

Candle Cafe's Paradise Casserole

According to Joy Pierson, co-owner of [Candle Cafe](#), Paradise Casserole has been one of the most popular dishes served at the restaurant over the years.

It is a delicious concoction of cinnamon-scented sweet potatoes layered with spicy black beans and millet. This is wonderfully hearty, loaded with complex carbohydrates, vitamins and protein. Enjoy!

Ingredients

- 4 sweet potatoes
- 1 tablespoon sweet white miso
- 1 teaspoon umeboshi vinegar (can substitute a mixture of red wine vinegar and soy sauce)
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 1/2 cans cooked organic black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 1/2 cups millet
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic
- 1/2 finely chopped onion (yellow or white)
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1-inch piece of kombu or other seaweed, rinsed
- pinch of crushed red pepper
- pinch of salt

Preparation

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Bake the sweet potatoes for one hour, or until fork tender. When cool enough to handle, remove the cooked potatoes from their skins, place them in a large mixing bowl and mash with a potato masher until smooth. Combine the miso, vinegar and cinnamon with the potatoes.

Drain the black beans and place in a large stockpot. Add water to cover by 2 inches. Add the rinsed kombu, cover and simmer for 45-60 minutes, or until tender. Drain and set aside, removing the kombu.

While the beans are cooking, put the millet and 3 ½ cups of salted water in a large pot. Bring to boil, cook 25 minutes or until the water is absorbed.

In a separate pan, heat 1 tsp of olive oil and sautee the garlic, onion, cumin and crushed red pepper with salt until just tender. Mix with the cooked black beans.

Spray or lightly oil a 3 qt. casserole dish or a 9" x 13" baking dish. Spread the millet over the bottom of the pan, and then spread the black bean mixture in an even layer over the millet. Add the sweet potato mixture over the black beans in an even layer.

Bake the casserole for 40 – 45 minutes. Remove from the oven and let cool a bit before serving. Serves 4 to 6 people.