

Safflower, *Carthamus tinctorius*

Tips:

- High oleic safflower oil has a high smoke point and can be used for frying or other high temperature cooking.
- Refined safflower oil is best when a neutral flavor is desired, as in baking.
- Use safflower oil in salad dressings since it remains liquid in colder temperatures.
- Mild tasting safflower oil is often used because of its mild flavor and clear color.
- The dried flower petals have been substituted for the more expensive saffron. While they appear similar and also produce a pigment, the flavor is not comparable.
- Cold pressed safflower oil can be used as carrier oil when making cosmetics, soaps, lotions and other products applied to the skin and hair.

Refried Black Beans

Refried beans are always fried in lard or bacon drippings in Mexico and the Southwest. In this recipe their flavor comes from the cumin and chili, which are sautéed with them, and the garlic, onion and cilantro, which are simmered with them in the boiling water.

1 pound black beans, washed and picked over	3 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
16 cups water, divided	1 ½ teaspoon salt, divided
1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon safflower oil	4 teaspoons mild chili powder
1 large onion	1 tablespoon ground cumin
4-6 large cloves garlic, minced, divided	Low-fat plain yogurt, for garnish

Soak beans overnight in 8 cups water. (Alternatively, place beans in a large pot, cover with water and bring to a boil. Boil for 2 minutes. Remove from the heat and let stand for 1 hour.) Drain.

Heat 1 teaspoon oil in a large, nonstick heavy-bottomed saucepan, bean pot or Dutch oven, and sauté onions and 4 cloves garlic over medium heat until tender, about 8 to 10 minutes. Add the soaked beans and 8 cups fresh water and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer 1 hour, uncovered. Add more garlic, if you wish, cilantro and 1 teaspoon salt, and continue to simmer, adding water as needed, until the beans are soft and the liquid is thick and aromatic and barely covers the beans, about 45 minutes longer. Remove from the heat.

Allow the beans to cool. Mash them coarsely in batches in a food processor or blender or with a potato masher. Make sure not to puree until smooth; you want texture.



Heat remaining 1 tablespoon oil in a large, heavy-bottomed, nonstick skillet and add chili powder and cumin. Sauté for 1 minute over medium heat and add the mashed beans (this can be done in batches, depending on the size of your pan). Taste for salt, adding $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon more if desired, and fry the beans, stirring often, until they begin to get crusty and aromatic. If they seem too dry, add some water. Mash and stir as they cook. There should be enough liquid so that they bubble as they cook, while at the same time a thin crust forms on the bottom. Cook for about 10 to 20 minutes and either serve immediately topped with a dollop of yogurt, or transfer to an oiled serving dish if you plan to reheat the beans later.

Make Ahead Tip: Cover and refrigerate for up to 3 days. Reheat, covered, at 325° F for 20 to 30 minutes. If the beans seem dry, moisten them with water before reheating.

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**Do you have a recipe using safflower to share?
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