

HERB WHITE BEAN DIP

Adapted from David Lebovitz

INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 cups (12 ounces) dried white beans
2 bay leaves
1/2 cup bean cooking liquid
4 medium cloves garlic, peeled and minced
8-10 tablespoons chopped mixed fresh herbs
2 tablespoons olive oil
4 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
2 teaspoons salt
additional olive oil and fresh herbs, for garnish

METHOD

Rinse the dried beans and sort them, checking for stones or debris. Soak the beans overnight in cold water.

The next day, rinse the beans, cover with water, and bring the beans to a gentle boil with a bay leaf. Cook until completely tender, 1 to 2 hours, depending on the beans. Drain the beans, reserving some of the liquid. Pick out the bay leaf and let the beans cool until warm.

Put the beans along with 1/2 cup of their cooking liquid in a blender or food processor, and blend with the garlic, herbs, olive oil, lemon juice, and salt. You'll need to stop the machine a few times and scrape down the sides, but do puree it long enough for it to be completely smooth, which will take several minutes.

Taste, and adjust for seasoning, adding more salt or olive oil if desired. If it's too thick, add a tablespoon or so of the reserved bean liquid or olive oil.

Garnish with a generous drizzle of olive oil and a scattering of fresh chopped herbs. Serve with veggies, crackers and bread or use on sandwiches.