

clover food lab



It's an email about Beans so you know it's probably Kiernan again. (It is. Hi!)

When Michelle came up with the idea of Soup Week for Veggie Monster, I knew immediately what I wanted to share: a White Bean Soup recipe that is so shockingly, stupidly, embarrassingly easy—yet so warming and satisfying and rich—that I make it approximately 20 times each fall and winter. (It's even in my fridge RIGHT NOW.) It only has 4 ingredients aside from oil/salt/pepper.

I have been making this white bean soup for almost exactly 13 years straight, and I know that because it comes from [a Boston Globe article published on Jan 13, 2010](#). A date that, in my opinion, should be celebrated alongside Christmas and Bastille Day.

- + When I have no time to cook something complicated for my family, I make this soup.
- + When guests are coming over, I make this soup.
- + When loved ones fall ill, I make this soup.
- + When I want to stretch a dollar, I make this soup.
- + When I have nothing in the cabinets but the basics, I make this soup.
- + When I happen to have a really good bottle of olive oil, I make this soup.

I make this soup! I make this soup! I make this soup! And I want you to make this soup too.

So here, in all its glory, is [the recipe!](#)

White Bean Soup

by Allison Boomer for the Boston Globe

1 pound dried white beans, such as Great Northern, navy, or cannellini

1/4 cup olive oil

2 large red onions, coarsely chopped

4 ribs celery, coarsely chopped

3-4 carrots, coarsely chopped

6 cups water

Salt and pepper, to taste

Extra olive oil (for sprinkling)

1. In a large bowl, combine the beans with water to cover them by several inches. Set aside at room temperature to soak overnight.
2. Drain the beans and rinse with cold water
3. In a soup pot over medium heat, heat the olive oil. Add the onions, celery, and carrots. Cook, stirring often, for 10 minutes or until vegetables soften.
4. Add the beans to the pot and stir well.
Pour in the water, turn up the heat, and bring the mixture to a boil. Skim any foam that rises to the surface. Lower the heat, cover the pan, and simmer gently, stirring occasionally, for 1 to 2 hours or until the beans are very soft. Add plenty of salt and pepper near the end of cooking.
5. Ladle the soup into bowls and sprinkle with olive oil.

That's it. That. Is. It. The base of red onions, carrots, and celery is so healthy and simple, but, combined with creamy white beans and a drizzle of peppery olive oil, the soup feels like a treat. In my experience, the soup only gets better over a few days, and the olive oil and a dash of salt work to brighten it up at serving time.

I'd start with the recipe as written, but part of the fun is how easily adaptable it is. Dried Goya white beans work well, Baer's Best are always great, or you can play with some of the fancier Rancho Gordos I mentioned in last week's bean email as well.

You can play with the cooking time too—if you want a brothier soup, stop cooking the beans when they are just softened. If, like me, you like a creamier soup in the winter (but without any dairy), let the beans simmer away for another 30-40 minutes until some start to break through their bean casings. If you want it EVEN THICKER, some soup recipes suggest taking a cup or 2 of beans out and mashing or blending them, then stirring them back into the whole.

Because the beans cook directly in the soup, they create their own flavorful broth, but you could certainly swap in a favorite stock or broth you have on-hand. (And, teaser: we'll be teaching you how to make your own veggie stock in this Friday's send so stay tuned. It would be great here.)

I use a nice assertive olive oil to finish it—I recommend [Olive Harvest](#), which you can pick up in the Armenian groceries around Watertown—and here too you could have some fun. Try different olive oils and see how they play against the beans and veggies. Maybe top it with a few quick pickled red onions? Some sauteed leeks? A cheesy crouton or ???! Make it your own and adjust to your family's tastes.

I make this soup! I make this soup! I make this soup!

If you do too, let me know. I'd love to hear how it goes.



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