Braised Pinto Beans and Cabbage with Corncakes

4 bean-and-cabbage plates with 3 small corncakes per person · Active 25 min · Total 50 min

Skills: Browning connected vegetable wedges and cooking small griddle cakes

Ingredients

• About 1/2 small green cabbage, cut into 6 narrow wedges with a little core attached (450 g prepared)

• 2 cans pinto beans, drained and rinsed (480 g drained total)

• 1 medium onion, chopped (150 g prepared)

• 2 garlic cloves, minced (6 g prepared)

• 1 can crushed tomatoes (14 oz/400 g)

• 1 cup water (240 ml)

• 3 tablespoons neutral oil (45 ml), divided equally between cabbage, sauce and corncake cooking

• 1 teaspoon ground cumin (2 g)

• 1 teaspoon fine salt (6 g), divided: 1/4 teaspoon/1.5 g for cabbage, 1/2 teaspoon/3 g for sauce and 1/4 teaspoon/1.5 g for cakes

• 1 cup fine yellow cornmeal (150 g)

• 1/3 cup all-purpose flour (40 g)

• 1 teaspoon baking powder (4 g)

• 1 large egg (50 g without shell)

• 3/4 cup milk (180 ml)

Set out

12-inch/30 cm deep skillet with lid, second nonstick skillet or griddle, mixing bowl and whisk, knife and board, turner, measuring spoons, food thermometer

Allergens

wheat, egg, milk. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Heat 1 tablespoon/15 ml oil in the deep skillet over medium-high heat. Add cabbage wedges and 1/4 teaspoon/1.5 g salt. Brown the two cut faces for about 4 minutes each, turning carefully. Transfer to a plate.

2. Add another 1 tablespoon/15 ml oil and the onion to the same pan. Cook for 5 minutes. Stir in garlic and cumin for 30 seconds, then add tomatoes, water, beans and 1/2 teaspoon/3 g salt. Return the cabbage, cover and simmer gently for 18–22 minutes until the cores are tender.

3. Meanwhile, whisk cornmeal, flour, baking powder and the remaining 1/4 teaspoon/1.5 g salt. Beat in egg and milk to make a thick pourable batter. Rest for 5 minutes.

4. Use the final 1 tablespoon/15 ml oil across 3 batches in the second skillet. For each batch, heat about 1 teaspoon/5 ml oil over medium heat and cook 4 cakes, using about 2 tablespoons/35 g batter per cake. Cook for about 3 minutes on the first side and 2 minutes on the second, until golden and cooked through. Make 12 cakes in total. Check a thick cake in every batch: its center must be fully set and at least 160°F/71°C because the batter contains egg.

5. Keep finished cakes on a warm plate while checking the cabbage. If the braise has much free liquid when the cabbage is tender, simmer uncovered for a final 2–3 minutes.

6. Divide beans, sauce and cabbage evenly between 4 plates and give each person 3 small corncakes. Serve while the cakes still have crisp edges.

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One measured meal

The twelve corncakes are already part of the four portions, so an additional loaf or rice side is not assumed.

Ingredient labels

Check cornmeal, baking powder and canned-bean labels for additional allergens.

A useful detail

The corncake oil is divided across three batches. A nonstick or well-seasoned surface helps this measured amount work; do not expect a dry, unseasoned pan to release the batter cleanly.

Keep it well

Refrigerate bean-cabbage portions and corncakes separately within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F/32°C. Keep at 40°F/4°C or below for up to 3 days. Reheat the braise and cakes to 165°F/74°C throughout. Cakes can be frozen with paper between them for up to 2 months for best quality.