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Baked (Barbecued) Beans

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Serves 6–8

INGREDIENTS

- 6 slices bacon
- 1 cup minced onion
- ½ cup minced green bell pepper
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 cup packed dark brown sugar
- ½ cup molasses
- ½ cup ketchup or tomato sauce
- 2 tablespoons yellow mustard
- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon liquid hickory smoke (optional)
- ½ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 2 teaspoons salt, or to taste
- 1 pound cooked navy beans, plus 3 cups cooking liquid, or 3 (15.5-ounce) cans, undrained

PREPARATION

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. Cut 3 slices of the bacon into 1-inch strips. In a skillet, cook the cut bacon until browned and crisp. Use a slotted spoon to remove to paper towels to drain.
3. In the same pan, sauté the onion, bell pepper, and garlic over medium heat until tender and the onion is translucent, about 5 minutes. Stir in the brown sugar, molasses, ketchup, mustard, vinegar, liquid smoke (if using), pepper flakes, black pepper, and salt. Mix well. Cook over medium-low heat until the sugar is dissolved, about 1½ minutes.
4. In a large bowl, combine the beans, their liquid, the sauce, and the cooked bacon. Pour into a 13 × 9-inch baking dish or a 3-quart casserole. Place the remaining 3 slices of bacon on top of the beans. Cover and bake for 45 minutes. Uncover, increase the oven temperature to 425°F, and bake for 15 minutes more to brown the bacon slices.

