Ham, Leek and Butter Bean Gratin

One 8×12 in (20×30 cm) dish, at least 3 qt/2.8 L;4 bean-forward main-dish portions · Active 30 min · Total 1 hr 20 min

Ingredients

- 3 cans butter beans, drained and rinsed (1 lb 9 oz/720 g drained total)
- 2 large leeks, white and pale-green parts washed and sliced (300 g prepared)
- 2 tablespoons butter (30 g)
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour (18 g)
- 1 1/4 cups milk (300 ml)
- 1/2 cup low-sodium chicken stock (120 ml)
- 1 tablespoon whole-grain mustard (15 g)
- 8 oz fully cooked ham, safely chilled, cut in small cubes (225 g)
- 2 oz mature cheddar, grated (60 g), divided equally between sauce and topping
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 2/3 cup coarse fresh breadcrumbs (40 g)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil (15 ml)

Set out

Oven, 8×12 in (20×30 cm) baking dish, at least 3 qt/2.8 L, Large deep skillet, Colander, Whisk, Small bowl, Rimmed baking sheet, Suitable foil if needed, Food thermometer

Allergens

Milk, Wheat, Mustard; check ham and stock labels for celery or other allergens. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Heat oven to 400°F (205°C). Put the dish on a rimmed sheet. Drain and rinse beans thoroughly.

2. Melt butter in the skillet over medium-low heat. Cook leeks 12–15 minutes, stirring, until very soft and excess water evaporates. Stir in flour 1 minute, then gradually whisk in milk and stock. Simmer 3–4 minutes until sauce coats a spoon.

3. Take off the heat and stir in mustard,30 g cheddar and pepper. Fold in ham and beans gently. Return to low heat 3–4 minutes until the filling reaches 165°F (74°C), then spread in the dish.

4. Mix breadcrumbs, olive oil and remaining 30 g cheddar in the small bowl. Scatter loosely over filling. Bake 20–25 minutes until golden and the center and several other points reach 165°F (74°C). Shield the top loosely if needed while the middle finishes.

5. Rest 5 minutes before serving four portions.

Beans are the main ingredient

The drained 720 g quantity is deliberate. Keep the full amount instead of replacing a can with extra sauce, which would make the pan looser and less substantial.

A useful detail

The 80-minute total includes thorough leek cleaning and softening, sauce, the full oven stage and rest. No extra salt is required because ham, stock, mustard and cheese season the base.

Keep it well

Refrigerate shallow portions 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 ingredient deadline. Reheat to 165°F (74°C), adding a little water if needed. Freeze promptly cooled portions for up to 1 month for quality only within the original ingredients’ safe windows; thaw in the refrigerator.