

# MEXICAN BLACK BEANS

SERVES 6

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*1 pound dried black beans, picked over for stones or foreign objects, and rinsed\**  
*1 2- to 3-inch piece of kombu (optional)*  
*2-3 Tablespoons olive oil*  
*1 onion, finely chopped*  
*3 garlic cloves, finely chopped*  
*1 jalapeno chile, minced (take the seeds out if you want to cut the heat)*  
*1 Tablespoon sea salt or kosher salt*  
*1 Tablespoon chopped cilantro*  
*Fresh lime juice (optional)*  
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1. Place the beans and the kombu in a large glass bowl or pot. Add enough cold water to cover the beans by at least 3 inches. Let stand overnight or at least 6 hours. (If the weather is warm, put the beans in the refrigerator to soak.)
2. Drain and rinse the beans, reserving the kombu. Place the beans and kombu in a large, heavy pot with enough water to cover by 3 inches. Bring to a boil over high heat, skimming the foam that rises to the top. Lower the heat to low and simmer gently, covered for 1 hour.
3. Heat the oil in a large, heavy-bottomed skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and sauté gently until tender, about 10 minutes. You can cover the skillet with a lid to soften the onions and garlic without allowing them to brown. Add the jalapeno and cook, 1 minute, until tender.
4. Remove the kombu from the beans and discard. Add the sautéed onion mixture, sea salt and cilantro to the beans and simmer uncovered for 30 minutes, or until very tender.
5. Drain the beans and reserve 2 cups of cooking liquid. Pour 1 cup of liquid back into the beans and mash the beans with the back of a spoon until you have the desired consistency. Add more liquid, if necessary. Taste for seasoning and squeeze some fresh lime juice on top, if desired.

\*Or you can use 3 15-ounce cans of cooked beans, undrained. Follow along here:

- Saute onion and garlic in olive oil in a medium saucepan until softened.
- Add jalapeno and cook for 1 minute.
- Add beans and liquid from the can (usually about 1/3 cup liquid per can) plus 2-3 teaspoons sea salt, 1 tablespoon chopped cilantro and simmer uncovered for 30 minutes.
- You can serve the beans as is or I like to mash them up a bit so they're nice and creamy. Squeeze a little lime on top if you like.