

BLACK BEAN WITH PORK STEW

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When we lived in rural SE Minnesota for several years, winters were long, bracing, and windy. I started making this stew to take the chill out of the day and provide the comfort that we longed for. Filled with flavorful, health-boosting ingredients, this stew satisfied our hunger and also put a smile on our faces. It became one of my most requested recipes from guests.

This richly seasoned version is an adaptation of a recipe from a favorite cookbook, *The Wine Lover's Cookbook* by Sid Goldstein. The spicy cayenne level can easily be adjusted to suit your taste preferences – add a little more, use less or none at all. For best flavor, choose a good quality, low sodium stock or broth, either homemade or a grocery store brand such as Trader Joe's, Kitchen Basics, Pacific Foods or Swanson. Kick back and enjoy this stew with a fruity Pinot Noir or Sangiovese, or a more robust Syrah or Zinfandel.

Makes: 4 - 6 servings

INGREDIENTS

1/2 pound dried black beans, or 2-15 ounce can (low sodium), drained and rinsed

1 tablespoon chili powder

2 ½ teaspoon ground cumin

1 teaspoon ground coriander

1 teaspoon dried basil

1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

1/4 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper

1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper

1 1/2 pounds cubed pork shoulder, (about 1/2' - 1" pieces)

4 ounces pancetta or bacon, diced

1 tablespoons olive oil

1 medium onion, diced

1 large carrot, peeled and diced

1 cup bell pepper (red, green, yellow), diced

1 cup peeled and diced butternut squash

1 jalapeno, seeded and minced

3 cloves garlic, minced

1 tablespoon dried oregano

1 tablespoon dried cilantro

1 cup red wine

3 cups chicken stock or broth (low or no sodium)

1 bay leaf

2 tablespoons lime juice

Cooked brown rice or other whole grain for serving

Optional garnish – diced avocado, tomatillo salsa, chopped cilantro or parsley, a dollop of sour cream or Greek yogurt

DIRECTIONS

To Prep Dry Beans:

- Place the beans into a large strainer and pick them over to remove any stones or debris. Rinse thoroughly.
- Transfer to a large bowl and cover with cold water by at least 2 inches. Soak beans for at least 8 hours or preferably overnight.
- Drain and rinse once more before using.

To Make the Stew:

1. In a large mixing bowl, combine the chili powder, cumin, coriander, basil, salt, black pepper, and cayenne. Add the cubed pork and mix thoroughly to coat. Set aside.
2. In a large stockpot, cook the pancetta or bacon over medium heat until lightly brown. Remove pancetta or bacon from the pan, and discard all but 1 tablespoon of the fat.
3. Add the olive oil to the same pot and add the onion, carrot, bell peppers, squash, jalapeno, and garlic. Sauté for 5 - 7 minutes, until soft and lightly brown.
4. Add the pork and brown on all sides.
5. Add the oregano, cilantro, pancetta or bacon, wine, chicken stock, beans, bay leaf. Increase the heat to bring to a gentle boil, then reduce heat to a gentle simmer. Cover the pot and cook for 1 1/2 - 2 hours, or until meat is very fork-tender.
6. Remove the bay leaf and stir in the lime juice. Serve in individual bowls over hot, cooked brown rice or other whole grain. Garnish as desired.