

String Beans

String Beans are the unripe, protective pods, of various cultivars of the common bean. They're harvested and consumed with their enclosing pods before the seeds inside have matured. Although we still refer to them as string beans, the "stringless" bean was bred in Le Roy, New York in 1897 and most modern green bean varieties do not have strings. Green beans are very high in fiber and are good sources of Vitamins C, K, and A, as well as calcium and manganese.

CULINARY TIPS

String beans can be green, purple, red, or yellow. The yellow-podded bean is often referred to as a wax bean and can be used interchangeably with the other varieties.

String beans can be consumed raw, steamed, boiled, pickled, braised, roasted, stir fried, and deep fried. The entire pod is edible (even the little "tail" at the end), though the stem end is usually removed before eating.

HOW TO STORE STRING BEANS

Store beans, unwashed, in a container or perforated plastic bag in the crisper drawer for 5-7 days. Beans freeze well too—simply blanch them before you put them in a freezer bag.

3 WAYS TO PREPARE STRING BEANS

- **Roast!** Heat oven to 400°. Toss trimmed beans with oil, salt, and pepper. Lay the beans on a baking sheet in single layer and cook till tender, about 20 minutes. Toss once or twice while cooking. The beans are done when slightly browned and shriveled.
- **Pickle!** Make a dilly bean pickle. Use a basic refrigerator pickle brine, and lots of fresh dill for a delicious quick version of Dilly Beans. (See recipe on reverse)
- **Stir Fry!** Heat 1-2 Tbsp. of sesame or peanut oil in wok or skillet until shimmering. Add beans and flavoring of choice (slivered onions and/or julienned ginger, for instance) stir fry for a minute or two then add thinly sliced garlic if desired. Stir fry for another minute, then season with soy sauce.

QUICK REFRIGERATOR “DILLY GREEN BEANS”

Ingredients:

1 lb green beans—stem-end removed (make sure beans are the same length as the height of your jars)
4 whole garlic cloves
2 large handfuls of fresh dill
1 Tbsp whole black peppercorns
2 whole chili peppers, or 2 tsp. red pepper flakes (or less, if you don't want it spicy)
1 Tbsp sugar
1 ½ Tbsp kosher salt
⅔ cup white vinegar
1 cup water

Instructions:

Wash and dry two pint-size mason jars.

In each jar, place 2 garlic cloves, a large handful of dill, the peppercorns, and chili peppers or red pepper flakes. Pack the green beans evenly in the jars.

In a small saucepan, combine water, salt, sugar, and vinegar. Heat over low-medium heat, whisking well until the sugar is dissolved.

Pour the hot brine over the green beans, gently tap on the counter to get rid of air bubbles. Top with extra water if the beans aren't completely immersed. Place the lids on the jars and refrigerate for a week before eating.