Boston Baked Beans

From *America's Test Kitchen* Season 6: American Classics

WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:
To create a Boston Baked Beans recipe packed with multiple levels of intense flavor yet traditional enough to make Fannie Farmer proud, we started with a combination of salt pork and bacon browned in a Dutch oven before adding dried small white beans. Cider vinegar gave our sauce tanginess while mustard and molasses boosted its flavor. Removing the lid for the last hour of cooking reduced the sauce in our Boston Baked Beans recipe to a syrupy, intensified state.

Serves 4 to 6

The beans can be made ahead. After cooking, cool them to room temperature and refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 4 days.

INGREDIENTS

- **4** ounces salt pork, trimmed of rind and cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- **2** ounces bacon (2 slices), cut into 1/4-inch pieces
- **1** medium onion, chopped fine
- **1/2** cup mild molasses
- **1** tablespoon mild molasses
- **1 1/2** tablespoons brown mustard
- **1** pound dried small white beans (about 2 cups), rinsed and picked over
- Table salt
- **1** teaspoon cider vinegar
- Ground black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

Adjust oven rack to lower-middle position; heat oven to 300 degrees. Add salt pork and bacon to 8-quart Dutch oven; cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until lightly browned and most fat is rendered, about 7 minutes. Add onion and continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until onion is softened, about 8 minutes. Add 1/2 cup molasses, mustard, beans, 1 1/4 teaspoons salt, and 9 cups water; increase heat to medium-high and bring to boil. Cover pot and set in oven. Bake until beans are tender, about 4 hours, stirring once after 2 hours. Remove lid and continue to bake until liquid has thickened to syrupy consistency, 1 to 1 1/2 hours longer. Remove beans from oven; stir in remaining tablespoon of molasses, vinegar, and additional salt and pepper to taste. Serve.