

# 20 Easy Dinners That Start With a Can of White Beans

It's time to spill the beans ... literally. We have recipes for the famous Reddit beans, white bean shakshuka and more hearty, bean-focused meals.



Hetty Lui McKinnon's broccoli and white bean Caesar. Rachel Vanni for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Spencer Richards.

**By Sharon Attia and Allison Jiang**

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Canned white beans are a hero of weeknight cooking. Like their [chickpea counterpart](#), they're cheap, easy to use and highly adaptable. And, unlike dried beans, which need to soak overnight, this hearty pantry staple turns into a delicious dinner in practically no time. Here are 20 recipes that let them shine.

## 1. Charros Corridos (Quick Spicy Bean Soup)



Rachel Vanni for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Simon Andrews.

Three words: hot dog soup. Beef franks are optional in this comforting, Northern Mexican-inspired bean soup, but highly recommended for savoriness, saltiness and whimsy. As with all good soups, toppings are king, and Kristina Felix recommends sliced avocado, diced onion and a tart hot sauce.

Recipe: **Charros Corridos (Quick Spicy Bean Soup)**

## 2. Pili Pili Shrimp With Braised Cannellini Beans



Armando Rafael for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Cyd Raftus McDowell.

“The results were **SUBLIME**,” wrote one reader about this warming dish from Kiano Moju, in which beans and shrimp are cooked with three different kinds of pepper — paprika, crushed red pepper and cayenne — for a deep flavor in a short amount of time. Spoon it over basmati rice.

Recipe: **Pili Pili Shrimp with Braised Cannellini Beans**

### 3. White Bean Shakshuka



Rachel Vanni for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Barrett Washburne.

Hearty and filling, Ifrah Ahmed's version of shakshuka is appropriate, and encouraged, for any time of day, not just brunch. A true pantry meal, it uses jarred marinara sauce along with fresh tomatoes, cumin, paprika and a jalapeño for spice. Crack four (or more) eggs into the bubbling sauce and devour.

Recipe: **White Bean Shakshuka**

#### 4. Creamy, Spicy Tomato Beans and Greens



Kelly Marshall for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Samantha Seneviratne.

“Marry me beans.” “Pizza beans.” “THA BEANSSS.” No matter what you call them, one thing’s for sure: You’ll love Alexa Weibel’s recipe, which has earned something like celebrity status on Reddit. You might ask yourself after making this dish, as this one punny commenter did, “Where has this recipe bean all my life?”

Recipe: **Creamy, Spicy Tomato Beans and Greens**

## 5. Green Curry Beans and Greens



Rachel Vanni for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Spencer Richards.

This shortcut curry from Kristina Felix uses store-bought green curry paste, along with serrano chiles, ginger and coconut milk. The end result is creamy stewed beans in a flavor-packed gravy, ready in less time than it takes to order takeout.

Recipe: [Green Curry Beans and Greens](#)

## 6. [Miso Leeks With White Beans](#)



Linda Xiao for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Monica Pierini.

Hetty Lui McKinnon coats braised leeks in a punchy miso vinaigrette, then tosses them with creamy white beans and serves with a jammy egg for a comforting midweek meal. If you like to meal prep, the miso leeks get better over time and can be made up to three days in advance.

Recipe: [Miso Leeks With White Beans](#)

## 7. [Lemony Shrimp and Bean Stew](#)



Christopher Testani for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Simon Andrews.

This Sue Li recipe, based on lemon, leeks, garlic and butter, comes together quickly enough for dinner on a busy night, but also feels special enough for a party. Feel free to substitute the shrimp with a flaky white fish or seared scallops. And if you're feeding a larger group, serve it over pasta.

Recipe: **Lemony Shrimp and Bean Stew**

## 8. Broccoli and White Bean Caesar



Rachel Vanni for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Spencer Richards.

Kristina Felix's white bean version of the classic salad is a worthy addition to the pantheon. Creamy beans, crisp-edged charred broccoli and torn pieces of baguette — which make it reminiscent of a panzanella — are covered in a tangy dressing made with some of the mashed-up beans.

Recipe: [Broccoli and White Bean Caesar](#)

## 9. [Charred Bok Choy and Cannellini Bean Salad](#)



Linda Xiao for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Rebecca Jurkevich.

This versatile recipe from Hetty Lui McKinnon pairs bok choy (or whatever other sturdy green you have on hand) with an assertive ginger-maple dressing and, of course, white beans. Cilantro adds even more brightness, lifting the beans out of winter and into spring.

Recipe: **Charred Bok Choy and Cannellini Bean Salad**

## 10. Cheesy Chile Crisp White Beans



Linda Xiao for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Monica Pierini.

Melissa Clark gives a cheesy bean bake a fiery glow-up in this easy weeknight recipe. For some heat, she recommends adding your favorite chile crisp or chile paste slowly, tasting as you go. (Different brands vary in their spiciness.) The hot beans are then topped with Cheddar and baked until the cheese has melted and toasted around the edges.

Recipe: [Cheesy Chile Crisp White Beans](#)

## 11. [Loubia \(White Bean and Tomato Stew\)](#)



Kerri Brewer for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Simon Andrews.

You could soak dried beans for this vegetarian Moroccan stew and get a truly lovely dinner, but Nargisse Benkabbou gives you the quicker option of using canned beans. This generous recipe hangs out beautifully in the fridge, even making a great breakfast with fried eggs or a lunch side with grilled meat.

Recipe: **Loubia (White Bean and Tomato Stew)**

## 12. Pesto Beans



David Malosh for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Simon Andrews.

Christian Reynoso simmers shallots, garlic, stock and cannellini beans (or any other creamy white beans) until soft, then adds a cup of grated Parmesan for a silky, pesto-inspired meal that yields maximum flavor with minimal effort in just 35 minutes.

Recipe: [Pesto Beans](#)

### 13. [Lemony Pasta With Asparagus and White Beans](#)



David Malosh for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Simon Andrews.

Did you know you can marinate canned beans? That's what Melissa Clark does here, infusing them with brightness, as well as a touch of heat via red-pepper flakes. While the beans marinate and the pasta cooks, she sautés asparagus in olive oil for a layered dish that's ready in 30 minutes.

Recipe: **Lemony Pasta With Asparagus and White Beans**

## 14. Harissa and White Bean Chili



David Malosh for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Simon Andrews.

Soy sauce and harissa are the special ingredients in Yasmin Fahr's nontraditional take on a classic. Dress it up however you like, but if you want to keep it vegan, skip the finish of yogurt or sour cream and the final sprinkle of cheese.

Recipe: [Harissa and White Bean Chili](#)

## 15. [Refried White Beans With Chile-Fried Eggs](#)



Christopher Testani for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Barrett Washburne.

While refried beans are typically made with pinto or black beans, they don't have to be. Here, Ali Slagle uses canned white beans, whose extra-starchy liquid speeds up cooking time, then adds a rich, spicy egg for a full meal. Tip: You can cut some of the richness by finishing each egg with a few drops of vinegar.

Recipe: **Refried White Beans With Chile-Fried Eggs**

## 16. Garlicky Alfredo Beans



Kerri Brewer for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Spencer Richards.

Carolina Gelen's five-ingredient recipe is the perfect choice for when you need a low-effort meal to warm you up. Top with crunchy garlic chips and sink into the couch with your favorite comfort movie.

Recipe: **Garlicky Alfredo Beans**

## 17. Rosemary White Beans With Frizzled Onions and Tomato



David Malosh for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Simon Andrews.

“When I told my friend that this was the best thing I’d ever eaten, she said, ‘How can that be?’ IT BE,” one reader commented on Melissa Clark’s 30-minute pantry masterpiece. Canned beans are quickly braised with olive oil, rosemary, tomato, chile flakes and lemon zest until the skins burst. Cooked-down onions add texture and a sweet, caramelized element.

Recipe: **Rosemary White Beans With Frizzled Onions and Tomato**

## **18. Pesto Pasta With White Beans and Halloumi**



Christopher Simpson for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Simon Andrews.

Yotam Ottolenghi cleverly uses halloumi in this quick weeknight pasta. He has you grate it to add fluffiness to the pasta as well as a delicious cheesiness. Lemon pulls it from the edge of being too rich, as does an elegant pesto cleverly built on arugula.

Recipe: **Pesto Pasta With White Beans and Halloumi**

## 19. White Bean Salad With Crispy Cheese



Rachel Vanni for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Barrett Washburne.

The textures and flavors in this hearty salad from Melissa Clark are delightful, especially because they come with very little effort. Thin slices of fennel provide sweetness, while baby arugula and fresh basil add some green. Then, just before serving, crumbled store-bought Parmesan crisps are tossed in, making the whole thing crunchy, salty and very fun to eat.

Recipe: [White Bean Salad With Crispy Cheese](#)

## 20. Tomato and White Bean Soup With Lots of Garlic



Ryan Liebe for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Simon Andrews.

This 30-minute soup from Ali Slagle owes its deep, complex flavor to a full head of garlic browned and simmered with canned white beans and tomatoes, all of which is then blended until creamy. Make it spicy with harissa, smoked paprika or chipotle. Serve with a crusty bread and top it with pesto, croutons, cheese, cooked grains, greens or a fried egg. The possibilities are endless.

Recipe: **[Tomato and White Bean Soup With Lots of Garlic](#)**

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