



Anasazi beans (*Phaseolus vulgaris*)

The Anasazi Bean is a beautiful maroon and white bean, similar to Jacob's cattle bean. Identified as one of the few cultivated crops grown by the Anasazi cliff dwellers. Sweet flavor, meaty and nutty. Anasazi beans are versatile and flavourful. These beans are easy to grow, drought tolerant and sweeter than the pinto bean, and they cook faster with no soaking. You can plant successive crops for use as both green beans and dried beans. Anasazi beans, which turn pale pink when cooked, are slightly sweet, with a meaty texture, which makes them ideal for baked bean dishes, Tex-Mex fare, and for serving and cooking with rice

Growing

Plant the Anasazi beans by a fence or a trellis, as they climb vigorously. Beans should be planted about 1 1/2 inches deep and spaced about 2 inches apart after all chance of frost has passed. Lightly cover the seeds with soil. Keep the soil damp but not soaking while the seeds sprout.

Thin the seedlings to 4 inches apart when they get their second set of leaves. Continue to water the bean plants biweekly. Again, keep soil moist but not soaking wet. Encourage plants to climb the fence or trellis by gently winding vines around the wire or supports as they become long enough.

Harvesting

Harvest the beans in late fall. Remove them from the pods and let them dry. Store them in a cool, dry area before cooking.

How to Prep

It isn't mandatory to soak dried beans before cooking them, but soaked beans do cook more quickly and evenly and are easier to digest. There are two ways to soak dried beans: A cold (long) soak, which guarantees fully hydrated beans, or a hot (quick) soak, which is speedier but leaves the possibility that some beans won't be fully hydrated and may therefore not cook as evenly.

Spread the beans out and pick through them, discarding any rocks, bits of debris, and shriveled beans. Then rinse the beans under cold water to remove any dust or dirt.

For a cold (long) soak: Put the beans in a large metal bowl with enough cool water to cover by about 3-inches. Soak at room temperature for six to eight hours, adding more water if the level gets low. Drain and rinse before cooking.

For a hot (short) soak: Put the beans in a large pot with enough cool water to cover by about 3-inches. Bring to a boil; boil for two minutes. Remove from the heat, cover, and let stand for one to two hours. Drain and rinse before cooking.

- Never let beans boil, except at the very beginning. Gentle simmering keeps the beans intact and creamy, not mealy.
- Wait to add salt until the beans have begun to soften, usually about halfway through cooking. That way, the salt can pass through the beans' softened skin and bring out their flavor.
- Add acidic ingredients such as tomatoes, vinegar, wine, or citrus juice once the beans have softened; if added too early, acid can thicken the beans' skin and extend cooking time. Non-acidic seasonings such as herbs, garlic, and onion can go into the pot from the start.
- Don't bother skimming off any foam that rises to the top of the cooking liquid. It's simply water-soluble protein released from the beans and will dissolve on its own.

Anasazi Beans Mexican Style

Ingredients:

- 1 lb Anasazi Beans
- 1 Onion chopped
- 2 Garlic cloves peeled and minced
- 20 sprigs Cilantro leaves chopped
- 2 Green onions sliced
- 2 cups diced tomatoes
- 1 green chili roasted, seeded and diced
- 1 tsp ground Cumin
- 1 tbsp Sea salt - or to taste

NOTE

You can use canned tomatoes and canned green chiles if you wish. Add as much (or as little) green chiles as you want depending on how spicy you want the beans to be.

1-Sort through the dried beans, picking out any debris or bad beans. Put in a colander and rinse thoroughly. Put in the slow cooker and cover with ample water. Use enough water so that when the beans double in size, they will still be covered with water. Allow to soak overnight.

2-The next morning, drain and rinse the beans. Put in the slow cooker with fresh water. Use enough water to cover the beans, plus 1/2 to 1 inch extra.

3-Add the onion and garlic. Cook on low for 6 hours or high for 4 hours until the beans are almost done. If there is a lot of water left in the pot, then take some out using a large spoon. You want the beans saucy, but not soupy!

4-Turn the slow cooker to high and add the rest of the ingredients, except for the salt. Use as much or as little green chile as you want. For info on how to roast your own chiles see the Notes below. I use only about 1/4 of a green chile in the recipe because I'm a wimp when it comes to spicy foods! Allow the beans to cook for another hour or until the tomatoes are tender.

5-Now's a good time to cook some rice if you want to serve the beans over rice.

6-When the beans are tender, add the salt (to taste).

7-Serve over rice, garnished with cilantro if desired. Or serve in tortillas or with corn bread.

Anasazi Beans and Ham Soup

Ingredients:

- 1 lb Anasazi beans
- 1 onion chopped
- 1 clove garlic finely chopped
- 1 Tbsp parsley flakes
- Black pepper to taste
- 2 c cubed ham
- 6 c water
- Carrots or celery chopped (optional)

1-Throw everything in a pot, bring to boil then simmer until done.

2-You can serve it over rice or eat it as a soup with crackers or crusty bread.