Tomato White Bean Mozzarella Bake

One 8×12 in (20×30 cm) dish, at least 3 qt/2.8 L;4 bean portions with 1 bread slice each · Active 25 min · Total 1 hr 20 min

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons olive oil (30 ml)
- 1 large onion, finely chopped (200 g)
- 4 garlic cloves, finely chopped (12 g)
- 2 cans chopped tomatoes, including juice (1 lb 12 oz/800 g total)
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/4 teaspoon fine salt (1.5 g)
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 3 cans white beans, drained and rinsed (1 lb 9 oz/720 g drained total)
- 1/3 cup loosely packed fresh basil leaves, torn (10 g)
- 5 oz low-moisture mozzarella block, grated or torn small (150 g)
- 4 slices wholegrain bread (160 g total)

Set out

Oven, 8×12 in (20×30 cm) baking dish, at least 3 qt/2.8 L, 12-in/30-cm skillet, Rimmed baking sheet, Small baking tray for bread, Food thermometer

Allergens

Milk, Wheat; check bread labels for sesame, soy or other allergens. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Heat oven to 400°F (205°C). Put the baking dish on a rimmed sheet. Heat oil in the skillet over medium heat. Cook onion 8–10 minutes until soft, then garlic 30 seconds.

2. Add tomatoes with juice, oregano, salt and pepper. Simmer uncovered 15–20 minutes, stirring along the bottom, until thick enough that a spoon leaves a brief trail. Fold in drained beans and simmer 3 minutes. Take off heat and stir in basil.

3. Spread hot bean mixture in the dish. Scatter mozzarella in small patches, leaving some tomato visible. Bake 18–22 minutes until cheese is melted and lightly golden and the center and several other spots reach 165°F (74°C).

4. Put bread slices on their tray and warm in the oven for the last 3–4 minutes, watching the edges. Rest the casserole 5 minutes, then serve four portions with one slice of bread each.

Watch the trail, not just the timer

A spoon briefly exposing the skillet bottom is a more useful sauce cue than insisting every brand of canned tomato will reduce in precisely fifteen minutes.

A useful detail

The 80-minute total includes chopping, full onion cooking and tomato reduction, assembly, baking and rest. Particularly watery tomatoes can take a few extra minutes to reach the spoon-trail stage before beans enter.

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 or an earlier dairy deadline. Reheat bean-and-cheese portions to 165°F (74°C). Freeze promptly cooled portions for up to 2 months for quality and thaw in the refrigerator. Keep bread separate and follow its label.