White Bean Spread

Ingredients:

Cooked Beans:

1c. dried canellinni beans
3 c. water
pinch baking soda
¼ t. salt
2 garlic cloves
1 t. coriander seeds
½ t. mustard seeds
2 bay leaves
vegetable trimmings, parsley stems or vegetable broth (optional)
¼ t. ea. dried sage and rosemary (optional)

Bean Purée:

2 c. cooked white beans
¼ c. olive oil
the juice from 1 lemon
1 small garlic clove (about 1 t. minced or pressed)
hot pepper sauce (optional)
salt

Equipment:

1 small cloth cooking bag or a small piece of cheesecloth
food processor (a blender or potato masher will work in a pinch, but won't give you the creamy, velvety texture. You could also use a blender, but might have a bit more difficulty getting everything to blend.

Soak beans:

Place beans, water and baking soda in a non-reactive bowl or saucepan. Cover. Leave out at room temperature for 6-8 hours. *

Cook beans:

Place garlic cloves, bay leaves, coriander and mustard seeds in a cloth cooking bag and add to the beans. Add salt. Cover the beans and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to simmer. Stir beans occasionally and add more water if necessary to keep beans covered. The beans will take around an hour to cook, (but don't be surprised if they take a little longer). Test the beans a few times when they are nearly cooked. When the beans are tender and fully cooked through, remove them from the heat. Immediately after cooking has stopped, Stir the rosemary and sage in to the hot cooking liquid. Leave the herbs to infuse for a few minutes while the beans cool.

Purée:

Drain beans, reserving the cooking liquid. Remove the cooking bag and discard the contents. Add

lemon juice, garlic and olive oil. Process until the mixture is completely smooth, adding in cooking liquid if necessary to bring the mixture together into a paste. Adjust salt, pepper and lemon juice to taste.

Serve:

With warm pita bread, olives and olive oil. Sprinkle with sumac or paprika.

Store:

Keeps, refrigerated, up to a week. Well sealed and frozen, it will keep for several months.