



GREEN CHILE BEANS

The combination of white beans and green chile makes an attractive presentation. Adding some red bell pepper or sun-dried tomatoes will give the dish an even more striking and festive appearance. Beans and chiles were used together for centuries by successive Mesoamerican cultures, as well as by the Native Americans of the Southwest. The Hohokam Indians based in Arizona between the sixth and tenth centuries were the first great farmers of the region, and grew over 100 varieties of beans, chiles, corn, and squash.

- 1 cup dried white beans
- 1 tablespoon lard or vegetable oil
- ¼ onion, peeled and cut into ¼-inch dice
- 4 to 5 fresh green New Mexico chiles, seeded and cut into ¼-inch dice, or 4 ounces frozen diced green chiles
- ¼ teaspoon ground dried oregano
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup water

Carefully sort through the beans and remove any foreign objects. Rinse in a sieve and soak overnight. Drain and rinse the beans, place in a large pot, and add enough water to cover the beans by at least 2 or 3 inches. Slowly bring to a simmer and cook at a low simmer until just tender, about 1½ to 2 hours. Add more water as necessary to keep the beans covered. When cooked, there should be about 2½ cups beans. Drain the beans.

Melt the lard or oil in a large pan and sauté the onion and green chiles over medium heat for 5 minutes. Stir in the oregano, salt, and cooked beans. Add the water and simmer for 5 to 10 minutes.

Serving suggestions: Serve as a side dish with grilled chicken or fish, or with enchiladas or tacos.

Storage: Keeps refrigerated for 2 or 3 days.

Preparation time: About 2 to 2½ hours

Yield: About 3 cups

BANDITO BLACK BEANS

Black beans, also known as turtle beans, are denser and meatier than any other bean, and take a little longer to cook. They stand up well to strong flavors, absorbing them better than lighter, creamier beans (pinto beans, for example). Black beans are standard fare in Caribbean and Central American countries such as Cuba, Guatemala (where I first tasted them), Honduras, El Salvador, and rural parts of southern Mexico, where they are served as a side dish with almost every meal.

- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds, toasted and ground
- 1 teaspoon coriander seeds, toasted and ground
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano, toasted and ground
- 2 cups dried black beans, thoroughly washed
- 4 quarts water
- 1 onion, peeled and minced
- 4 cloves roasted garlic, peeled and minced
- 2 jalapeño chiles, seeded and finely chopped
- 2 dried bay leaves
- 1 cup tomato purée
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 cup Spicy Chipotle Toltec Barbecue Glaze (page 87)

Place all the ingredients except for the salt and barbecue glaze in a large stock pot or saucepan. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer slowly for 2½ hours, or until the beans are tender, adding more water if necessary to keep the beans covered.

Add the salt and barbecue glaze and cook until the sauce thickens and almost all the liquid has evaporated (about 10 minutes).

Serving suggestions: Goes well with grilled meat, poultry, or game fowl. At Coyote Cafe, we serve it with our famous Pecan-Grilled Cowboy Steak.

Storage: Keeps refrigerated for 2 or 3 days.

Variation: This recipe can be adapted as a soup by adding water, puréeing half of the beans, and then folding them back in to the other ingredients.

Preparation time: About 3 hours

Yield: About 4 cups