

Recipes by *Here & Now* Resident Chef Kathy Gunst

Pork and White Bean Chili

Kathy's Note: Although there are several steps involved with making this chili it can all be made a day or two (or even three) ahead of time. You can use canned beans, but if you can find the time it's much better to soak dry beans overnight, drain and cook in simmering water until almost tender.

Serve this hearty, smoky chili with slices of avocado, lime wedges, sour cream, chopped fresh cilantro and chopped scallions, and a variety of hot pepper sauces. The chili is delicious with taco chips or warm corn or flour tortilla to dunk in and sop up the juices.

Ingredients:

The Pork and Marinade:

- 1 teaspoon cumin seed* or ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- 2 pounds shoulder of pork, excess fat removed, and cubed into 1 to 1 ½ inch pieces
- 1/2 cup dry red wine
- 6 dried de Arbol chiles or New Mexican chiles, whole
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 tablespoon chipotle in adobo sauce (available in cans)
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

The Chile:

- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- One 28-ounce can tomatoes
- 1/2 cup water
- 3 cups cooked white beans, drained, rinsed, and drained again if canned, see note above
- 1/3 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- About 1/2 to 1 teaspoon chile powder depending on how spicy you like your chili
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- One bottle beer, preferably dark
- Garnishes: Lime wedges, avocado slices or chunks, chopped fresh cilantro and scallions, sour cream, hot pepper sauces and taco chips or warm flour or corn tortillas

*Place the cumin seeds in an ungreased skillet over low heat. Toast for about 6 minutes, or until you smell the spice. Remove from heat and grind in a spice grinder or coffee grinder that you use just for spices.

Instructions:

Marinate the pork: place the pork in a large bowl and add the wine on top.

Soak the chiles: place the chiles in a bowl and cover with 1 cup boiling water. Let soak 15 minutes.

In a blender, add the cumin, garlic, onion, chiles and 1 cup of the water they soaked in, the chipotle, oregano, salt and pepper and whirl until thick and mostly blended.

Pour the marinade over the pork and using your (clean) hands make sure all the meat is coated in the mixture. Cover and refrigerate for at least 6 hours or overnight.

To make the chili: Remove the pork from the marinade using a slotted spoon and making sure to reserve the marinade.

Heat a large casserole over high heat. Add the oil and let it get hot. Working in small batches, brown the pork for about 2 minutes on each side, or until brown. Remove to a thick paper towel and let drain. Repeat with the remaining pork; you shouldn't need additional oil since the pork will lose some fat.

Add the tomatoes to the hot casserole, using a spoon to break them up into smaller pieces. Add ½ cup water and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to low and add the beans, cilantro, chile powder, the reserved marinade, beer, and salt and pepper. Cover and let simmer for about 1 hour. Partially remove the lid and simmer over very low heat for an additional 30 minutes, or until the meat is tender and the sauce has reduced somewhat and is flavorful. Add salt and pepper and hot pepper sauce to taste.

Serves 4 to 6.

Butternut Squash and Black Bean Vegetarian Chili

Kathy's Note: This chili has a sweet and smoky and slightly spicy flavor. It can be made a day or two ahead of time. Serve with the Spider Cornbread, and top with sour cream and chopped scallions.

Ingredients:

1 pound black beans, soaked overnight in a large bowl of cold water or 6 cups cooked canned black beans, drained, rinsed, and drained again
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 leeks, dark greens discarded, cut lengthwise and thinly sliced
1 small red onion, chopped
3 scallions, cut into 1-inch pieces
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
2 teaspoons chile powder
1/3 cup chopped fresh cilantro
3 pound butternut squash or any winter squash, peeled, deseeded, and cut into 1-inch cubes
2 ribs celery, chopped
4 ripe tomatoes, chopped, or 2 cups canned tomatoes with their juice
4 cups vegetable stock
One 4-ounce can whole green chiles, drained and thinly sliced
Hot pepper sauce to taste
Accompaniments: Cornbread (recipe below), sour cream, and 3 thinly sliced scallions

Instructions:

Soak the beans in cold water overnight. Drain and place in a large pot with fresh cold water and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to low and partially cover; cook for about 45 minutes, or until just tender. Drain the beans. Alternately you can use canned beans that are drained, rinsed, and drained again.

In a large pot heat the oil over low heat. Add the leek and onion and cook, stirring, for 8 minutes. Add the scallions, salt and pepper and cook another 2 minutes. Add the cinnamon, cumin, chile powder, and cilantro and stir well; cook 1 minute. Add the squash and stir well to coat all the squash pieces with the spices and onions; cook 4 minutes. Add the celery, tomatoes, beans, vegetable broth, and chiles, and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook about 1 hour or until the squash is tender. Taste for seasoning and add salt, pepper, and hot pepper sauce to taste. Serve hot with a dollop of sour cream and a sprinkling of scallions.

Serves 6 to 8.

Spider Herbed-Buttermilk Cornbread

Kathy's Note: This is an unusually delicious version of cornbread, with a creamy, herb-flecked layer. Originally this cornbread was made in a spider pan, a black cast iron skillet with "legs" that gave it a spider-like appearance. You can use a regular cast iron skillet or any thick, ovenproof skillet.

Ingredients:

1 1/2 tablespoons butter
1 1/2 cups cornmeal
1/3 cup sugar
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons salt
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1 cup buttermilk
2 large eggs, beaten
2 cups milk
Coarse freshly ground black pepper
1 tablespoon fresh chives, minced
2 scallions, very thinly sliced
1 1/2 tablespoons finely chopped parsley
1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh rosemary

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Melt the butter in a 10-inch cast iron skillet over low heat.

In a large bowl mix the cornmeal, sugar, flour, salt, and baking soda. Add the buttermilk and stir until smooth. Add the eggs, 1 cup of the regular milk, and the melted butter, leaving a touch of butter to grease the skillet. Add the pepper, chives, scallions, parsley, and rosemary and mix until smooth.

Pour the batter into the greased skillet and bake for 12 minutes. Pour the remaining cup of milk on top and continue baking until the cornbread is firm, about 45 minutes. A toothpick inserted in the center should come out clean. Serve hot or at room temperature cut into wedges.

Serves about 8.