

MAIN

First Cool Front Chili

Made with cubed chuck instead of ground beef, and without a single bean, which in this state is less a recipe note than a legal position.

Prep: 30 minutes · Cook: 3 hours · Total: 3 hours 30 minutes, mostly unattended · Servings: 6 to 8

Ingredients

- 3 lb beef chuck, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 2 tbsp neutral oil
- 1 large yellow onion, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 3 dried ancho chiles
- 2 dried guajillo chiles
- 1 chipotle in adobo, plus 1 tsp of the sauce
- 2 tbsp ground cumin
- 1 tbsp Mexican oregano
- 1 tbsp masa harina
- 2 cups beef stock
- 1 bottle (12 oz) lager
- 1 tbsp cider vinegar
- Kosher salt
- To serve: diced white onion, lime wedges, crumbled cotija, saltines

Instructions

- 1 Stem and seed the ancho and guajillo chiles. Toast them in a dry skillet over medium heat, about 30 seconds a side, until they smell nutty. Cover with boiling water and let sit 20 minutes, then blend smooth with 1 cup of the soaking liquid, the chipotle, and its sauce.
- 2 Pat the beef dry and salt it well. Brown it in a Dutch oven over medium-high heat in three batches, setting it aside as it finishes. Crowding the pan steams the meat instead of searing it.
- 3 Lower the heat. Cook the onion in the drippings 6 to 8 minutes until soft and golden, add the garlic for 1 minute more, then the tomato paste for 2 minutes, stirring until it darkens a shade.



MAIN (CONTINUED)

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- 4 Return the beef and its juices to the pot. Add the chile purée, cumin, oregano, stock, and beer. Bring to a bare simmer, cover, and leave it alone for 2 1/2 to 3 hours, until a cube gives way under a spoon with no resistance.
- 5 Whisk the masa harina into a quarter cup of water and stir it in. Simmer uncovered 20 minutes. Add the vinegar, then salt to taste.
- 6 It's better the next day, and even better the day after that.

TIP

Toast the chiles only until they smell nutty. Any longer and they turn bitter, which can't be undone.