

# Cacio e Pepe Beans (High Protein)

Prep: 3 minutes • Cook: 22 minutes

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*Silky, peppery butter beans coated in a creamy Parmesan sauce and crowned with a shatteringly crisp Parmesan tuile. Comforting yet bright with toasted black pepper, this quick, high-protein dish delivers rich flavor in minutes.*

## Ingredients

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- 3/4 teaspoon black peppercorns (whole; toasted and crushed)
- 2/3 cup Parmesan cheese (grated; divided (1/3 cup for crisps, 1/3 cup for sauce))
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 2 cloves garlic (minced)
- 2 cans (15 oz/14 fl oz/398 ml each) butter beans (no-salt added; with liquid (do not drain or rinse))
- 1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1 tablespoon water (room temperature)
- to taste black pepper (freshly ground, for garnish)

## Instructions

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1. Preheat oven to 400°F (205°C).
2. Toast the peppercorns: Add whole black peppercorns to a large dry skillet over medium-low heat and toast, shaking often, until fragrant, 3 to 5 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool.
3. Make Parmesan crisps: Line a large baking sheet with parchment. Divide 1/3 cup of the grated Parmesan into 2 thin circles, leaving at least 1 inch (2.5 cm) between them; top with freshly ground black pepper. Bake until golden-brown and crisp, 5 to 8 minutes. Let cool on the sheet.
4. Crush the peppercorns: Transfer cooled peppercorns to a resealable bag and crush with a rolling pin into coarse pieces (about the size of coarsely ground pepper).
5. Cook aromatics: Return the large skillet to medium heat. Melt the butter, then add minced garlic and the crushed peppercorns. Cook, stirring continuously, until the garlic is pale golden, 1 to 2 minutes.
6. Build the sauce: Add the butter beans with their liquid and the fine sea salt. Increase heat to bring to a bubble, then reduce to medium and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the liquid reduces by half, about 10 minutes.
7. Thicken: Whisk cornstarch and water in a small bowl until completely smooth. Stir the slurry into the skillet and cook, stirring, until the sauce thickens and turns silky, 1 to 2 minutes.
8. Finish with cheese: Stir in the remaining 1/3 cup grated Parmesan until melted and smooth. Taste and adjust salt and pepper as needed.
9. Serve: Divide beans into 2 bowls. Garnish with additional freshly ground black pepper and extra Parmesan if desired.

Top each bowl with a Parmesan crisp and serve immediately.

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**Tags: High Protein, Vegetarian, Italian, Beans, One Pan, Comfort Food**

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