

mexican black beans

serves 6

1 pound dried black beans (aka turtle beans), picked over for stones or foreign objects, and rinsed*

1 (2- to 3-inch) piece kombu**(optional)

2-3 Tablespoons unrefined, cold-pressed extra-virgin olive oil

1 onion, finely chopped

3 cloves garlic, 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)

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.