

{Vegan} Smoky Black Bean Purée with diced avocado, tomato, and lime

Equally good as a shareable lunch, snack, or pre-dinner nibble, this dip's smooth, soft texture is lovely both warm and straight from the fridge. (To see how I repurposed the leftovers for breakfast, [follow me on Instagram @sternmanrule](#). Hint: look for the avocado toast.) Serve with plenty of tortilla chips, lime, cilantro, tomato, and avocado, and play with the amount of chipotle to suit your taste. *Important: Don't forget to soak the beans the night before!* Also, there's no garlic in here, though I bet a half or full clove would make a nice addition.

Serves 4

1 cup dried black beans
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
Kosher or sea salt, and freshly ground black pepper
2-4 chipotles and a few teaspoons adobo (to taste) from 1 can of chipotles in adobo sauce

Diced avocado, chopped tomatoes, cilantro leaves, additional olive oil, lime wedges, and tortilla chips, for serving

Pick through the beans looking for stones, rocks, or buried treasure. Soak them overnight in plenty of cool water.

Drain, rinse, and tumble the beans into a medium saucepan. Add the baking soda and cover by 2 inches with cold water. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to maintain a vigorous simmer, and cook until very tender, about 45 minutes, or longer, depending on the age of the beans. (Note: Within the first 5 minutes or so of boiling, white foam will rise to the top of the pot. Skim this off with a large spoon and discard.)

Reserve a few tablespoons of cooking water, then drain the beans. Scoop up 1/3 cup of the beans and set them aside for serving.

Transfer the remaining warm beans to a food processor. Puree the beans, adding 3 tablespoons of the olive oil and 2 tablespoons of the cooking water (or use tap water if you forgot to reserve the water like I always do) through the feed tube. You want this dip to be very smooth, so take your time pureeing and stop the machine once or twice to scrape down the sides. Transfer to a medium bowl.

Season the dip with 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon salt (start with less), 1/4 teaspoon black pepper, and 2 to 4 minced chipotles and a few teaspoons of their accompanying adobo sauce. You'll waken things up with lime in a second.

Top with the 1/3 cup reserved black beans, diced avocado, chopped tomatoes, and cilantro leaves and hit with a generous swirl of additional olive oil. Have plenty of lime wedges and tortilla chips on hand, for serving.