

Green Bean Casserole with Crispy Shallots

Thanksgiving just doesn't feel the same without this creamy casserole, so I have re-created it *Against All Grain*-style, without the heavy cream, MSG, or gluten. I could eat the mushroom sauce in this dish by the spoonful.

SERVES 10 TO 12

1 cup (about 150g) whole raw cashews
2 tablespoons ghee or extra-virgin olive oil
8 ounces cremini mushrooms, halved
1 shallot, peeled and chopped
1 clove garlic, crushed
2 tablespoons sherry (optional)
1 cup water
1 3/4 cups chicken stock
1 1/2 teaspoons fine sea salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves
2 pounds haricots verts (thin green beans), ends trimmed

Topping

1/2 cup palm shortening, bacon fat, or ghee, for frying
2 shallots, peeled and thinly sliced into rings

Place the cashews in a bowl and cover them with boiling water. Soak for 1 hour.

Meanwhile, heat the ghee in a skillet over medium heat. Add the mushrooms, shallot, and garlic and sauté for 10 minutes, or until the mushrooms and shallot have softened. Pour in the sherry and simmer for 5 minutes to reduce the liquid.

Drain and rinse the cashews, transfer them to a blender, add the water, and blend until very smooth.

Add the mushroom mix, half of the stock, and the salt, pepper, and thyme to the blender and pulse a few times until the mushrooms are bite size. Pour the mixture into a bowl and stir in the remaining stock. Set aside to cool for 15 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Combine the mushroom mixture with the haricots verts and spoon into a casserole dish. Bake, covered, for 30 minutes, until the beans are tender and the sauce is bubbling. Uncover and bake for 15 minutes more.

Meanwhile, to make the topping, heat the palm shortening in a small, deep saucepan over medium-high heat. Working in batches, panfry the shallots for about 5 minutes,

until golden brown. Drain and cool in a single layer on a plate lined with paper towels.

Top the casserole with the crispy shallots and serve warm.

Make it ahead Since this dish involves a few steps, it's helpful to do it in stages ahead of time. Make the sauce up to 3 days in advance and store in an airtight container in the refrigerator. Trim the haricots verts and store in a bowl of water, tightly covered, in the refrigerator for up to 5 days. Prepare the assembled casserole up to 2 days in advance, cover, and store in the refrigerator. Bring to room temperature, then bake as directed.

