

French Cassoulet

Authentic French Cassoulet with duck confit, pork, and white beans. A rich, slow-cooked stew that develops incredible flavors over three days.

15 min

PREP

6h

COOK

6h 15min

TOTAL

4

SERVINGS

Medium

DIFFICULTY

French Cassoulet

Ingredients

- 1 lb dry bean
- 10 cup chicken broth
- 1 cup tomato
- 4 oz pork belly
- 4 sausage
- 3 clove garlic
- 2 bay leaf
- 6 clove
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp black pepper

Instructions

- 1 Prepare the beans**

Drain the 1 lb soaked beans and rinse under cold water. Bring 10 cups water to a rolling boil in a large pot, add the beans, and boil rapidly for 5 minutes to remove toxins. Drain completely and set aside.
- 2** Return the drained beans to the pot and add 1 cup chicken broth. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce heat to medium-low and simmer for 45 minutes until beans are just tender when pierced with a fork. Strain beans and reserve the cooking liquid separately.
- 3 Prepare the meats**

Cut the 4 oz salt pork into ¼-inch dice. Process the diced salt pork with 3 cloves garlic in a food processor for 15 seconds until it forms a smooth paste. Transfer to a bowl and set aside.
- 4** Cut the 4 duck confit legs at the joints to separate into smaller pieces. Cut the 2 pork belly pieces into 2-inch cubes. Cut the 6 sausages in half crosswise.
- 5** Heat a large skillet over medium heat. Sear the duck pieces skin-side down for 5 minutes until golden brown and crispy. Flip and cook 3 minutes more until heated through. Transfer to a plate.
- 6** Cook the halved sausages in the same skillet for 4 minutes per side until golden brown all over. Transfer to a plate. Sear the pork belly cubes for 3-4 minutes per side until golden brown on all sides. Transfer to a plate.

- 7 Assemble the cassoulet**

Preheat your oven to 163°C (325°F). Stir the salt pork and garlic paste into the warm cooked beans along with 1 tsp nutmeg and ¼ tsp salt until well combined.
- 8** Layer half of the seasoned beans in a large Dutch oven. Arrange the duck pieces and pork belly cubes on top, then cover with the remaining beans. Nestle the sausage pieces so they are partially visible on the surface.
- 9** Pour the reserved bean cooking liquid over the top until the beans are just covered by liquid. Sprinkle with 1 tsp black pepper.
- 10 First bake**

Bake uncovered for 3 hours, gently breaking through the crust with a spoon every 45 minutes when it becomes thick and golden. Add more reserved liquid or hot water as needed to keep beans moist. Cool for 1 hour, then refrigerate overnight.
- 11 Second bake**

Bake the cassoulet at 163°C (325°F) for 1½ hours, breaking the crust and adding liquid as needed to prevent drying out. Cool completely and refrigerate overnight again.
- 12 Final bake and serve**

Bake one final time at 163°C (325°F) for 1½ hours until a deep golden crust forms on top. Let rest for 30 minutes before serving to allow flavors to settle.

Tips

- Soak beans overnight in cold water with a pinch of salt to ensure even cooking and prevent tough skins.
- Brown meats in batches to avoid overcrowding the pan, which causes steaming instead of proper searing.
- Use a heavy-bottomed Dutch oven or ceramic cassole to ensure even heat distribution throughout the long cooking process.
- Save some cooking liquid when draining beans - you'll need it to maintain proper moisture during oven cooking.
- Break the surface crust gently with a spoon when it becomes too thick, allowing moisture to bubble up and create new layers.
- Let cassoulet rest at room temperature for 30 minutes before serving to allow the sauce to thicken slightly.
- Make extra - cassoulet tastes even better the next day after flavors have had time to meld together.
- Use homemade stock when possible, or choose low-sodium versions to control the final salt content of your dish.