

The Magical Fruit

By Michael Stowell

Well, I'd decided last week that I was going to cook traditional Tuscan Beans like the real live Florentians do it. I did the normal research, multiple Google searches, and comparisons of different versions of the recipe. Of course there are always the little tips that you pick up along the way.

One of the suggestions I found for preparation of the beans was to not only soak them overnight, but to change the water several times throughout the soaking process. What this helps to achieve is a de-gasification of the bean.

So, this past Tuesday I decided that I'd go get the authentic cannellini beans from the Fresh Market up the road, along with some other really delightful food I found. If I lived closer, and had more money, I would shop exclusively at this grocery store. It is NICE. Anyway, back to the beans.

I rushed home on Tuesday with the beans, wanting to start the soaking of the cannellini immediately. Beans in a bowl – check; cover with water - check. Cool, now wait. Fast-forward 4 hours, and it's time to change the water. I discovered that the beans had soaked up a majority of the water so I poured out what was left and refilled the big bowl.

Fast forward again to Thursday (today). Just to let you know, I did change the water three more times on Wednesday. I just didn't have a chance to cook them. Anyway, when I changed the water again this morning, I noticed that the water had some bubbles collected on the surface. I thought to myself, these are gonna be fabulous beans. Completely inert and devoid of any gut wrenching gases that tend to get the best of all of us.

Well, here's the crux of the story. Beans go BAD after about two days of sitting in tap water. Matter of fact, they exhibit downright strange behavior if you ask me. I wasn't really thinking about the beans when I got home but the smell, oh Lord, the smell. I went over to the sink and started to do dishes, thinking it must be the gravy in there that I'd made on Tuesday.

That's when I noticed the bowl of beans... they seemed to have taken on a life of their own.

I could swear the plate that was sitting atop the bowl of beans moved a little bit. The plate was now sitting a good half inch above the rim of the bowl. My first thought was that the beans

had become completely saturated and had swollen as to push the plate higher. I guess my instincts weren't all that great that day, and if there was the proverbial "writing on the wall" I guess it was in Spanish, and mi no comprende.

The lovely little cannellini had expelled ALL of their putrid gases into the bowl. An inch and a half thick stinky foam now covered them and nothing was gonna get in their way, including me. My cousin described the smell the best as: "a wet fart".

So there you have it, proof that beans do really strange things after you ingest them.

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