

# **RANCHO GORDO** *Cooking*

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## **Back-to-Normal Charro Beans**

After the Napa Valley earthquake hit, I just wanted to get it behind me and get back to normal. I was tired of thinking about it: the lost money, the damages, that initial view of our floor here at Rancho Gordo with bottles of hot sauce, pecan oil, bars of chocolate, broken pottery and all the new books that sat in this disaster stew. You want to acknowledge what you've been through but it feels like there's a fine line between that and indulgence.

For me the best way to get back to normal is over my stove cooking for family and friends. I decided to venture back and it was a happy experience. It's silly but making beans took me to normal! I decided to cook my beautiful Flor de Junio beans from Mexico and turn them into Charro beans. I served them for dinner and I can say they were incredible. Flor de Junio are solid but tender and perfect for this kind of dish. Having some friends over for dinner with a few family members, serving beans, pouring wine, listening to good music and plenty of laughs felt like normal. The work wasn't over, but I was back.

- 1 pound [Flor de Junio \(Silvia\) Beans](#)
  - 4 slices bacon
  - 1/2 onion, chopped
  - 1-2 fresh serrano chiles, minced
  - 1 red bell pepper, roasted, peeled, and chopped
  - 1 can of beer
1. Cook the beans in the [Rancho Gordo manner](#).
  2. In a skillet over medium-low heat, cook the bacon until the fat has rendered. Remove the bacon and chop it into small pieces; set aside. Add the onion and serrano chiles to the skillet and fry until softened and fragrant. Stir in the roasted red bell pepper.
  3. Once the beans are cooked, add the beer, the reserved bacon, and the sauteed vegetable mixture. Let simmer for a bit to blend the flavors.