

BEAN & VEGETABLE CHILI

INGREDIENTS

1 cup dry black beans (or two 14 ounce cans)
1 cup dry kidney beans (or two 14 ounce cans)
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 red or green peppers
Any other vegetables you'd like (mushrooms, corn, etc)
2 to 3 tablespoons chili powder
1 tablespoon cumin
2 teaspoons coriander
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 large (24-28 ounce) can/box strained tomatoes
2 large fresh tomatoes OR 1 large can/box diced tomatoes
Optional garnishes:
Fresh cilantro
Sour cream
Shredded cheese
Tortillas/tortilla chips or pita bread/chips
Lime wedges
Chopped scallions

METHOD

To use dry beans...

Rinse 1 cup dry black beans + 1 cup dry kidney beans and sort through to pick out any little stones. If you have a slow cooker, cover the beans with several inches of water and cook on low for 8 hours or on high for 10 hours. If you don't have a slow cooker, put beans in a large pot and cover with several inches of water. Allow to soak overnight. In the morning, rinse the beans in a colander and put back in the pot. Add water to cover by at least a few inches. Bring to a boil, then turn down heat to a simmer. Stirring occasionally, allow to cook until tender, about 1 1/2 hours. When beans are tender, drain, rinse and set aside.

To use canned beans...

Rinse and drain beans in a colander and set aside.

Put at least a few tablespoons of oil in a large pot. Heat over medium high heat, add the chopped onions and stir. After about 5 minutes, add the peppers and garlic. Stir and cook for another 5 minutes and then add any other vegetables you are using. (Corn or mushrooms are especially good.)

Add the spices to the vegetables. Stir well to mix and cook for 3 or 4 minutes, being careful not to let the spices stick and burn.

Add tomatoes and cilantro to vegetables and spices and mix well. Add in salt, pepper and sugar to taste.

Add cooked, rinsed beans and salt and pepper to taste. Turn chili down to low. Add one teaspoon sugar to counter the acidic taste of the tomatoes. Taste to see if more is needed and add just a little sugar at a time until the acidic taste is gone.

When the flavors have blended and you are happy with the taste, serve. It is fine to eat this right away, or to let it simmer on low for another 30 minutes. Add a little water if it is too thick for you.

Serve with toppings of your choice.