



Amanda's Muy Bueno Black Bean Cakes

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 16 / **Cook Time** 12 / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

chop: to cut something into small, rough pieces using a blade.

dollop: to add an unspecified blob of food to the top of another food, like dolloping whipped cream on top of a piece of pie.

knife skills: Bear Claw (growl), Pinch, Plank, and Bridge (look out for trolls).

pan-fry: to cook in a pan in a small amount of fat.

slice: to cut into thin pieces using a sawing motion with your knife.

tear: to pull or rip apart a food, like basil leaves, into pieces instead of cutting with a knife; cutting breaks cell walls more, so herbs can discolor faster.

Equipment

- ☐ Medium nonstick or cast iron skillet
- ☐ Mixing bowl
- ☐ Can opener
- ☐ Potato masher
- ☐ Cutting board
- ☐ Kid-safe knife
- ☐ Dry measuring cups
- ☐ Measuring spoons
- ☐ Small bowl

- ☐ Whisk
- ☐ Wooden spoon
- ☐ Heat-resistant spatula or pancake turner
- ☐ Paper towels

Ingredients

Amanda's Muy Bueno Black Bean Cakes

- ☐ 1 15-oz can black beans ******(for LEGUME ALLERGY sub 2 C grated zucchini or yellow squash)******
- ☐ 1/4 C shredded Colby-Jack, cheddar, or queso fresco cheese ******(for DAIRY ALLERGY sub 1/4 C dairy-free/nut-free cheese shreds, like Daiya brand)******
- ☐ 4 green onions
- ☐ 1/2 green bell pepper
- ☐ 1/3 C chopped fresh cilantro from 1/2 large bunch
- ☐ 2 large garlic cloves
- ☐ 2 tsp ground cumin
- ☐ 1/2 tsp salt
- ☐ 1/4 tsp ground black pepper
- ☐ 2 eggs ******(for EGG ALLERGY sub 1/2 very ripe avocado, peeled and mashed, OR 2 T ground flaxseed, whisked well with 6 T water)******
- ☐ 1/4 C cornmeal
- ☐ 1/4 C olive oil
- ☐ 1/2 C sour cream, optional ******(Omit for DAIRY ALLERGY or sub 1/2 C dairy-free/nut-free sour cream)******

Food Allergen Substitutions

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Legume: For 1 15-oz can black beans, substitute 2 C grated zucchini or yellow squash.

Egg: For 2 eggs, substitute 1/2 very ripe avocado, peeled and mashed, OR 2 T ground flaxseed, whisked well with 6 T water.

Dairy: For 1/4 C shredded cheese, substitute 1/4 C dairy-free/nut-free cheese shreds, like Daiya brand. Omit optional 1/2 C sour cream or substitute 1/2 C dairy-free/nut-free sour cream.

Instructions

Amanda's Muy Bueno Black Bean Cakes

rinse + drain + smash

Rinse and drain **1 can of black beans** and add them to a mixing bowl. Smash them slightly with your potato masher.

edible education

Black beans have been a staple of Latin American countries forever. They are filling and full of protein. And they are a blank slate for seasoning! Black beans are native to the Americas. Other names for black beans are "black turtle beans," "caviar criollo," and "frijoles negros." Black beans can be added to soups, made into savory cakes (like we're doing today), eaten with steamed rice (delicious and common in Cuban cuisine!), and even baked into brownies! Farmers in the present-day United States started growing beans widely after the end of the Mexican-American war in 1848.

add + mix

Add **1/4 cup of shredded Colby Jack or other cheese** to the beans and mix.

slice + chop + tear

Slice **4 green onions** thinly (white and green parts!). Chop **1/2 green bell pepper**. Remove the leaves from **1/2 bunch of cilantro** and tear or chop them into small pieces. Add the prepared veggies to the mixing bowl with the beans and cheese.

smash + peel + mince

Use your hands and your weight to smash **2 garlic cloves**, then remove the peel and mince the cloves. Add the minced garlic to the mixing bowl.

measure + mix

Measure and mix in **2 teaspoons ground cumin**, **1/2 teaspoon salt**, and **1/4 teaspoon black pepper**.

crack + whisk + mix

Crack and whisk **2 eggs** in a small bowl. Add the eggs and **1/4 C cup cornmeal** to the bean mixture and mix well.

heat + pan fry

Adults heat **1/4 cup of olive oil** in a medium nonstick or cast iron skillet over low heat. Swirl oil around in the skillet to coat the surface. Carefully drop 1 to 2 tablespoons of black bean mixture per cake into the skillet and flatten them with a spatula. Fry the cakes for 5 to 6 minutes per side or until golden brown, firm, and crisp. Drain on paper towels. Repeat until all cakes are made.

dollop + drizzle

Dollop your warm black bean cake with sour cream if you'd like, and drizzle it with **Groovy Green Savory Sauce**. "Buen Provecho" (Bwayn proh-VAY-choh) or "Enjoy your meal" in Spanish!

Featured Ingredient: Black Beans!

Hi! I'm Black Bean!

"My full name is "black turtle bean" because of my hard outer shell, but you can just call me "black bean." I'm a variety of common bean, although I'm anything but common! I bring a distinctive shiny look, sweet taste, and meaty texture to Latin American, South Asian, Cajun, and Creole cuisines."

History

Globally, there are 13,000 known varieties of beans. They include the white bean, like the Italian Cannelini, Great Northern, and Navy Bean; the black turtle bean (usually shortened to black bean); and the pinto bean. What kind of beans are you using today?

Beans were one of the first foods gathered, according to archaeologists. Our hunter-gatherer ancestors used beans as food tens of thousands of years ago. They were grown around 7,000 years ago in the Middle East.

In ancient Greece, public officials were elected if they picked the single white bean from a bunch of black beans.

In the 15th century, Spanish explorers brought beans to Europe when they returned from voyages to the New World. Then, Spanish and Portuguese traders took them to Africa and Asia to sell.

Beans are now prevalent worldwide, primarily due to their use as an inexpensive, plant-based protein.

Today, the largest commercial producers of common dried beans are India, China, Indonesia, Brazil, and the United States.

North Dakota grows forty percent of the beans in the US, more than any other state!

Brazil grows the most beans in the world.

In Nicaragua, newlyweds are given a bowl of beans for good luck.

Anatomy & Etymology

Did you know: Beans are technically a fruit!

Beans are legumes, so they have seeds that dry in the seed pod. Other legumes include lentils, peas, peanuts, and soybeans.

Beans plants leave the soil better and healthier than before they were planted. Most plants deplete the soil, but not beans. This is because they have nodules on their roots that add nitrogen, which the soil needs.

The world's tallest bean plant was over 45 feet tall! That's the equivalent of three average-sized giraffes stacked on top of one another. The plant was grown in the USA in 2003.

The word "bean" was first used before the 12th century. It comes from the Old English "bēan," from the Proto-Germanic "bauno," and is related to the Dutch "boon" and German "Bohne."

How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

Beans are harvested at full maturity when their pod reaches about six inches long, and the leaves turn brown and fall off about 75 days after the beans are planted.

When harvested, the shells are broken open, and the beans are collected as long as they are dry. If they're not thoroughly dried, they can be hung up to finish drying before they're popped from their shells.

We can't eat raw, uncooked beans. Why? Because beans have something called lectins that are poisonous, and the only way to remove most of these lectins is to cook the beans.

If you're using dried beans, soak them before cooking to remove "antinutrients," compounds that block the absorption of nutrients.

Dried beans are generally available in prepackaged containers as well as bulk bins; both canned and dried beans are available throughout the year.

Canned beans can stay fresh for years!

Combine the creamy texture of beans with a whole grain such as brown rice, and you have a virtually fat-free high-quality protein meal.

Beans are made into burgers, dips, brownies, cakes, dips, fudge, muffins, pies, and drinks (coffee and cocoa beans). They can also be used in jewelry, toys, and musical instruments. "Bean bag chairs" are made with polystyrene "beans," but the small bean bags for play are sometimes made with real dried beans.

Nutrition

Beans are complex carbohydrates and high in fiber, which keeps our digestion strong and smooth and our tummies happy.

Beans are excellent sources of iron, magnesium, and potassium. The body needs these minerals to grow, develop, and stay healthy.

Beans supply several B vitamins to our diet, especially folate (B-9). These vitamins contribute to healthy brain function, formation of red blood cells, increased energy, and decreased cancer and cardiovascular disease risk.

The fiber and protein in beans are good for stabilizing blood sugar. They are popular with vegans and vegetarians because they replace some of the nutrients found in meat.

Beany Expressions:

Bean counter = an accountant

Bean pole = describing someone tall and thin

Cool beans = when something is cool

It doesn't amount to a hill of beans = when something doesn't add up to much

Full of beans = full of energy, enthusiasm

Hasn't got a bean = doesn't have any money

Not worth a bean = not worth anything

Spill the beans = dish the dirt, tell the truth