosher salt

½ cup extra virgin olive oil

3 tablespoons sherry vinegar

Freshly ground black pepper

2 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Cranberry beans in their broth

Half a small head of radicchio, sliced crosswise into pretty ribbons (about 2 cups)

½ cup pecorino cheese, cut into tiny cubes

Makes 2 servings

To make the vinaigrette: In a mortar, mash the garlic with the salt with a pestle, until a paste is formed. Whisk in olive oil and vinegar. Season with freshly ground black pepper.

Warm the beans; drain and place in a bowl with the radicchio and cheese. Toss with several tablespoons of the vinaigrette, season with plenty of black pepper, and serve immediately.

GOOD MOTHER STALLARD BEAN

Year after year we have a disappointing harvest of the beloved bean. We should give up but personally it's among my favorites so we're still investing the time and energy to bring them to you. And me.

This year's crop looks very good but I find myself saying that every year.

In the meantime, we have a pound for you in this shipment to love and cherish. Thin-skinned,

meaty and yet velvety, they would be the perfect bean if they grew with more reckless abandon.

SUMMERTIME CHILI SIN CARNE

We reworked my original Chili Sin Carne recipe with our new chili powder blend (included in this box) and agreed this is the vegetarian chili to make this summer.

4 tablespoons olive oil

2 garlic cloves

½ of an onion, chopped

2 tablespoons Rancho Gordo Chili Powder

2 cups vegetable broth

4 cups cooked Rancho Gordo Good Mother Stallard beans, or other hearty heirloom beans, with about 1 cup of cooking broth

4 small zucchini (or 2 large), sliced into rounds or at a bias

Fresh corn kernels from 3 ears of corn

Salt to taste

Sugar (if needed)

Limes and/or creme fraiche for serving (optional)

Makes 4 to 6 servings

In a large pot, like an enameled cast iron Dutch oven, heat the olive oil over medium-low heat until it ripples. Add the garlic and onion and saute until fragrant, about 5 minutes. Add the chili powder and mix well, stirring constantly, for 3 minutes. You should have a dense paste.

Very slowly, mix in the vegetable broth, stirring constantly until well blended. Gently add the beans and their broth. Mix and cook on medium-low heat for about 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Test seasonings and add salt if needed. If the broth is overly bitter, add sugar, a teaspoon at a time, until the flavor is correct.

Continue simmering on medium-low, stirring occasionally, until the chili has started to thicken and there is no grainy texture from the chili powder. Add the zucchini and corn and cook for another 15 minutes.

Serve with lime wedges and a bowl of creme fraiche, if you like.

MIDNIGHT BLACK BEAN

Midnight is a true black turtle bean with a rich, traditional black bean flavor and texture. Midnight beans have a light, thin skin and delicious bean broth that pairs perfectly with a simple bowl of rice. But don't forget to strain them for a salad with your favorite greens and use any leftover broth as a base for soup or even poaching eggs. They also make delicious refried beans.

NOPAL AND BLACK BEAN SALAD

Right after beans, my passions lie with cactus plants. Nopales are succulents in the Opuntia family and you spy them all over the Bay Area. You see them pre-cut in plastic bags in the cold section of many Mexican markets and you'll find them in jars with vinegar as well.

2 nopal paddles, or 1½ cups jarred, cooked nopales

1 cup cooked, well-drained Rancho Gordo

Midnight Black beans, warmed slightly

½ red onion, chopped

½ cup crumbled queso fresco, or ½ cup cubed

Monterey Jack cheese

¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro

1 cup mixed salad greens

Salt and freshly ground pepper

2 garlic cloves, minced

2 tablespoons fresh lime juice

2 tablespoons sunflower or grapeseed oil

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

Serves 4

If using jarred nopales, drain and rinse well under cold water. If preparing the nopales yourself: Bring a medium saucepan of lightly salted

water to a boil. With a sharp knife, cut along the outside rim of the paddle. Next, holding the base with a towel, scrape off the sharp spines on the paddles (I'd suggest wearing gloves if it's your first time). Cut off any bruised or damaged spots. The paddles will ooze liquid; rinse them under cold running water. Cut them crosswise into 1-inch-thick slices. Cut the slices into 1-inch squares. Cook the nopal pieces in the boiling water until very tender, about 15 minutes. Add a few onion slices for extra flavor. Drain and rinse well under cold, running water.

In a large salad bowl, combine the nopales, beans, onion, cheese, cilantro, and greens.

To make the dressing: In a small bowl, whisk together the garlic and lime juice. Slowly drizzle in the sunflower and olive oils, whisking constantly until the dressing comes together.

Pour the dressing over the salad. Toss well and season with salt and pepper.

DOMINGO ROJO BEAN

I say this every time but Domingo Rojo isn't as flashy or sexy as other beans but every time I eat them, I ask myself why I don't eat them more often. They are dense and firm but also somehow creamy at the same time. The bean broth is sublime but they're red beans so they are taken somewhat for granted by The People of the Bean, myself included.

We have an epic recipe for Texas Red Beans and Rice from Bludso's BBQ on our website. It's a big production but very worth it. But literally a bowl of rice with a scoop of Domingo Rojo beans is a treat. Maybe top with salsa, or sauteed onions and thyme. It's hard to go wrong with these.

CELENE'S BEAN-STUFFED PUPUSAS

Celene in our customer service department is from El Salvador and she was gracious enough to share her pupusa recipe. She says our Domingo Rojos remind her of the small red beans that are popular in El Salvador. Black beans are another favorite there.

She usually makes a quick tomato sauce to serve over these. She boils 8 to 10 tomatoes, covered with water, for about 15 minutes, and then purées the mixture until smooth (adding salt to taste).

FOR THE CURTIDO
½ head green cabbage, cored and shredded
1 small white onion, sliced
2 medium carrots, grated
4 cups boiling water
1 cup distilled white vinegar
1 tablespoon Rancho Gordo Mexican Oregano
2 teaspoons salt
FOR THE REFRIED BEANS
3 tablespoons olive oil
½ cup chopped white onion
1 garlic clove, minced
1 pound Rancho Gordo Domingo Rojo or Mid-night Black beans, cooked, with cooking liquid
1 teaspoon salt
3½ cups grated mozzarella cheese

FOR THE PUPUSA DOUGH
4 cups masa harina
2 teaspoons salt
3 cups cold water
Vegetable oil for frying
Makes 18 pupusas

MAKE THE CURTIDO: In a large bowl, combine the cabbage, onion, and carrots. Pour the boiling water over the vegetables and toss. Let sit for 10 minutes, then drain.

In a liquid measuring cup or small bowl, combine the vinegar, oregano, and salt. Pour over the slaw and toss to coat. Once thoroughly mixed, transfer the curtido and any leftover liquid in the bowl to an airtight jar or container. Chill for at least 20 minutes in the refrigerator, or chill overnight for best results.

MAKE THE REFRIED BEANS: Heat a large cast-iron skillet over medium-low heat for about 5 minutes. Add the oil to the pan. Once hot, add the onion and cook until soft and translucent, about 3 minutes. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant and softened, about 1 minute.

Add the beans, along with some of their liquid, to the pan and increase the heat to medium. Add

the salt. Mash the beans with a potato or bean masher, ensuring no beans are left whole. Cook for 7 to 10 minutes, stirring frequently, until most of the liquid has evaporated and the beans don't immediately flood the pan when you drag a spatula across the bottom. If you prefer a perfectly smooth consistency, use an immersion blender to purée the beans in the pan, or transfer to a blender and blend until smooth. Season with more salt to taste, then set aside to cool completely before making the pupusa dough. Once the beans have cooled, fold in the mozzarella cheese.

MAKE THE PUPUSA DOUGH: In a large bowl, whisk together the masa harina and salt, then add the water. Use your hands to mix until the dough comes together with a clay-like texture.

Fill a small bowl with water and a bit of oil and set it near your work station. You'll wet your fingers with the mixture as you work to keep the dough from sticking to your hands.

Heat a large pan or griddle over medium-high heat for at least 5 minutes. While the pan heats, form the pupusas: Take a large, golf ball-sized portion (about 3½ ounces) of dough and roll into a ball, then flatten into an even round, using the fingers of your dominant hand to press the dough against the palm of your non-dominant hand (rather than smashing your palms together), about 5 inches in diameter.

Fill the dough round with about 3 tablespoons of the bean mixture, or slightly less than the amount of masa used to make the disc. Gently fold 2 sides of the dough over the filling, then rotate and fold up the other 2 sides until the filling is completely encased. Pinch off any excess dough overlapping at the top and return to the remaining masa. Then, carefully pat out the ball between your hands into a roughly 4-inch disc. If the filling breaks through, patch it with a tiny bit of dough. Repeat with the remaining ingredients.

Lightly brush the hot pan with the vegetable oil, then place 4 to 5 pupusas (or as many as will fit without touching) in the pan and cook for 3 to 5 minutes, depending on thickness, until the bottoms are golden brown. Flip and cook on the other side for 3 to 5 minutes more, until golden brown and cooked through. Repeat with the remaining pupusas.

Serve the pupusas with the curtido. Enjoy!

ROYAL CORONA BEAN

How do you not love Royal Coronas? It wouldn't make sense. They are obviously big, but if properly cooked, they're a wild kind of creamy that no other bean, any size, can compete with. Cook them until they're soft, but if you detect a little starchiness, almost potato-like, keep on simmering for another 20 minutes or so. I was going to make a comparison to a big fish on a deep sea expedition and how you have to make the fish get so tired it gives up, but it dawns on me I know nothing about fishing, deep sea or any other kind. Just cook them until they are creamy.

I love adding pickled shallots to them and calling that a meal but there are countless ways to enjoy them.

SMOKY CONFIT'D BEANS WITH OLIVES

Lukas Volger's new cookbook, *Snacks for Dinner* (Harper Wave, May 2022), is good for many reasons. It's a wealth of really good food that you'd want in your repertoire. I also love that he gives the option to use canned or homemade beans. I wish modern food editors would insist on the same and not make a big deal out of it.

1¾ cups cooked white beans (or one 15-ounce can, drained and rinsed), such as Rancho Gordo Royal Corona, Cassoulet, or Large White Lima beans
¼ cup kalamata olives, pitted and coarsely minced
3 plump garlic cloves, smashed
1½ teaspoons smoked paprika
1 teaspoon kosher salt
½ cup olive oil
¼ teaspoon dried oregano
Makes 3 to 4 servings
Preheat the oven to 400°F.

In a small skillet or other shallow, oven-safe dish, stir together the beans, olives, garlic, paprika, and salt. Pour the oil over the mixture

and gently stir to combine. Transfer to the oven and bake for 30 minutes. I don't stir, as I like the chewy crust that forms on the beans at the surface, but you can stir once or twice as it bakes if you prefer a more uniform consistency.

These are best served hot or warm, garnished with the dried oregano. Leftovers can be stored in an airtight container, where they'll continue to marinate for up to 3 days. Bring to room temperature, or warm, before serving.

CHILI POWDER BLEND

Chile Powder with an “e” means ground chiles. Chili Powder, with an “i” denotes a blend of chiles, spices, and salt. A lot of people make their chili (or chili con carne) with a prepared mix. I've avoided it because I like to make things difficult for myself but Julia has come up with a delicious mix that I would use without hesitation. It's a Bean Club exclusive and a true labor of love.

Most of us are familiar with Chili Con Carne but when we were writing our Chili Manifesto (available for download on our site), I knew I had to come up with a better vegetarian version than what we encountered. Too often these meatless dishes were just a vegetable stew with some spice thrown in. I believe our Chili Sin Carne can hold its own against the meat dish. That's a strong claim but when we were testing out our chili powder in the Rancho Gordo test kitchen, that's exactly what I thought. It's also a lot easier without the beef.

I've complained about this before but tomatoes don't belong in a chili, con or sin carne! I know not everyone will agree but try a batch using either chili recipe and see what you think. You can always add tomatoes in later.

RANCHO GORDO CHILI CON CARNE

If you prefer a spicy chili, you might want to add a pinch of your favorite chile powder to this recipe to kick up the heat.

¼ cup olive oil
2 pounds chuck roast, cut into ½- to 1-inch cubes
2 white onions, chopped
4 to 6 cloves garlic
3 tablespoons Rancho Gordo Chili Powder
3 cups water
1 bottle Negra Modelo (or other dark beer)
3 cups Rancho Gordo Good Mother Stallard, Domingo Rojo, Vaquero, or Santa Maria Pinquito beans, cooked and drained
Salt to taste
1 tablespoon of Masa Harina (optional)
Garnishes of your choice
Makes 4 to 5 servings

In a stockpot over medium heat, warm the oil. Brown the meat pieces in batches, removing them as they brown.

When all the pieces are browned and seared, lower the heat and sauté the onions and garlic until soft. Add the chili powder; fry the spices for a few minutes, and then slowly add the water and then the beer. Bring to a boil and then reduce the heat to low. Add the meat back to the pot and allow to simmer gently for about 2 hours, stirring occasionally.

Add the beans and salt to taste. Cook for another 10 minutes or so. The texture should be somewhat soupy but if the liquid is too thin, dissolve the masa harina in about ½ cup of water. Stir well to avoid any lumps. Slowly add the liquid to the chili. Cook on low for another 15 minutes or so.

Ladle out hot with garnishes of raw chopped onion, chopped cilantro, chile powder, etc. Serve with hot flour tortillas, buttermilk biscuits, or your favorite cornbread.



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