

Forethought Soup

Ingredients:

- 20 oz. dried beans
- 2 cups water
- 1 ham hock bone w/ spare ham on
- 14 oz can diced tomatoes
- 1 medium diced onion
- Salt, pepper, chile powder

Rinse then soak beans in water at least 8 hours in advance. Rinse beans again, bring to boil in 2 cups water. Add ham on bone, diced tomatoes, diced onion. Add salt, pepper, chile powder to taste. Simmer for 2 hours.

Here's another easy freezer-stuffer. Most people call it ham and bean soup but I prefer to name it after the most important ingredient. Everything else is negotiable by comparison. The first step could *almost* go unsaid but I'll spell this out. Step 1: Get, cook, eat 1 ham hock however you like but save some meat on the bone for this soup. That's forethought part one.



Forethought part two: Long before you want this soup, get yourself a good dried bean variety bag...



...rinse the beans off..



...and get those beans soaking in water. Leave them there for at least 8 hours. Be sure to use a pot that is much bigger than the volume the beans originally take up; they can expand A LOT.



Chop up the left-over ham. Sarah tells me this part is not necessary but I like it chopped off the bone first.



After rinsing those beans again, put the beans, 2 cups of water, ham (including bone), diced onions, and diced tomatoes into the pot and get it all simmering. Add some salt, pepper, and chile powder in there for flavor.



A couple more hours later, it'll all be nicely mixed together.



There you go! One yummy soup. All you have to do is remember to save some ham from your ham hock and remember that you want ham and bean soup at least 10 hours before you want to eat it! The work to prepare is pretty minimal so long as you have sufficient forethought. Throw the rest in jars for later of course.