



Authentic Southwestern Beans

NIBBLEDISH CONTRIBUTOR

Ingredients

- a pound (call it 400g) of dry pinto beans - water - salt - dry red chiles such as New Mexicos or anchos, if you like

Instructions

A lot of people steer clear of beans at a Mexican restaurant. They make you fart, they have no texture, they're full of lard. But when you grow up with them, you can't live without them. After futzing with them for years, I recently stumbled over my grandmother's secret to perfect beans. 1. Take your dry beans and pick them over, taking out any rocks, chunks of dirt, sticks, or shriveled dead-looking beans you might find. Give them a rinse in cold water and transfer to a soup pot. 2. Add enough water to cover the beans by about three or four inches (8-10 cm). Put the lid on the pot, put the pot on the burner, put the burner on high and wait for it to boil. 3. You're tempted to add salt now. DON'T. Salt helps beans hold their body, which is antithetical to the nature of norteño beans. You want them to break down a little bit and give some texture to the cooking liquid. Wait for it. 4. Once the water boils, drop the heat to low, give the beans a stir, slap the lid back on, and let it bubble for two to three hours. (You can do what my grandma does and huck it in a pressure cooker -- then it'll only take 20 minutes.) You can put in your red chiles here if you want them. (I usually top my beans with red chile sauce anyway.) 5. When the beans are cooked, they'll look just short of refried beans -- there'll be enough water for it to be pourable but not so much that it's soupy. Now you can add salt to your taste. I know, it seems too simple to be any good. But I'm not lying when I say these are the best beans I've ever made.