

Vegetarian Chili

Serves 6 to 8

We prefer to use whole dried chiles, but the chili can be prepared with jarred chili powder. If using chili powder, grind the shiitakes and oregano and add them to the pot with 1/4 cup of chili powder in step 4. into, black, red kidney, small red, cannellini, or navy beans can be used in this recipe, either a single variety or a combination of beans. For a spicier chili use both jalapenos. Serve with diced avocado chopped red onion, lime wedges, sour cream, and shredded Monterey Jack or cheddar cheese.

Salt

1 lbs (2 1/2 cups) dried beans, rinsed and picked over
2 dried ancho chiles
2 dried New Mexican chiles
1/2 ounce shiitake mushrooms, chopped coarse
4 teaspoons dried oregano
1/2 cup walnuts, toasted
1 (28 ounce) can diced tomatoes, drained with juice reserved
3 tablespoons tomato paste
1-2 jalapeno chiles, stemmed and chopped coarse
6 garlic cloves, minced
3 tablespoons soy sauce
1/4 cup vegetable oil
2 lbs onions, chopped fine
1 tablespoon ground cumin
7 cups water
2/3 cup medium grain bulgur
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro

1. Bring 4 Quarts water, 3 tablespoons salt, and beans to boil in Dutch oven over high heat. Remove pot from heat, cover, and let stand for 1 hour. Drain beans and rinse well.
2. Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 300 degrees. Arrange ancho and New Mexican chiles on rimmed baking sheet and toast until fragrant and puffed, about 8 minutes. Transfer to plate and let cool, about 5 minutes. Stem and seed toasted chiles. Working in batches, grind toasted chiles, shiitakes, and oregano in spice grinder or with mortar and pestle until finely ground.
3. Process walnuts in food processor until finely ground, about 30 seconds. Transfer to bowl. Process drained tomatoes, tomato paste, jalapeno(s), garlic, and soy sauce in food processor until tomatoes are finely chopped, about 45 seconds, scraping down bowl as needed.
4. Heat oil in Dutch oven over medium high heat until shimmering. Add onions and 1 1/4 teaspoons salt; cook, stirring occasionally until onions begin to brown, 8 to 10 minutes. Lower heat to medium, add ground chile mixture and cumin, and cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add rinsed beans and water and bring to boil. Cover pot, transfer to oven, and cook for 45 minutes.

5. Remove pot from oven, Stir in bulgur, ground walnuts, tomato mixture, and reserved tomato juice. Return to oven and cook until beans are fully tender, about 2 hours.

6. Remove pot from oven, stir chili well, and let stand, uncovered, for 20 minutes. Stir in cilantro and serve. (Chili can be made up to 3 days in advance).