

Sweet and Sour Mixed Bean Hot-pot

An appetizing mixture of beans and vegetables topped with potato.

Ingredients

450g / 1lb unpeeled potatoes
15ml / 1 tbsp olive oil
40g / 1 ½ oz / 3 tbsp butter
40g / 1 ½ oz / 1/3 cup plain wholemeal flour
300ml / ½ pint / 1 ¼ cups passata
150ml / ¼ pint / 2/3 cup unsweetened apple juice
60ml / 4 tbsp each light soft brown sugar, tomato ketchup, dry sherry, cider vinegar, and light soy sauce
400g / 14oz can butter beans
400g / 14oz can flageolet beans
400g / 14 oz can chickpeas
175g / 6oz / 1 cup green beans, chopped and blanched
225g / 8oz / 1 cup shallots, sliced and blanched
225g / 8oz / 3 cups mushrooms, sliced
15ml / 1 tbsp each chopped fresh thyme and marjoram
salt and freshly ground black pepper
sprigs of fresh herbs, to garnish

Serves 6

Step One

Preheat the oven to 200 degrees C / 400 degrees F. Thinly slice the potatoes and par-boil them for 4 minutes. Drain the potatoes thoroughly, toss them in the oil so they are lightly coated all over and set aside.

Step Two

Place the butter, flour, passata, apple juice, sugar, tomato ketchup, sherry, vinegar, and soy sauce in a saucepan. Heat gently, whisking continuously, until the sauce comes to the boil and thickens. Continue to simmer gently for 3 minutes, stirring all the time.

Step Three

Rinse and drain the beans and chickpeas and add to the sauce with all the remaining ingredients, except the herb garnish. Stir well to mix them thoroughly.

Step Four

Spoon the bean mixture into a casserole.

Step Five

Arrange the potato slices over the top, overlapping them slightly so that they completely cover the bean mixture.

Step Six

Cover the casserole with foil and bake for about 1 hour, until the potatoes are cooked and tender. Remove the foil for the last 20 minutes of the cooking time, to lightly brown the potatoes. Serve garnished with fresh herb sprigs.