Olive Oil–Poached Tuna with Garden Vegetable Escabeche

SERVES 4

For the white bean puree:
1 cup dried small white beans (such as French Navy), picked over and rinsed
1 bay leaf
2 cloves garlic
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
2 teaspoons kosher salt
1/2 cup Meyer lemon olive oil
1 tablespoon creme fraiche

For the escabeche vegetables:
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
3 tablespoons white verjus
1 bay leaf
1 tablespoon kosher salt
1/4 cup shaved pearl onion (2 large pearl onions)
1 clove garlic, shaved
1/3 cup shaved baby carrot (4 baby carrots)
3/4 cup shaved fennel (about 1 small bulb)
1/2 cup sliced summer squash, in 1/2-inch-thick rounds
1/3 cup cut green beans, in 1-inch pieces
1/4 cup shaved radish (about 3 radishes)
1/2 cup peeled and shaved celtuce
1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano
1 tablespoon finely grated lemon zest

For the oil-poached tuna:
1 lemon, thinly sliced crosswise
4 cups extra-virgin olive oil
4 fresh thyme sprigs
2 bay leaves
1 lb ahi (yellowtail) tuna fillet, 1 inch thick, cut into 4 equal portions
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

To make the white bean puree: Combine the beans and 4 cups water in a covered container and refrigerate overnight.
The following day, drain the beans, transfer to a 2-qt pot, and add 4 cups water, the bay leaf, garlic, and extra-virgin olive oil. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, skimming off any foam that forms on the surface. Reduce the heat to a low simmer and cook uncovered for about 45 minutes, until the beans are tender. Remove from the heat, add the salt, and let cool slightly.

Drain the beans into a sieve placed over a bowl and discard the bay leaf. In a blender, combine the beans, 3/4 cup of the bean liquid, the lemon, olive oil, and crème fraîche and process to a smooth puree. The puree can be made up to 3 days in advance; store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.
To prepare the escabeche vegetables: In a small pot, combine the olive oil, verjus, and bay leaf over medium-low heat and cook just until the mixture begins to bubble at the sides of the pot. Add the salt, onion, garlic, carrot, and fennel and cook over low heat for 3 minutes. Remove from the heat and add the squash and green beans. Cover and let sit for 10 minutes. Add the radish, celtuce, oregano, and lemon zest.

To prepare the tuna: Put the lemon slices on the bottom of a stainless-steel sauté pan. Add the oil, thyme, and bay leaves, place over medium-low heat, and slowly heat the oil to 200°F on an instant-read thermometer. Reduce the heat to low, add the tuna, and cook for 4 minutes. Using a spatula, gently transfer the tuna to a plate and then test a piece by breaking it apart. The center should be slightly pink and translucent. Let rest for 1 minute, then flake all of the portions into large chunks and season with the salt. The leftover oil can be strained and refrigerated in an airtight container and then reused for poaching tuna up to three more times.

To serve: Spoon 2 cups of the bean puree onto a large platter. Top with the tuna and spoon the escabeche vegetables over the top. The dish can be served immediately, at room temperature, or chilled.