

Quick Mogettes

see historical notes on page 2!

A single 400g tin (225g drained) of cannellini beans will make two generous portions - scale-up as required.

Ingredients:

400g tin of cannellini beans (225g drained)

some lardons, finely chopped (optional)¹ - 25/30g or so?

1 medium carrot, finely chopped

1 stick of celery, finely chopped

1 medium onion or shallot, finely chopped

oil for frying - I use rapeseed by habit, olive would be more authentic

bay leaf

large sprig of thyme

2 cloves garlic, finely chopped

4 cherry tomatoes, halved (optional)¹

some stock, vegetable water, white wine, other liquid component

¹ *The lardons and tomatoes really *are* genuinely optional! The lardons make it non-veggie, and the tomatoes are an addition by one innovative cook!*

Method:

In a small saucepan, fry the (lardons if used, and) vegetables with the bay leaf gently for some minutes (5 or so) in the oil.

Add the thyme and garlic, and halved-cherry tomatoes if used, and fry a little more.

Now add the liquid to just cover the contents of the pan and simmer gently until the vegetables are cooked - the carrot is probably the one to test.

When cooked, remove the bay leaf and thyme stems, then season liberally with salt and black pepper, remembering that any stock used (ie, stock cube) may already contain salt and adjusting accordingly.

Now roughly drain (don't be too fastidious!) the beans and mix into the pan. This should result in enough liquid to coat the beans; adjust if necessary.

At this stage you could heat the beans through in the pan for immediate serving, reserve for heating in the microwave just before serving, or reserve for freezing and subsequent microwave defrosting and reheating.

NB. See notes - better prepared in advance and refrigerated!

NOTES:

Whilst living in France, there was one year, as a contribution to the Autumn village neighbourly get-together, I made a large pot of the Vendéen bean stew known as *mogettes* (*mojettes*) to share with my neighbours.

This was delicious, and compared well to that of another neighbour who had also, coincidentally, chosen this dish: But making it the traditional way is very, very tedious and resource intensive!

It is made using dried haricot beans which have to be soaked overnight, drained, washed, boiled, skimmed, drained, reboiled - I'll stop there, but you can see where it's all going!

Un vrai calvaire!

The reason for this is that, in the countryside, one dries the last of the haricots in the late summer sun to have a reserve for the winter!

The dish goes very well with roast lamb or lamb chops/cutlets (rack of lamb, lamb shanks?) as a "vegetable" accompaniment, so I've devised a *short-cut* version one can quickly make at home taking about half-an-hour.

Tried it out yesterday and it was good!

It's even better if you make it in advance and keep it in the refrigerator to allow the flavours to mingle/develop.

Cannellini beans that we get here in tins are haricot beans, but have the advantage of being ready cooked, cutting out all the time-and-energy consuming steps I started to describe above. So we can prepare the aromatic flavourings and texturing separately. then add the ready-to-eat beans!

It is my opinion that letting the beans absorb the flavourings is advantageous, so preparing in advance and storing in the refrigerator is potentially very advantageous!

The nomenclature of the white haricot bean is varied: In the US they are "navy beans", in Italy, cannellini beans, lingot beans, haricots blancs (sec), white kidney beans!

My wife, on seeing the vegetable mixture, said "mirepoix!" from her encyclopædic knowledge of such things: See, for example

<https://theforkedspoon.com/mirepoix/>