

Ba Da Beans! Camerota's Cupboard February 2011

Here's to beans. They provide lean protein, help you feel full, are inexpensive, versatile, and taste great. Active ingredients in beans include saponins, protease inhibitors and phytic acid, all of which have been shown to play a role in cancer prevention and may even slow tumor growth.

Black Bean Soup with Israeli Couscous

You can't beat hot soup to help us through this endless winter. This quick, easy, satisfying one comes from the AICR (American Institute for Cancer Research) website. The warm, filling black turtle bean featured in this recipe has a meaty texture much like that of a mushroom and, combined with the larger couscous, makes for a dish high in fiber, iron, and tons of different antioxidants.

2 tsp. olive oil
1/2 cup chopped onion
2 garlic cloves finely minced
1/2 cup uncooked Israeli couscous
1 tsp. ground cumin
3 cups fat-free, reduced-sodium chicken broth
2 (15 oz.) cans black beans, rinsed and drained
1 tsp. minced canned chipotle chiles in adobo sauce
1 (14.5 oz.) can no salt added stewed tomatoes, with juices
2 Tbsp. sliced green onions
1/4 cup cilantro, roughly chopped for garnish
Low fat sour cream for garnish

- Heat oil in medium saucepan over medium heat. Add onion, garlic and couscous. Cook 5 minutes, stirring frequently. Add cumin.
- Add broth and bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat to low and simmer 5 minutes.

- Add beans, chiles and tomatoes. Cover and simmer 4 minutes or until the couscous is tender.
- Serve with green onions, cilantro and sour cream.

Makes 4 servings.

Nutrition information per serving: 290 calories, 2.5 g total fat (0 g saturated fat), 52 g carbohydrate, 15 g protein, 13 g dietary fiber, 380 mg sodium.

Artichoke Bean Dip

(from *More Nutritious Still Delicious*)

This healthy alternative to traditional mayonnaise-based artichoke dip recipes is a great way to incorporate more high fiber beans into your diet. If you don't have Italian Seasoning blend in your kitchen you can substitute ½ teaspoon dried basil, ¼ teaspoon dried oregano, 1/8 teaspoon dried thyme and 1/8 teaspoon dried marjoram.

1 can (19 ounces cannellini beans, drained and rinsed)
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 teaspoon Italian Seasoning Blend
2 cloves garlic
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 can (14 ounces) artichoke hearts (8 to 10 small size), drained and pressed of liquid
¼ medium onion

- Add ingredients to bowl of food processor or blender.
- Pulse or blend until consistency is creamy. Adjust seasoning to taste.

Serve with whole grain crackers, or whole wheat pita wedges. This recipe can also be used as a spread on vegetable sandwiches.

Makes 12 servings (2 tablespoons per serving), 2 cups total

Nutrition information per serving (2 tablespoons): 61 calories; 3 gr protein; 7 gr carbohydrate; 2 gr dietary fiber; 3 gr fat; .5 gr saturated fat; 0 mg cholesterol; 95 mg sodium

Bean And Artichoke Salad

This salad came by way of a neighbor from a “meat and potatoes” family. Although they usually disdain vegetables, when my neighbor served this dish at Christmas, the relatives ate the whole salad and loved it. I brought it to a potluck with the same result, no leftovers.

2 cups grape tomatoes, some cut in half, some left whole
1 red bell pepper, cut into small pieces
1 sm. red onion, thinly sliced into rings
1 19 oz. can red kidney beans or white kidney beans (cannellini)
1 15 oz. can chickpeas
1 can (14 ounces) artichoke hearts (8 to 10 small size), drained and pressed of liquid
1 cup chopped cilantro or parsley (or to taste)
2 Tbs. fresh lemon juice
2 Tbs. balsamic vinegar
2 Tbs. olive oil
1 1/2 tsp. spicy brown mustard or dijon mustard
1 tsp. dried basil
1 tsp. dried oregano
1 tsp. dried thyme or several fresh sprigs
1 clove garlic minced or pressed

- Rinse and drain beans and artichokes. Combine the first 7 ingredients in a large bowl .

- Combine remaining ingredients in a small bowl. Stir with whisk and pour over the bean mixture.
- Chill before serving. Stir occasionally so all ingredients marinate.

Serves 10

Nutrition information per serving: 138 calories, 7 grams protein, 19 grams carbohydrate, 4.5 grams dietary fiber, 4 grams fat, 0 milligrams (mg) cholesterol, 280 milligrams (mg) sodium.