

Bacon Green Beans with crispy sage

Green beans and bacon are a pretty classic pairing, but still -- there's something a little naughty about including a little bacon fat in the mix. Turns out it makes a lovely medium in which to fry sage.

Serves 4, as a side

1 teaspoon olive oil
2 slices bacon, sliced crosswise into 1/2" slivers
1 pound green beans, stem ends snapped off
8 leaves fresh sage (6 left whole, 2 thinly sliced)
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat and add the bacon. Fry until crisp, nudging it around a bit so it cooks evenly and doesn't burn, and lowering the heat as necessary to avoid sputtering. Use a slotted spoon to move the bacon to paper towels to drain.

Add the whole sage leaves to the hot bacon fat. Cook about 3 minutes or until crisp, using tongs to flip leaves gently two or three times. Remove to the paper towels.

Pour off all but 1 tablespoon of the fat in the skillet. Add the green beans and the thinly sliced sage, and saute for about 5 minutes, turning often with tongs, until beans are bright green, speckled brown in spots, and crisp-tender. Season with salt and pepper, garnish with the bacon and fried sage, and serve immediately.