



Chili (7-Chile Texas Chili)

from HomeSickTexan

serves 8-10

- 4 chiles de árbol
- 2 quajillo chiles
- 8 ancho chiles
- 2 pasilla chiles
- 4 slices bacon
- 4 pounds chuck roast, in 1/4" cubes
- 1 large yellow onion, diced
- 6 large cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup brewed coffee
- 1 bottle beer
- 2 cups hot water
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 tablespoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon each ground cinnamon, clove, allspice, cayenne
- 2-3 canned chioptles en adobo, or to taste
- 1/3 tablet Mexican chocolate
- 1/4 cup masa harina
- grated sharp cheddar cheese, minced onions & chopped cilantro for garnishes

Place a large cast-iron skillet over medium heat. When quite hot, place a few dried chiles in and cook each side until lightly toasted. Do not blacken or burn, as this will make the taste quite bitter. If you have a lot of chiles, you'll probably need to do this in batches. Once they're all toasted, turn off the heat and add enough water to the

skillet to cover the chiles (or do this in a bowl), and let them soak for half an hour or more.

Meanwhile, in a large heavy pot (something copper or a Dutch oven), fry the bacon. When done, remove from pan and set aside. (You can make BLTs or feed it to your dog!) In the remaining fat, about 3 tablespoons, lightly brown the beef in a single layer. This will probably have to cook in batches, as well. Using a slotted spoon, remove the browned beef from the pot. Mine left a lot of liquid behind, so I poured this out and reserved it. I added some duck fat to the pot (you can use pork fat or mild olive or canola oil) and add the onions. Cook on medium until translucent. Add the garlic and cook for another minute.

Return beef back to the pot, and add the coffee, beer, two cups of water (or reserved beef broth plus water to make 2 cups) and the dry spices. Turn the heat up to high and bring to a boil.

Meanwhile, your soaking chiles should be soft. Drain them, discard the soaking water and put them in a blender (or food processor or Vitamix) along with the canned chipotles and one cup of fresh water. Puree until very smooth. Stir the chile puree into the meat. You can add a portion of it now, and more later, as needed.

When the chili begins to boil, turn heat down to low and simmer for five hours, stirring occasionally. If it starts to get too dry, add more liquid; either water or some stock or more chile puree.

After five hours, take a Mexican hot chocolate disc and finely grate 1/3 of it into the pot. Scoop out 1 cup of broth and mix it with the masa harina to make a slurry. Stir this back into the chili, making sure there are no lumps. Taste for seasoning, adding salt and more chile puree or spices, if needed. (I doubled the amount of cumin and added more cayenne and chipotles when I made it.)

When ready to serve, heat the chili through and taste for seasoning once more. Offer cheese, onions and cilantro as garnishes. Tortillas, tostadas and cornbread all make great accompaniments.