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kitchen collage

Beans and Greens

Makes: 4 servings
Time: 1 to 2-1/2 hours

I never tire of this classic combination, especially since there are so many possible variations. Regardless of the flavors, it's a texture thing; the beans should be somewhat creamy and the greens should be silky without disintegrating. The secret is to add the greens – and lots of garlic and oil – after the beans are almost there.

8 ounces dried chickpeas, washed, picked over, and soaked if you like
1 medium onion, unpeeled
1 bay leaf
1 clove
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 bunch (about 1-1/2 pounds) broccoli raab, roughly chopped
1 tablespoon minced garlic, or more to taste
1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil, or more to taste
1/2 cup Fried Bread Crumbs for garnish

(1) Put the beans in a large pot with water to cover. Turn the heat to high and bring to a boil.

(2) Cut a slit in the onion and insert the bay leaf; insert the clove into the onion as well and put the onion in the pot. Turn the heat down to medium-low so the mixture bubbles gently, cover partially, and cook, stirring occasionally.

(3) When the beans begin to soften (anywhere from 30 to 60 minutes, depending on the bean), sprinkle with salt and pepper. Continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until the beans are tender but still intact (which will be about as much more time as it took for them to get tender). Add water if necessary.

(4) Add the broccoli raab to the pot and continue to cook until tender, 10 to 30 minutes, depending on the thickness of the stems. If you want a soupy mixture, add more water.

(5) Remove the onion. Taste and adjust the seasoning. About 3 minutes before serving, add the garlic and olive oil and stir. Spoon the beans and greens into individual bowls and garnish with bread crumbs. Serve immediately.