



Secret ingredient? Adzuki beans!

Chili your way: kidney beans, black, pinto ...

Great northern beans thicken soups, sauces.

Fava bean falafel, lima bean succotash. Yum!

Bean Counter

We asked chef Charlie Layton of Basic Kitchen in Charleston, South Carolina, for his favorite dry bean choices. Plus: other varieties and tips to consider



BLACK

Native to: The Americas
Flavor: Earthy;

mushroomlike

Best uses: Served with rice; added to soups; in bulked-up veggie burgers

Cooking tip: Before cooking, most dry beans should be soaked in water for at least four hours, then drained.



GREAT NORTHERN

Native to: The Americas
Flavor: Mild, nutty

Best uses: Classic baked beans; added to soups or stews

Cooking tip: To skip the soak, use a multicooker.

Also consider: Other white beans include navy beans and cannellini (a.k.a. white kidney beans)



FAVA/BROAD

Native to: Mediterranean and Middle East

Flavor: Creamy mouthfeel, earthy, with a hint of sweetness

Best uses: Egyptian-style falafel; hummus; salads

Cooking tip: Add baking soda to soaking water to loosen skins. Remove skins from water after cooking.



CHICKPEA/ GARBANZO

Native to: Mediterranean

and Middle East

Flavor: Buttery

Best uses: Hummus; marinated; reserve can liquid/cooking water for plant-based egg alternative

Cooking tip: For hummus, soak for 12 hours with baking soda. Boil without salt.



LIMA/BUTTER BEAN

Native to: The Americas
Flavor: Lightly

sweet and mild

Best uses: Sott'olio (preserved in seasoned olive oil); salads; veggie burgers

Cooking tip: Simmer fresh young beans, unsoaked, in salted water.

Also consider: Gigante, popular in Greek cuisine



KIDNEY

Native to: The Americas
Flavor: Slightly

sweeter than white beans but very tender

Best uses: Caribbean-style rice and peas; chili

Cooking tip: Want to use canned beans? Try to find "no salt added" versions.

Also consider: Red beans, popular in Creole dishes



PINTO

Native to: The Americas
Flavor: Creamy,

slightly nutty and smooth in texture

Best uses: Chili; various beans and rice dishes

Cooking tip: Skim any scum off cooking water.

Also consider: Black-eyed peas (yes, they are beans), Anasazi and cranberry



ADZUKI

Native to: Asia
Flavor: Noticeably sweet, nutty

Best uses: Salads; sweet applications such as plant-based brownies

Cooking tip: There's no need to soak beforehand. These cook up quickly. Simmer with a 1-4 ratio of beans to water.

—Kelsey Ogletree