

Drop in with Dirk



Dirk Lakeman

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Protein-Packed Spring Bean Salad

A fresh, protein-packed salad that's inexpensive, easy to prepare and full of flavour! This warm bean salad combines creamy haricot beans, fresh seasonal vegetables, mozzarella, and Cajun-spiced pork or chicken for a dish that's perfect for spring and summer dining.

Serves 2–3

Ingredients

For the bean salad

200 g dried haricot beans
½ cucumber, peeled and diced
2 tomatoes, peeled and diced
1 small red onion, finely chopped
¼ fennel bulb, finely chopped
1 ball mozzarella, cut into small cubes
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 tsp cider vinegar
1 tbsp olive oil

**Cook the bean ingredients:*

500–750 ml water
1 tablespoon fish sauce
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
4 whole cloves
1 whole star anise

For the topping

2 Cajun-seasoned pork steaks or chicken breasts
Chopped fresh parsley
Fresh basil leaves

Method

1. Cook the beans

*If using dried beans, soak them overnight. The next day, drain and cook in a pressure cooker for approximately 12 minutes with the fish sauce, pepper, cloves and star anise. Allow to cool completely before using.

(Short on time? Tinned haricot beans work perfectly well!)



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2. Prepare the vegetables

To peel the tomatoes, score a small X in the base of each one and cover with boiling water. Leave for around 10 minutes, then slip off the skins and dice. (You can leave the skins on if preferred.)

Dice the cucumber, finely chop the red onion and fennel and cube the mozzarella.

3. Make the salad

In a large bowl, combine the cooled beans, cucumber, tomatoes, red onion, fennel and mozzarella.

Season with salt and pepper, then dress with the cider vinegar and olive oil. Toss gently to combine.

4. Cook the pork or chicken

Cook the Cajun-seasoned pork or chicken in an air fryer at 160°C for approximately 16 minutes, or until cooked through.

Allow the meat to rest for a few minutes, then slice while still warm.

5. Assemble and serve

Spoon the bean salad onto serving plates and top with the warm sliced pork or chicken.

Finish with a scattering of fresh parsley and basil leaves.

Enjoy!



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