



# THE WEDNESDAY CHEF

## **Ali Slagle's Cheesy Black Bean Bake**

*Serves 3 to 4*

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

5 garlic cloves, peeled and sliced

4 tablespoons tomato paste

1 ½ teaspoons smoked paprika

¼ teaspoon red-pepper flakes (can be left out if you're cooking for heat-sensitive palates)

1 teaspoon ground cumin

2 (14-ounce/400 gram) cans black beans, drained and rinsed

½ cup/120ml boiling water

Salt and black pepper

1 ½ cups/170 grams grated Cheddar cheese

1. Heat the oven to 475 degrees. In a 10-inch ovenproof skillet, heat the olive oil over medium-high. Fry the garlic until lightly golden, about 1 minute. Stir in the tomato paste, paprika, red-pepper flakes and cumin (be careful of splattering), and fry for 30 seconds, reducing the heat as needed to prevent the garlic from burning.

2. Add the beans, water and generous pinches of salt and pepper, and stir to combine. Sprinkle the cheese evenly over the top then bake until the cheese has melted, 5 to 10 minutes. If the top is not as browned as you'd like, run the skillet under the broiler for 1 or 2 minutes. Serve immediately.