

And this week...

We each have rituals and traditions that serve to mark the passing of each season.

Spring cleaning, for example, seems to be a universal one. Some people go apple picking in the Fall; when I lived in France we took a day off work in October and drove to the Champagne region from Paris, always stopping at the same restaurant, and laid in our stores of bubbly for the year. I have a Japanese friend who makes sure that she declutters her kitchen on December 31st, getting rid of any piece of kitchen equipment that she has not used over the course of the year and deep cleaning the kitchen, before the next year begins. I am sure that you each have your own ways of transitioning to whatever season is the next to come.

One of my personal autumn traditions is replenishing my pulse stores. This is not to say that I don't buy canned beans, or lentils, or run of the mill dried beans throughout the year as needed, but mid-October, I somehow always find myself perusing specialty bean catalogs and buying new and exciting varieties for the stew and comfort food season ahead. My favorite among this year's purchase of a myriad of bean varieties was a bag of **Vaquero beans**. I had never come across these little "Holsteinesque" beans before, but I am surprisingly excited to use them (though I suspect that they may fade to plain white as they cook...)

This year, I seem to be advance buying a lot of things, rather than just following my specific October bean ritual. While all of the articles about the supply chain disruption may partially be the media whipping us into a bit of a panic, it is amazing how many things are out of stock on Amazon, or how many shelves are bare at the grocery store. I have purchased duck in advance of Thanksgiving, as turkey has been out of stock since

September and my butcher tells me that he has no idea if any will come in by November either.

But, to return to my beans, my mid-October ritual also means that whatever remains of the stores from the previous year needs to be used up before the arrival of the exciting replacement items. Because of this, I may post a few more bean related recipes this week than usual...In the meantime, here is the recap of last week's recipes. Many more items were cooked, but didn't quite warrant being transcribed...

Spaghetti and Fall Mushroom Ragu

The Ultimate In Greens

Suan La Tang (Chinese Hot and Sour Soup)

Preserved Lemon Paste