

## Braised Beans and Greens

Earth Day Dinner | April 2007



*Any dried or fresh shell beans will work in this healthful dish. Since cooking times vary, just cook the beans until tender. See note, below, for using fresh.*

- 1 LB. DRIED CRANBERRY BEANS, DRY CHRISTMAS (CALICO) LIMA BEANS, OR DRY PINTO BEANS\*
- 8 CUPS WATER
- 1 ONION, CUT INTO WEDGES
- 1/4 CUP SNIPPED FRESH THYME
- 3 CLOVES GARLIC, THINLY SLICED
- 1 BAY LEAF
- 4 CUPS FRESH SPINACH LEAVES
- 3/4 CUP EXTRA-VIRGIN OLIVE OIL
- 3 FRESH JALAPEÑO CHILE PEPPERS, SEEDED, IF DESIRED, AND CHOPPED
- 1-1/2 TBSP. SNIPPED FRESH THYME
- 1 TSP. SALT
- 1/4 TSP. GROUND BLACK PEPPER
- SALT AND GROUND BLACK PEPPER

Rinse beans. Place beans and water in 4-quart Dutch oven. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Simmer for 2 minutes. Remove from heat. Cover and let stand for 1 hour. (Or, cover and let soak in a cool place 6 to 8 hours or overnight.) Drain and rinse beans.

Return beans to 4-quart Dutch oven. Stir in 8 cups fresh water, onion, 1/4 cup thyme, garlic, and bay leaf. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Simmer, covered, until tender (1 1/4 to 1 1/2 hours for cranberry and pinto beans; 45 to 60 minutes for Christmas lima beans). Stir in spinach. Drain beans and spinach. Transfer to a large serving bowl. Cool slightly. Remove bay leaf. Stir in oil, chile peppers, remaining thyme, 1 teaspoon salt, and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Serve at room temperature or cover and chill up to 6 hours. Season to taste with additional salt and ground black pepper. Makes 16 side-dish servings.

**\*NOTE:** To use fresh shelled cranberry beans, omit soaking. Cook as directed for 20 to 25 minutes or until tender.

Per serving: 190 cal., 10 g fat (1 g sat. fat), 0 mg chol., 195 mg sodium, 18 g carbo., 5 g fiber, 7 g pro.