



COLUMNS

20-Dollar, 20-Minute Meals
 5 Questions
 Amanda's Kids' Lunch
 Behind the Scenes
 Beyond the Basics
 Big Feast
 Booze52
 Breakfast of Champions
 Building a Dream Kitchen
 City Dirt
 Community Picks
 Cooking for Clara
 Cooking From Every Angle
 Cooking What I Want
 Craft Cocktails
 Dinner vs. Child
 Down & Dirty
 Feast Your Eyes
 Feed52
 Food History 101
 Genius Recipes
 Guest Editors
 Halfway to Dinner
 Heirloom Recipes
 Instagram of the Week
 Joan Nathan's Chosen Recipes
 Kitchen Confidence
 Link Love
 Meatless Mondays
 Menu Ideas
 Monday Funday
 My Broke Kitchen
Not Recipes
 Not Sad Desk Lunch
 On the Grill
 Project Dessert
 Provisions
 Regional Italian Food
 Required Reading
 Rogue Baking Tips with Alice Medrich
 Seasonal Southern Cooking
 Small Batch
 Spirit Guides
 Sunday Dinners
 The Art of Crafts
 The Good Life, Gluten-Free
 The New Veganism
 Vegan Lunch
 Videos
 Weeknights with

NOT RECIPES

How to Make Vegetarian (or Vegan) Chili without a Recipe

By kim place-gateau · October 7, 2013 · 39 Comments

+ SAVED 56

SHARE



Here at Food52, we love recipes -- but do we always use them? Of course not. Because once you realize you don't always need a recipe, you'll make your favorite dishes a lot more often.

Today: As the days get shorter and the nights get cooler, we start craving chili. Now it's simple enough to make any night of the week, without a recipe.



There's something about chili -- so versatile and satisfying. Top it with cheese, sour cream, avocado, crumbled crackers, or diced fresh onions and hot peppers. Roll it into a tortilla with some rice. Pour it over a burger. It's all good.

My favorite recipe is a vegetarian version from my former restaurant in Fredericksburg, Virginia. Dedicated carnivores and vegans alike happily slurped it up. If you prefer meat in yours, by all means go ahead -- it'll be terrific.

I like to think of chili in terms of ratios. However you decide to proceed, and whatever ingredients you use, stick to about 2 parts diced vegetables : 2 parts cooked or canned beans : 2 parts tomatoes : a little less than 1 part (optional) added protein like tofu. This is a loose guideline, of course, but it gives you something to jump off from.

Let's make it happen.

How to Make Vegetarian Chili Without a Recipe

1. In a big heavy pot, heat up a pat of butter or a glug of oil of your choosing. Sauté some diced onions, whatever combination of hot and bell peppers you like, and garlic. If you feel like some finely diced carrots, leeks, or celery, too, go for it. Add some salt and stir.

MORE GREAT ARTICLES



How to Make Paella Without a Recipe



How to Make Any Cereal Treats Without a Recipe



How to Make Mayonnaise (or Aioli) Without a Recipe

10/8/13

How to Make Vegetarian (or Vegan) Chili without a Recipe

Jenny

What to Cook Now

Wildcard Winner

Wine, Unfussed

Your Burning
Questions

CONNECT
WITH FOOD52



2. Add spices. I've used chili powder, cumin, turmeric, smoked paprika, chipotle, and various ground peppers; you should use whatever tastes like chili to you. Use 2 to 3 times as much assorted chili powders as cumin and turmeric. This is really to taste, but start with 1/2 teaspoon of cumin per cup of tomatoes if you need a benchmark. Salt and pepper to taste. If you didn't put in fresh garlic, add garlic powder here -- shoot for about the same amount of garlic powder as cumin.



3. Now, get your can opener ready! You'll need beans and diced tomatoes. I love to use fire-roasted diced tomatoes and diced tomatoes with green chilis, but you can use your favorite. As for beans, I prefer a combination of kidneys, garbanzos and black beans. If you like to work with dried beans, I recommend cooking these first and then adding them now. You will probably also need to add 1 part water or stock at this point. Fill your empty tomato cans with stock or water as a measuring guideline and pour in liquid until it looks like chili.



4. Add more protein if you like. I'm a fan of tofu, so I cut a block of extra-firm into smallish cubes and toss it in. Tip: If you freeze tofu ahead of time, then thaw, then squeeze all the water out before you use it, you'll be blown away by the texture.



5. Now just simmer for about an hour, mostly covered. Then add spice as needed and enjoy! Don't forget to serve it over scrambled eggs for tomorrow's breakfast.



Round out your Tex-Mex menu with some other classics:

- Cornbread with Chorizo
- Charred Corn and Avocado Salad with Lime, Chili, and Tomato
- Rick Bayless's Tortilla Soup with Shredded Chard

MAKE IT SPICY

READ	SHOP	COOK	SHOP
Community N. 37 - Izak Picks: 12 Chili Recipes	(Sweet Chiles, Garlic, Cumin)	Smoky Black Bean and Sweet Potato Chili	Enamel Aroma Pot with Lid Trivet

Provisions, our new kitchen and home shop, is here!

Get \$10 off your first purchase of \$50 or more.

Visit Provisions.

Tags: chili, how to, step by step, vegetarian, chili

FOLLOW

kim place-gateau

I've cooked and eaten in a bunch

How to Make Vegetarian (or Vegan) Chili without a Recipe

of beautiful countries, and I still haven't found anything that smells better than mushrooms sautéing in red wine and butter.

COMMENTS (39)



 Check for new comments

Showing 28 out of 39
comments [Load More](#)

[ADD COMMENT](#)