

Fennel-White Bean Mash

Swick

Serves 1 | Active Time: 20 minutes | Total Time: 8 hours

Chef's Notes

This dish is not only great as a side dish, it is also great as the first layer of a pizza, or even as a spread with bread and cheese.

It goes particularly well with Pan-Fried Sole.

Step 1: Soaking the Beans (optional)

- 1 cup white beans, dried (preferably cannellini) Rinse the dried beans and use either the quick soak method or soak them overnight.

You can use canned beans instead of dried. In this case, use 18-20 oz of beans.

Step 2: Cooking the Beans (optional)

- 2 cloves garlic
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1/2 tsp sea salt

Drain the beans and then place into a pot, along with the garlic cloves and bay leaves. Add about twice the amount of water to beans and bring to a boil.

Then turn down the heat and let simmer until just cooked through. Add the salt about halfway through cooking.

Once done drain and set aside. In the meantime, you can go ahead and prepare the fennel.

Step 3: Preparing the Fennel

- 1 bulb fennel (white and light green part only)
- 1 shallot
- 1 clove garlic

To prepare the fennel, slice lengthwise into 1/4" -inch thick pieces and then finely dice. Finely mince the shallots and garlic. You can prepare everything up to this point one day in advance.

Step 4: Cooking the Fennel

- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 fresh sage leaves
- 1 small sprig fresh rosemary
- 1/2 tsp sea salt

Once the beans are finished cooking, you can continue.

Place a large fry pan over medium heat. Once hot, add the oil, followed by the fennel, shallots, garlic, fresh herbs and salt. Sweat and stir occasionally and adjust the heat, if necessary, so that the fennel doesn't take on any color.

Cook for about 10 minutes, or until the fennel has softened and becomes translucent.

In the meantime, you can prepare the soffritto (Step 5).

Step 5: Preparing the Soffritto

- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 tsp chili flakes
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

To prepare the soffritto, emincé the garlic and then place into a small fry pan with the chili flakes and olive oil.

Place over medium heat and cook until the garlic softens and you start to smell it. Once done, pour into the fennel mixture. Stir to combine.

Step 6: Finishing the Dish

- sea salt (to taste)
- freshly ground black pepper (to taste)

To finish the dish, add half of the beans to the fennel mix and mash with a fork. Add the remaining beans and fold in, keeping the beans whole.

If the mixture seems a bit dry, you can go ahead and drizzle in a bit more olive oil. Taste for seasoning and serve.