

A Pot of White Beans, Sausage, and Broccoli Rabe

This particular bean recipe comes together as a meal with andouille sausage and broccoli rabe. If you're just looking for a good pot of beans, stop at step nine. When you get there, test for doneness. Continue heating until softened to your liking and enjoy with additional cheese and perhaps a dollop of yogurt or burrata.

Speaking of cheese, one of my favorite ingredients to add while cooking beans is parmesan. I enjoy adding a rind of parmesan to the cooking brine. If your rind isn't especially hard, it can break down nicely in this recipe to be chewy bits of salty parmesan dispersed through your meal. However, if you have an especially hard rind, there are two options. You can either use it for flavoring and remove it once the pot moves from the stove to the oven (see instructions below), or instead use a big chunk of the cheese itself. The cheese will be super flavorful and will definitely break down during cooking. As always, feel free to add more cheese whenever you want! (duh)

Another final note. I've used andouille here which is a fully cooked sausage. If you use a raw sausage, you must sear it separately before adding it at the end.

Serves 3-4

1 cup dry white beans

½ teaspoon kosher salt

½ teaspoon baking soda

Water

1 medium onion

2 large garlic cloves

1 bay leaf

1 parmesan rind or 1 large nub of parmesan cheese (see note)

1 cup tightly packed, roughly chopped, broccoli rabe leaves

Two links (10-11 oz) smoked andouille sausage, sliced

1 lemon, juiced

1 tablespoon chopped parsley leaves

Salt and pepper to taste

1. Pick through the white beans and remove any stones or bad beans. Rinse the beans and put them in a sealable container. Add the ½ teaspoon each of salt and baking soda to the container. Next, add water, covering the beans with enough water so that you leave enough space for the beans to at least double in size. I like to add two parts water in volume to one part bean volume.
2. Seal the container and place it in the fridge overnight.
3. The next morning, preheat the oven to 400F.
4. Dump the beans and the soaking liquid into a Dutch oven or a heavy, oven-safe pot with a lid. There should be enough liquid still that the beans are all submerged by the water. Add another half cup of water if needed.
5. Cut the ends off the onion and peel the outside off. Cut into quarters and add to the pot. Smash the garlic cloves and remove the papery skin. Add those to the pot as well along with the bay leaf and cheese rind (or shredded cheese).
6. Put the lid on the pot and place in the preheated oven. Cook for 45 minutes, stirring halfway through. If you're cooking a larger bean like cannellini, increase this cooking time to 60 minutes.
7. After 45 minutes, remove from the oven and place on your stovetop. Take the lid off and set aside.
8. Put the pot on the stove over medium heat. Bring to a simmer and continue heating another 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. The beans should be softening nicely, and the garlic and onions should also be breaking down.
9. Add the broccoli rabe to the pot and stir in. You should still have a bit of liquid in the pot—if not, add a quarter cup of water. Continue to heat another 5-10 minutes, stirring more frequently. As you stir, the broccoli rabe and onions should be incorporating nicely into the beans.
10. After 5-10 minutes, test the beans to ensure they are soft enough. The liquid should also be mostly gone at this point. Cook another 5 minutes if needed. Add the sausage to the pot, along with the lemon juice and parsley. Stir it all together and put the lid back on the pot. Turn the heat off and let sit 5-8 minutes until the sausage is heated through.
11. Season to taste with salt and pepper and serve!