

Chili

Ingredients

- 2 lb Roasted, Peeled Chiles, chopped
- 2-3 lbs Ground Beef
- 2 medium onions, diced
- 2-3 stalks celery, chopped
- 2 bell peppers, chopped
- 24 oz tomato paste
- 30 oz canned kidney beans
- 30 oz tomato sauce
- 30 oz stewed/diced tomatoes
- 1 tbsp chile powder
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 4 bouillon cubes

Brown tomato paste and onions in a pan. Brown beef with spices in stew pot. Add other canned items to pot, add tomato paste, add veggies, simmer 1 hour

The Details:

I'm pretty sure I've never actually made chili the same way twice so all of the listed ingredients are pretty gross approximations. Chili is hard to get wrong but there are a few important details that really improve the flavor of chili beyond your hum-drum everyday chili recipe.

First, making good chili is all about good chile! As in good roasted chiles. If you can't get good New Mexican chiles, as spicy as you prefer, you can probably get by on Anaheim chiles since they seem to be more widely available. The next New Mexican to read this will probably curse me for saying so.

Before cooking the chili this time, I decided to really put my working hypothesis to the test: I suspected that it is really impossible to over do chiles in a good chili (assuming your chiles aren't hotter than you can stand to eat in bulk). That's why there are OVER TWO POUNDS of (frozen) roasted, peeled green chiles in this recipe. I like it so much, I don't think I'll ever make chili with less chile again. I *may* opt to mix in a few more milds to make the dish a bit more accessible to others though...

Second, *brown the tomato paste before adding!* That little detail really adds some richness to the flavor. Don't forget.

Ok, let's make chili!



As promised, you'll need two pounds of chiles. Note that these are still frozen. Get those puppies thawing if you have a freezer full!



Get all those seasonings and canned goods together, and start opening cans!



Start browning the beef in your stew pot and pour in the seasonings. Go a bit light on seasonings if you're not sure how much you'll want in total; you can add more later. After the beef is *mostly* brown, you can add all your canned goods except for tomato paste and get them all simmering. Do yourself and your neighbors a favor and give those kidney beans a good rinse. I'm told that rinsing makes a big difference in reducing certain side-effects of eating beans.



Now spread your tomato paste in a pan and start browning it! **This is really important for full flavor so do not skip this step!**



Dice up your onions and mix them into the paste, let it all brown together. You want the paste to be a dark maroon before it is done. I also add a fair amount of olive oil to help things along but that is optional. You may, however, want to be more vigilant about stirring the paste - I got some burned bits in there. Whoops.



Now that you've browned and added the tomato paste, your mixture should really be stewing along. You may opt to add about a cup of water to the mixture at this point if things are getting a bit thick.



Chop up your celery and bell peppers then add them in! Don't go too fine on the chopping - largish chunks are nice for general texture.



Chop off the heads of your chiles and chop up the rest into nice big chunks then add them in.



Your chili should really be looking appetizing now. Let that stew until you are just shy of death by starvation.



As an optional very much non-standard alteration, cook up some pasta to go under the chili! I started doing this a few years ago and LOVE it!



Eating time! Add some (optional) pasta into your bowl.



Pour over your chili.



Grate some cheddar over that deliciousness.



Now add a dollop of sour cream.



Eat, refill, repeat until you burst!