

TEXAS CHILI

This Texas classic doesn't include beans or tomatoes, only beef, homemade chile paste, and a few flavorings. It's what Texans call a "Bowl o' Red" and tastes intensely of its two main ingredients. Take care to cook the chili at the barest possible simmer to avoid evaporating the sauce before the beef is tender. Whatever combination of dried chiles you use, make sure they're as fresh as possible by buying from a store with good turnover. Dried chiles should be pliable (but not damp) and without signs of mold. The trick to any chili, however, is to slowly build flavor by letting your seasonings simmer awhile so they can fully cook. Otherwise, you might experience the bitterness of raw spices. This chili recipe goes one step further in its pursuit of the beefiest-possible bowl. They skip the tomatoes altogether – no chunky tomatoes, no tomato paste, no tomato sauce – and simmer beef directly in chili paste.

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"This is a simple recipe for Texas chili I learned from my mother. I like my chili with a little fire to it, but you can adjust this recipe to your liking. This is a chili that only gets better the second day so don't worry about using a large pot and having more than your family can eat the first night because you can have it a couple of nights later. ENJOY. I know I do every time I make this chili."

This was, as billed: easy, delicious and classic. I omitted the chopped chili for the younger members of the family and left it simmering on low for the afternoon and it was

delicious. Perfect for a rainy Seattle fall day. Not that it rains here...

Awesome starter chili recipe! I love to use this recipe as a base and then change it up! For example, change out a pound of the ground beef for a pound of ground spicy or sweet italian sausage (without casings) I also love to mix up the type of beans used to give the chili some character. I made this for an event and used one can of butter beans, one can of kidney beans and one can of pinto beans (same sized cans). It was a hit! Don't be afraid to make small changes to this great base!

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INGREDIENTS:

3 lb. chuck roast
1 bell pepper
1 lg. onion
8 cloves garlic
3 tbsp. butter or bacon drippings
2/3 c. (6 oz. can) tomato paste
5 c. water
1 can (14 1/2 oz.) cut up peeled whole tomatoes & juices
3 bay leaves
1 tsp. oregano leaves
1 tbsp. salt
1 tsp. cumin
1/2 tsp. pepper
2 tbsp. sweet Hungarian paprika
3 tbsp. flour

6 tbsp. cornmeal

DIRECTIONS:

In a 6 quart saucepan melt butter or drippings and saute chopped onion, bell pepper and minced garlic for 5 minutes. Cut the meat in 1/2 inch cubes and add to sauteed mixture. Cook meat until gray, not brown. Add tomato paste and water. Stir to mix, then add chopped tomatoes, bay leaves, oregano, salt, cumin, pepper and paprika. Simmer, covered, 2 hours. Cool. Remove, refrigerate overnight so flavors will mellow. Remove top layer of solidified fat. Reheat. With a little cold water make a paste of flour and cornmeal. Add paste to chili. To obtain a smooth texture, cook and stir 5-7 minutes after thickening has been added. Remove bay leaves and serve with grated cheese, chopped onion, lime wedges and sour cream.