Professional chefs rely on an arsenal of techniques and ingredient knowledge to develop and build flavor. Luckily, those skills are easy to learn and translate well to the home kitchen. This means patients and clients can feel empowered to create healthy meals that taste great.

Pulses are naturally delicious. They provide earthiness and texture like no other food can. And while good on their own, they also taste great when introduced to other ingredients and cooking techniques. Employing these ingredients and techniques is especially important when cooking pulses. Think about it this way, all pulses rely on liquid for cooking. Plain water will get the job done but may leave you wanting more seasoning after the cooking process. Adding aromatics to the liquid, while the pulses are cooking, however, is how flavor is built. Building these layers of flavor is the secret in making any dish even more interesting and delicious.

Thinking about how you want to cook and flavor the food is the first step. From what oil to choose to when to add herbs, it all matters. Use this information to familiarize yourself with common cooking concepts, enhance the ways you enjoy pulses and incorporate them in more meals throughout the week.

Layer and build flavor with oils, aromatics, spices, herbs, salt, acid and cooking techniques.

### OILS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OIL for Cooking</th>
<th>For cooking at high temperatures ( &gt; 400°F)</th>
<th>Sesame, vegetable, sunflower, canola, avocado, peanut, light olive oil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moderate to low heat cooking</td>
<td>For cooking at temperatures ( &lt; 400°F)</td>
<td>Sesame, avocado, grapeseed, extra virgin olive oil, unrefined coconut oil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Oil for Finishing/ Flavoring | Added after cooking | Walnut, almond, extra virgin olive oil, toasted sesame oil, hemp seed oil, truffle, hazelnut |

### AROMATIC COMBINATIONS

**The Holy Trinity** United States, Southern-style cooking
2 parts onion to 1 part green bell pepper and 1 part celery

**Ata Lilo** West Africa
Red onion, tomatoes, scotch bonnet pepper, and red bell peppers. Sometimes: ginger or garlic

**Adu Lsan** India
Ginger and garlic, turned into a paste

**Mirepoix** France
2 parts onion to 1 part celery and 1 part carrot

**Sofrito** Puerto Rico
Onion, garlic, culantro, aji dulce peppers, red or green bell peppers

**Chinese Mirepoix** China
Garlic, ginger, scallions

### SPICES

The berries, seeds, barks or roots of plants that boost flavor which are available whole or ground.

- **Cook first!** Dry heat (toasting) or moist heat (also called “blooming”) and typically uses fat) help create a strong, complex flavor

### SALT

Salt heightens the flavors of the food, keeps meat moist and breaks down pectin in vegetables.

- Most common types used in the kitchen: kosher, table and sea (best for finishing, rather than cooking)

### HERBS

Herbs are the fresh or dried herbaceous stems and leaves of the plant that boost and add flavor. At the proper time, they can be added to elevate dishes or meals.

- **Use dry and hardy herbs at the beginning of cooking**
- **Use fresh, delicate herbs to finish**
- **Wash and fully dry before cutting/chopping fresh herbs**

### ACID

Acid brightens the flavors of the dish, adds contrast and balance.

- **Examples:** citrus juices, vinegars, buttermilk, wine, tomatoes
SMASHED PINTO BEAN TACOS
with Pickled Red Onions & Smoky Chipotle Crema Slaw
Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE SLAW
- ¼ cup plain Greek yogurt
- 1 canned chipotle pepper in adobo sauce, minced
- + 1 teaspoon adobo sauce
- 1 teaspoon lime zest
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
- ½ teaspoon honey
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 3 cups shredded coleslaw mix

FOR THE BEANS
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon ground cayenne pepper
- 1 can (15 ounce) pinto beans, drained and rinsed

FOR THE TACOS
- 8 corn tortillas, warmed
- 1 ripe avocado, diced
- 1 lime, cut into wedges

Pickled onions

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large bowl, combine the Greek yogurt, chipotle pepper, lime juice, honey, and salt until well blended. Add the coleslaw mix and toss to coat.

2. Heat oil in a small saucepan set over medium heat. Add the garlic, cumin, and cayenne pepper and stir constantly until fragrant, 1 minute. Stir in pinto beans and ½ tsp salt, cover and cook 30 seconds, remove lid and cook, stirring occasionally, 2 more minutes. Remove from heat.

3. Top warmed tortillas with pickled beans, slaw, and avocado. Serve with a lime wedge.

PREP TIP: Make the pickled onions one day in advance.

TO MAKE PICKLED ONIONS

Combine ½ cup warm water, ¾ cup white vinegar, 1 tsp granulated sugar and 1 tsp salt in a large jar and stir until sugar and salt are mostly dissolved. Set aside. Thinly slice 1 small red onion and place in a bowl. Cover with 4 cups of boiling water, let sit 1 minute. Strain onions, and carefully transfer to the jar. Push onions down with a wooden spoon to ensure they’re fully covered in liquid. Allow to cool before covering with a lid. Refrigerate until ready to enjoy.

FOR THE HOME COOK

You can teach clients how to incorporate pulses into dishes they are accustomed to, like salads, pasta, burritos, tacos, casseroles, burgers, or soups. Here are ways they can add more pulses to their diet:

Tacos
- replace half or all shredded beef, pork or chicken with cooked lentils

Lasagna
- replace half or all ricotta cheese with pureed cannellini or other white beans

Sandwiches
- replace mayonnaise with hummus or other bean spreads

Burgers
- replace half or all ground beef with mashed pinto or black beans

Dressings & Baked Goods
- use the liquid from canned chickpeas (aquafaba) in place of eggs

Soups
- puree pulses in soups to thicken and make creamy

Smoothies
- replace whey protein powder with pea protein in smoothies which adds protein and fiber and can make it a vegan option

Crotons & Salad Toppers
- roasted chickpeas or lentils make for a crunchy, savory substitute for crotons

Pork
- replace or pair with kidney, red, pinto, or black beans

Menu Inspiration

Here are some common pulses and dishes that incorporate them:

Chickpeas
- hummus, falafel, pasta noodles, salads, tacos, curry, burgers

Pinto Beans
- bean burgers, chili, refried beans, burrito

Black Beans
- black bean burgers, enchiladas, brownies

Kidney Beans
- chili, refried beans, veggie soups

FOR THE SLAW

1 minute. Strain onions, and carefully transfer to the jar. Push onions down with a wooden spoon to ensure they’re fully covered in liquid. Allow to cool before covering with a lid. Refrigerate until ready to enjoy.

COOKING TECHNIQUES

It is important to know when, where and how to build flavor with heat.

DRY HEAT
(baking, broiling, deep-frying, grilling, roasting, sautéing, searing)
- Transfer of heat to food without a water-based liquid resulting in caramelization or the Maillard reaction
- Maillard reaction is a chemical process where proteins and sugars are introduced to high heat (> 300°F) contributing to the browning and flavoring of food

MOIST HEAT
(braising, poaching, simmering, steaming, stewing)
- Transfer of heat to food using liquid (broth, stock, water, wine, etc.)
- Liquid cooks food and can add flavor

Pulses
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Dishes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fava beans, lentils, chickpeas</td>
<td>Middle East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinto beans and black beans</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black beans, red kidney beans, pigeon peas, chickpeas, fava</td>
<td>South America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chickpeas and lentils</td>
<td>Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White beans</td>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fava beans</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borolotti beans, lentils, cannellini beans, chickpeas, fava beans, red kidney beans</td>
<td>Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black eyed peas, mung beans, red kidney beans</td>
<td>Africa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Popular Pulses around the world

- Kidney Beans
- Black Beans
- Pinto Beans
- Fava beans
- Cannellini beans
- Chickpeas
- Fava beans

Great Northern
- salads, chicken chili, soups, paired with fish

Green, Brown, Red Lentils
- soups, chili, pastas

Green & Yellow Dry Peas
- split pea soup, Khubuli

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Created by Sara Haas, RDN, LDN for USA Pulses