

Healthy Green Bean Casserole

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Ingredients

2 1/2 pounds green beans, trimmed and cut into 1- to 2-inch pieces (about 8 cups)	2-3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
1 medium sweet onion, thinly sliced	3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
3/4 teaspoon salt	1/4 teaspoon black pepper
2 1/2 cups low-fat milk	1 1/2 cups whole-wheat breadcrumbs or 1/2 cup shredded or crumbled cheese



Directions

Position racks in upper and lower third of oven; preheat to 425 degrees.

Toss green beans in a large bowl with 1 tablespoon oil until well coated. Divide between 2 baking sheets and spread in an even layer. Roast, stirring once and rotating the pans top to bottom about halfway through, until tender and beginning to brown, 20 to 25 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and cook, stirring frequently, until very soft and golden brown, 5 to 8 minutes. Add flour, salt and pepper; cook, stirring, for 1 minute more. Add milk and continue to stir, scraping up any browned bits. Cook, stirring, until the sauce bubbles and thickens enough to coat the back of a spoon, about 4 minutes. Remove from the heat.

When the green beans are done, remove from the oven. Preheat the broiler.

Transfer half the green beans to a 2-quart, broiler-safe baking dish. Spread half the sauce over the green beans. Add the remaining green beans and top with the remaining sauce.

Combine breadcrumbs and the remaining 1 tablespoon oil in a small bowl (skip this step if you are topping with cheese).

Sprinkle the breadcrumb mixture (or cheese) over the gratin. Place under the broiler and broil, watching closely, until the gratin is bubbling and beginning to brown on top, 1 to 5 minutes, depending on your broiler. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving.

Nutrition Information

Makes 8 servings; about 1 cup per serving

Calories: 170; Fat: 7 g (saturated fat 1 g); Cholesterol: 4 mg; Carbohydrates: 23 g; Protein: 7 g; Fiber: 5 g; Sodium: 303 mg; Potassium: 367 mg.

Notes

This recipe uses a homemade light cream sauce instead of canned cream soups, and a lighter topping of whole wheat bread crumbs and cheese instead of fried onion straws. For soft green beans steam them in a large pot instead of roasting them.

To make ahead: roast green beans (step 2) up to 30 minutes ahead. Prepare the sauce (step 3), cover and refrigerate for up to 1 day; gently reheat until steaming before combining with the green beans. To make your own fresh breadcrumbs, trim crusts from whole-wheat bread.

Tear bread into pieces and process in a food processor until coarse crumbs form. Once slice of bread makes about 1/2 cup fresh breadcrumbs.