



The Infamous Chili

NIBBLEDISH CONTRIBUTOR

Ingredients

4-5 cloves garlic, minced

2-3 jalapeño chiles, minced

1 habañero chile, minced

1 yellow onion, thinly sliced

2-3 large green chiles of your choice (New Mexico, Anaheim, cubanelle or poblano all work well)

big pinch salt

ground spices and dry herbs (to your taste):

- black pepper
- cumin
- chili powder
- oregano
- garlic powder
- cayenne pepper
- crushed red chile flakes
- ginger
- cinnamon
- whatever else you think might go

1-2 ounces red wine or cider vinegar

1 lb (400g) ground meat (I generally use beef sirloin)

1 bottle Mexican beer

1 28-oz can crushed tomatoes

1 14-oz can diced tomatoes
2-3 14-oz cans beans of your choice, drained and rinsed (pinto, black, red or any combination all work well)
1/2 cup tomato ketchup
2-3 Tbsp Worcestershire sauce
1 capful (about 1/2 tsp) liquid smoke
liquid condiments (to your taste):

- mustard
- soy sauce
- hot sauce
- again, whatever else you think would be good -- this isn't science

juice of 1 lime
1 bunch fresh cilantro, roughly chopped

Instructions

If I have a defining recipe, this is it. Once a cheap way to eat for a few days in college, my chili has catapulted me from "dude whose cooking won't kill us" to "holy crap, let's get invited back here for dinner again." It's won cookoffs in two states and earned fans from the mere writing of its recipe. Guests ask me to make chili when they visit me from New Mexico, chile capital of the planet. And now, I'm posting the recipe here.

1. Put a large saucepan or stock pot over medium heat. Add about a tablespoon of olive oil (or other vegetable oil, or butter, or bacon fat, whatever, I don't care) and allow it to heat. Toss in the garlic, jalapeño and habaero, stir briefly (just until you want to cough), and then add the onion and green chile. Season with salt and cook, stirring occasionally, until soft (about 5-7 minutes).
2. Add all your dry spices at once. The cumin and chili powder should be the predominant flavors, and go easy with the cinnamon. Stir everything together and cook another minute or so, until you start seeing stuff sticking to the bottom of the pan. Deglaze with the vinegar and stir until you don't see any more liquid.
3. Dump in the meat, break it up with a spoon or spatula or whatever you want to stir with, and cook until it's brown all around the outside, 3-4 minutes. Pour in the beer, let it come up to a gentle boil, reduce the heat to medium-low, open another beer for yourself, and walk away for 7-10 minutes.
4. When the beer has reduced by at least half -- preferably enough that when you

stir you can see the bottom of the pan -- add the tomatoes, beans, then add the ketchup, worcestershire, liquid smoke and other condiments. Don't be shy with the hot sauce -- you can use any kind you like. (I've put in three or four different kinds of Tabasco, other various commercial cayenne pepper sauces, sambal, Thai chili-garlic sauce, horseradish, salsa, Chinese mustard, and the juice from a jar of pickled jalapeños.) Stir it all together, bring it back to a simmer, and walk away for another 15 minutes.

5. Just before service, turn off the heat, add the lime juice and cilantro, and stir it all together. Grate some cheddar or monterey jack cheese on top and serve with flour tortillas or cornbread. You might want to keep some honey handy, too, in case your lips start to burn off.