

Cannellini Bean, Leek, Fennel and Savory Salad

Ingredients

2 cups uncooked or 2 cans cannellini beans (white Italian kidney beans)
1 medium leek, dark green top removed, white and light green part halved lengthwise then cut into 1/2" slices
1 medium fennel bulb, halved lengthwise, cut into 1/2" slices
1 Tablespoon olive oil
1/2 teaspoons fennel seeds
3/8 teaspoon or to taste salt
1 cup peas, fresh or frozen
1/4 teaspoon cayenne or chili pepper flakes
1/2 cup walnuts, lightly toasted
1 generous Tablespoon fresh summer or winter savory (or substitute 2 teaspoon fresh thyme and 1 teaspoon fresh sage), minced

VINAIGRETTE

4 Tablespoons olive oil
2 Tablespoon lemon juice
2 teaspoons horseradish mustard
2 garlic cloves, minced
1/4 teaspoon salt
large pinch freshly ground black pepper

BED OF GREENS

6 cups your choice of young greens including mesclun mix, tender lettuce, arugula, shredded savoy cabbage, red mustard leaves, spinach, shredded tender lacinato kale, mâche, purslane - you name it!, torn or shredded

GARNISHES

1/2 bunch parsley, minced
2 scallions (white part and tender green part), thinly sliced
4 radishes, thinly sliced

Method

1. Soak cannelloni beans in water at least 6 hours or overnight. Drain into colander and rinse very well. Return beans to large pot and cover with at least 2 inches of water. Bring to a simmer in pot with lid. Remove lid and quickly skim off white foam from top as this foam

contributes to potential gassiness. Return lid and bring to a simmer, stirring occasionally, for 45-60 minutes until beans are tender but not overly soft. Let beans cool a bit in cooking water then drain into a colander, retaining the bean broth for a future soup. This can be done a day or two ahead. If cooking shortly before completing the recipe, keep beans at room temperature as they will take up the vinaigrette best if not chilled. Broth freezes well for many months. If using canned beans, skip this step.

2. Heat 1 Tablespoon olive oil in a large sauté pan. Add leeks, fennel and sauté about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add fennel seeds and 1/4 teaspoon salt in the last few minutes of cooking.

3. Make the vinaigrette by blending all the ingredients in a blender for a minute or so or shake it all in a lidded jar.

4. Gently mix the beans, sautéed vegetables, peas, cayenne or chili pepper flakes, walnuts and savory with the vinaigrette. Taste and adjust for salt, acid, heat and oil.

5. Lay 3/4 cups young greens on a plate or shallow bowl, top with about 1/2 cup bean salad. Top with garnishes. Salad is good served either warm temperature or chilled.

Source: Mary Scott (8 servings)
