



## February

***Let yourself be silently drawn by the stronger pull of what you really love.***

**-Rumi**

### **Soul Food**

Think for a moment of a food from your past, one that makes you feel great after you eat it for no specific reason. Maybe it is macaroni and cheese, slow-simmered tomato sauce, ice cream cones or potato pancakes. Eating comfort foods (every now and then) can be incredibly healing, even though your rational brain might not consider it highly nutritious.

Food has the power to impact us on a level deeper than just our physical well-being. What we eat can reconnect us to precious memories, like childhood playtimes, first dates, holidays, our grandmother's cooking or our country of ancestry. Our bodies remember foods from the past on an emotional and cellular level. Eating this food connects us to our roots and has youthening and nurturing effects that go far beyond the food's biochemical make-up.

**Acknowledging what different foods mean to us is an important part of cultivating a good relationship with food. This month when we celebrate lovers and relationships, it's important to notice that we each have a relationship with food—and that this relationship is often far from loving. Many of us restrict food, attempting to control our weight. We often abuse food, substituting it for emotional well-being. Others ignore food, swallowing it whole before we've even tasted it.**

What would your life be like if you treated food *and your body* as you would treat your beloved – with gentleness, playfulness, communication, honesty, respect and love? The next time you eat your soul food, do so with awareness and without guilt, and enjoy all the healing and nourishment it brings you.



### **Food Focus: Beans**

Beans, or legumes, including peas and lentils, are an excellent source of plant-based protein. Beans are found in most traditional cultures as a staple food, offering grounding and strengthening properties that enhance endurance. They offer a highly usable, highly absorbable source of calcium for the body. A very inexpensive source of high nutrition, beans can be rich, delicious and satisfying,

Lack of sexual energy is often due to overtaxed adrenal glands and kidneys. Beans are known for strengthening these organs (ever noticed the shape of a bean?) and can help restore vital energy as well as sexual energy.

**Beans have a reputation for causing digestive distress, but this is usually because they have been undercooked or improperly prepared. To help reduce gas-forming properties, soak beans overnight prior to cooking, increase cooking time, add spices like bay leaf, oregano or cumin, or add kombu (a sea vegetable) when cooking.**

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## **Recipe of the Month: Easy Beans and Greens**

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 10 minutes

Yield: 2-3 servings

### **Ingredients:**

1 can black beans (or pinto, red, kidney—your choice)

1 bunch collard greens (or kale, spinach—your choice)

your favorite toppings, such as salsa, avocado or guacamole and sour cream

### **Directions:**

1. In a medium saucepan, heat drained beans. Add your favorite seasonings, if desired.
2. Fill a separate medium saucepan with 1-2 inches of water and bring to a boil.
3. Wash and chop greens (you can use the stems, too) and add to boiling water.
4. Cook for 2-3 minutes until greens are bright green and tender. Drain off water.
5. On a plate, arrange a portion of the greens, top with a portion of the beans and finish with toppings of your choice.

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