

Daric's Black Bean Chili with Artichoke Hearts

Ingredients:

- 1/2 lb. meat, chopped or ground
- 1/2-1 bottle of beer
- 1 dried haba ero pepper (optional)
- 1 can black beans
- 1 can whole peeled tomatoes
- Any hot sauce, to taste
- 3-4 oz. haba ero cheese
- 1 can artichoke hearts (packed in water, not marinated)

Preparation:

1. Oil the bottom of a pot and brown the meat.
2. Add at least enough beer to cover meat. Cook meat in beer for a minute or two to make sure it cooks through.
3. Crumble and add dried haba ero pepper (you could also add any dry spices you want at this point). Stir and let it soak in beer. Mix the pepper bits with the meat.
4. Add black beans and cook in beer (add remaining beer if desired) long enough for them to absorb some beer (10-15 minutes).
5. If you have hours to cook, then add the can of whole tomatoes (remove any remaining skin and green stuff). If your time is limited, just cut them up before adding them. Cook to mush up the tomatoes.
6. Add desired hot sauce to taste (you could also add any fresh hot ingredients you want, such as fresh hot peppers, at this time).
7. Cook to reduce liquid to your liking.
8. Crumble up the cheese and stir in a little at a time, until all cheese is melted.
9. Drain artichoke hearts and cut into quarters. Add artichoke hearts to chili and cook just a bit longer (about 5 minutes or so).
10. This recipe serves 3 to 4 people if you serve it in bowls, or 6 to 8 if you use cups. Eat and serve as much or as little as you like. Feel free to add or change anything.

Ingredients in Detail

1/2 lb. meat

An easy meat to use is turkey sausages with the casings removed. Any meat can be used, but it should be chopped or ground, and then seasoned.

1/2-1 bottle of beer

Any kind of beer should be OK to use, as long as it doesn't overpower the chili.

1 dried habañoero pepper

This ingredient adds heat, and is therefore optional. Fresh habaños or milder hot peppers (fresh or dried) could be used instead. Just note that dried hot peppers and seasonings are added before beans, while fresh hot peppers and herbs are put in when hot sauce is added.

1 can black beans

If using dried beans, use about 1 cup dry beans soaked for a few hours. Different beans could be used instead, if desired.

1 can whole peeled tomatoes

Remove any skin and/or green core parts from tomatoes before adding them.

Any hot sauce

Add to taste. There are a great variety of bottled hot sauces out there, from mild to fiery hot. You can even concoct your own! Remember to be careful, though, since you can always add more hot sauce, but you can't take it back out of your chili once it has been added.

3-4 oz. habañoero cheese

Somoma Habañoero Jack is great for this. Cabot Habañoero cheddar is super hot, but is perhaps too good to be used just for chili. Use your favorite hot pepper cheese, or just use cheddar and add more hot stuff to compensate.

1 can artichoke hearts

Use artichoke hearts that are plain and packed in water, not marinated. These will provide texture and dilute the meat a bit, so the chili is not just a solid mass of meat. Some alternatives (with different textures) include bamboo shoots, pitted olives, or cubed vidalia onions.