Smoky Ham and Butter Bean Bake

One 8×12 in (20×30 cm) dish of at least 2.5 qt/2.4 L; 4 main-dish portions, each with 2 bread slices · Active 25 min · Total 1 hr 10 min

Ingredients

- 2 cans butter beans, drained and rinsed (1 lb 1 oz/480 g drained total)
- 1 cup low-sodium chicken stock (240 ml)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil (15 ml)
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped (150 g)
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped (6 g)
- 1 teaspoon mild smoked paprika (2 g)
- 12 oz fully cooked ham, safely chilled and cut in short strips (340 g)
- 1 cup roasted red pepper from a water- or brine-packed jar, drained and patted dry (180 g)
- 1 tablespoon cider vinegar (15 ml)
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley (8 g)
- 8 slices crusty bread (8 1/2 oz/240 g total), for serving

Set out

Oven, 8×12 in (20×30 cm) baking dish, at least 2.5 qt/2.4 L, Large skillet, Bowl and fork, Small baking tray for bread, Rimmed baking sheet, Food thermometer

Allergens

Wheat in serving bread; check ham and stock labels for celery, milk or other allergens. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Heat oven to 400°F (205°C). Put the dish on a rimmed sheet. Mash one-third of the beans with 60 ml of the measured stock in the bowl.

2. Heat oil in the skillet over medium heat. Cook onion 8–10 minutes until soft, then add garlic and paprika for 30 seconds. Stir in mashed beans and remaining 180 ml stock and simmer 2–3 minutes until lightly thickened.

3. Fold in whole beans, ham, roasted pepper, vinegar and black pepper. Heat 4–5 minutes, stirring gently, until the mixture reaches 165°F (74°C). Stir in parsley and spread in the dish.

4. Bake uncovered 20–25 minutes until the edges darken slightly and the center and several other points reach 165°F (74°C). Warm bread on its separate tray for the last 4–5 minutes, watching so it does not burn.

5. Rest the bean bake 5 minutes. Serve one-quarter with two bread slices per person.

Keep the beans recognizable

After the sauce is made, turn the whole beans with a broad spoon. They can split naturally, but repeated hard stirring would turn the filling into a uniform paste.

A useful detail

The 70-minute total includes draining and chopping, the stove stage, up to 25 minutes baking and rest. No extra salt is added because ham, stock and jarred peppers vary in seasoning.

Keep it well

Keep bread separate. Refrigerate bean-bake portions in shallow containers within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F (32°C), at 40°F (4°C) or below. Use within 3 days of the ham’s original cooking or opening, or an earlier label deadline. Reheat to 165°F (74°C), adding a little water if the bean sauce has thickened. Freeze promptly cooled portions for up to 1 month for quality only while the original ingredients remain within their safe window; thaw in the refrigerator.