

PEACEFUL CHOLENT FOR A PEACEFUL DAY

This cholent recipe is healthy, cheap, tasty and easy to make at home for your family or friends, if you can use the oven and a sharp knife. **You must check with the adults at home first. Let them do the cutting with a sharp knife and taking the hot cholent out of the oven, if they say so.**

What you need—for six or more:

- 120g dried beans (preferably a variety of shapes and sizes; soaked for about 8 hours in advance)
- 500g onions, peeled and finely sliced or chopped
- oil for frying (sunflower, rape seed and corn oil are best)
- 500g potatoes, washed and cut into large chunks; you can leave the skins on, if you like, but cut out the bad bits
- 50 g buckwheat or pearl barley
- vegetables for flavour—about two of the following: a large carrot, small parsnip, piece of swede, stick of celery
- 6 bay leaves
- 2 or more cloves of garlic (crushed or chopped)
- 1 litre boiling water, flavoured with 1 dessertspoon yeast extract, a few squirts soy sauce, a little dried paprika, a few pinches of chives and a vegetable stock cube; if you like, you can use herbs or other flavourings instead
- 6 raw eggs, **in their shells** (optional)
- 200—500 g vegetable protein chunks, such as soya steak (optional)

Very important

✧ The cholent will need to be slow-cooked for 15—20 hours, so allow time for this.

What you do

1. Drain the soaking water off beans.
2. Place the beans in a saucepan with fresh water and the bay leaves.
3. Boil the beans vigorously, keeping them well covered with water, for at least 20 minutes. This is especially important if you are using red kidney beans: if they are not cooked enough, they can cause violent illness!

4. Meanwhile fry the onions and garlic gently until golden in colour. You could, instead, sweat them in a microwave for about 10 minutes.
5. Mix the onion, beans and uncooked buckwheat or pearl barley with the chopped raw vegetables and turn into a casserole dish that has a tightly fitting lid. (If the lid does not fit well, a large piece of foil can be pressed down firmly around the sides as far as the bottom of the dish.) Instead, you could use an electric slow cooker.
6. Pour over the flavoured boiling water. Add more water, if necessary, so that that the mixture is well covered.
7. If you're using eggs, wash them but leave the shells on. Push them into the mixture carefully so that they don't crack.
8. Cover the dish tightly with the lid or foil.
9. Place the cholent in an oven, set to the lowest possible heat (about 100° C.) or turn on the electric 'slow cooker'. Leave the heat on all the time.
10. When the cholent is ready to serve, take out the eggs (if you have included them). Careful: they'll be hot! Use a spoon so as not to scald your fingers. Run the eggs under a cold tap and shell them. They will have the consistency of hard-boiled eggs, but the 'whites' will be brown. They will have absorbed the flavour of the cholent. You can serve them as an appetiser. They're nice with pickles, and of course, hallah or other nice bread!