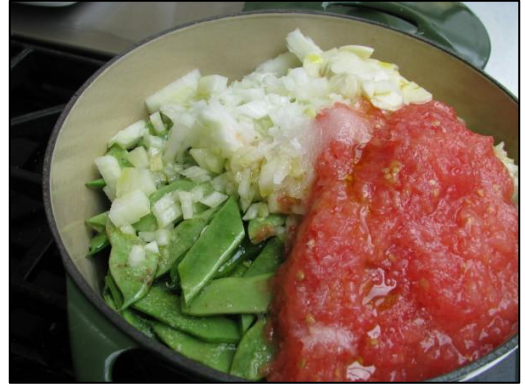


Green bean zeytinyađlı

I learnt this dish while staying with Zeliha İrez, an amazing cook who runs a guesthouse in Turkey. Zeliha uses a pressure cooker to speed things up. If you don't have one, try to leave the beans gently cooking for five or more hours.

Zeytinyađlı foods are a family of vegetable dishes which are cooked in olive oil. They are common in western Turkey, where olive trees grow. The beauty of the dish is that everything goes in the pot together and then requires little attention.



Serves: 8-10 people as a side dish or starter

1kg flat green beans, topped and sliced in 1-2" lengths, on the diagonal

1 big onion, finely chopped

2 big tomatoes, halved and grated (skins discarded)

6 cloves garlic, finely sliced

1 tsp salt

1¼ tsps sugar

90ml good olive oil (one full Turkish tea glass)

lemon juice to finish

1. Put all ingredients except lemon juice in a heavy saucepan or pot with a lid. Mix and cook over the *lowest heat possible*, stirring occasionally, until soft, reduced and luxurious. The longer and slower you cook them the better. Anything from one to 7 hours is good, depending on how low your burner goes.
2. Let beans cool in their juices. NB If they seem too watery when you finish cooking them, you can cook uncovered for a while longer to reduce the sauce, and/or remove the beans and reduce the sauce separately, then return beans to the pot to cool. They will be even more delicious the next day, served room temperature. Squeeze over some lemon juice if you think the flavour needs brightening.