

Green Beans with Ham, Vegetables, and Almond Oolong Sauce

Transform your green beans into a modern, flavorful dish with this unique recipe. Combining fresh green beans with savory ham, vibrant bell peppers, and sweet cherry tomatoes, this dish is elevated with a hint of Ali Shan oolong tea. Topped with a creamy almond sauce infused with Almond Oolong tea and toasted almonds, this dish is perfect as a side or a light main course, bringing a burst of color and taste to your table.

PREP TIME: 25 minutes

1 lb fresh green beans, trimmed
4 slices center-cut ham, diced
1 med red bell pepper, diced
1 med yellow bell pepper, diced
1 C cherry tomatoes, halved
1 med sweet onion, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced

ALMOND SAUCE:

2 T butter
2 T all-purpose flour
1 C milk
1 T Almond Oolong tea

COOK TIME: 30 minutes

1 T olive oil
1 T butter
1 T Ali Shan, brewed and cooled
1/4 C sliced almonds, toasted
Salt and pepper to taste
1/4 C fresh parsley, chopped

1/4 C chicken broth
1/4 C almond butter
1/4 C grated Parmesan cheese
Salt and pepper to taste

PREPARE THE GREEN BEANS: Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the green beans and blanch for 3-4 minutes, until bright green and tender yet crisp. Drain and immediately transfer to an ice bath to stop the cooking process. Drain again and set aside.

COOK THE HAM AND VEGETABLES: In a large skillet, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the diced ham and cook until browned and crispy, about 5 minutes. Remove the ham from the skillet and set aside. In the same skillet, add the butter and chopped onion. Sauté until the onion is translucent, about 3 minutes. Add the garlic, red bell pepper, and yellow bell pepper. Cook, stirring frequently, until the peppers are tender, about 5 minutes. Stir in the cherry tomatoes and cook for another 2 minutes.

COMBINE AND FINISH: Add the blanched green beans and cooked ham back to the skillet. Pour in the brewed Ali Shan oolong tea and stir to combine. Cook for another 2-3 minutes, until everything is heated through and well combined. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Garnish with fresh parsley before serving.

PREPARE THE ALMOND SAUCE: In a small saucepan, heat the milk until just below boiling. Add the Almond Oolong tea and steep for 5 minutes. Strain the tea leaves and set the infused milk aside. In a medium saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat. Whisk in the flour and cook for 1-2 minutes, until lightly browned. Gradually whisk in the infused milk and chicken broth, bringing to a simmer. Stir in the almond butter and Parmesan cheese until smooth and creamy. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

SERVE: Plate the green beans with ham and vegetables. Drizzle the almond sauce over the top and sprinkle with toasted almonds. Garnish with additional fresh parsley if desired.