

Classic Baked Beans with Bacon, Onion & Bell Pepper: Easy Side Dish

Get ready to elevate your side dish game with these incredible



TIME
5 min

METHOD
Slow cooker

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INGREDIENTS

- 2 slices bacon, diced
- 1 small sweet onion, diced
- 1 bell pepper, diced (any color, green or red works well)
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon smoked paprika
- 1/4 TO 1/2 teaspoon chipotle chili powder (adjust to taste)
- ... teaspoon salt
- ... teaspoon freshly cracked black pepper
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons BBQ sauce (your favorite brand)
- 2 tablespoons ketchup
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 2 (22 ounce) cans baked beans (like Bush's Grillin' Beans, or your favorite brand)
- 2 slices bacon, for topping (optional)

Swaps and Notes:

Bacon (Diced): Use regular or thick-cut bacon for the best flavor. Turkey bacon can be used for a lighter option, but you may need to add a bit of olive oil for sautéing the vegetables.

Sweet Onion: Adds sweetness and depth when cooked down. Yellow onion can also be used.

Bell Pepper: Green bell pepper offers a classic savory flavor, while red, yellow, or orange will

add more sweetness.

Garlic: Freshly minced garlic provides the best aromatic flavor.

Smoked Paprika: Crucial for that smoky flavor. Do not substitute with regular paprika.

Chipotle Chili Powder: Provides a smoky heat. Adjust the amount (1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon) to your preferred spice level. Omit for no heat.

Apple Cider Vinegar: Adds a tangy brightness that cuts through the richness and balances sweetness.

BBQ Sauce & Ketchup: Use your favorite brands. These contribute to the classic sweet and tangy baked bean flavor.

Dijon Mustard: Adds a subtle sharp tang that enhances the overall flavor.

Brown Sugar: Packed brown sugar adds sweetness and helps create that caramelized, syrupy consistency.

Baked Beans: The recipe suggests Bush's Grillin' Beans, which are pre-flavored. If using plain canned baked beans, you might want to increase the seasonings slightly. Do not drain them.

Bacon for Topping (Optional): Adds extra crispy texture and visual appeal.

DIRECTIONS

1. Let's get these delicious : Baked Beans simmering and baking!
2. Preheat : Oven: Preheat your oven to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C).
3. Cook : Bacon & Aromatics (Skillet): Heat a large skillet (one that is oven-safe, if you prefer not to transfer the beans to a separate dish) over medium-low heat. Add the 2 slices of diced bacon. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the bacon is fully browned and crisp, and most of its fat is rendered. Remove the crispy bacon bits with a slotted spoon and set them aside on a paper towel-lined plate for garnish. Leave about 1-2 tablespoons of the rendered bacon fat in the skillet. Stir the diced sweet onion, diced bell pepper, and minced 2 garlic cloves into the skillet with the bacon fat. Cook, stirring often, for about 5 minutes, or until everything softens and the onion becomes translucent.
4. Add : Spices & Liquids: Stir in the 1 tablespoon of smoked paprika, 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon of chipotle chili powder (adjust to taste), 1/4 teaspoon salt, and 1/4 teaspoon freshly cracked black pepper. Cook for 1 to 2 minutes, stirring constantly, to bloom the spices and enhance their flavor. Stir in the 2 tablespoons of apple cider vinegar, 2 tablespoons of BBQ sauce, 2 tablespoons of ketchup, 1 tablespoon of Dijon mustard, and 1 tablespoon of brown sugar until all combined into a cohesive sauce base.
5. Combine with : Beans & Simmer: Stir in the 2 (22 ounce) cans of baked beans directly from the can (do not drain!). Bring the mixture to a gentle boil over medium-high heat. Once it starts boiling, turn off the

heat. I suggest tasting the beans here. Adjust seasoning with more salt, pepper, or heat (more chipotle chili powder) if desired. If you'd like, you can lay the 2 optional slices of bacon on top of the beans at this point; they will get crispy as the beans bake.

6. **Bake:** Place the skillet (or transfer the entire mixture to an oven-safe baking dish if your skillet isn't oven-safe) in the preheated oven. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes, or until the beans are bubbly around the edges and the sauce has thickened to a rich, syrupy consistency. The bacon strips on top (if used) should be crispy.
7. **Serve:** Remove the baked beans from the oven and let them cool slightly for 5-10 minutes before serving. This allows the sauce to thicken further. Garnish with the reserved crispy diced bacon before serving.

SWAPS & NOTES

Bacon (Diced): Use regular or thick-cut bacon for the best flavor.

Turkey bacon can be used for a lighter option, but you may need to add a bit of olive oil for sautéing the vegetables.

Sweet Onion: Adds sweetness and depth when cooked down.

Bell Pepper: Green bell pepper offers a classic savory flavor, while red, yellow, or orange will add more sweetness.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Render Bacon Fat: The rendered bacon fat is crucial for a smoky flavor base.

Don't Drain Canned Beans: The liquid in the canned baked beans is part of the recipe and helps create the sauce.

Taste and Adjust Seasoning: With so many flavorful ingredients (bacon, BBQ sauce, canned beans), it's important to taste the beans before baking and adjust salt, sweetness, or heat as needed.

Bake Until Bubbly & Syrupy: This indicates the sauce has thickened and the flavors have melded.

More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/classic-baked-beans-with-bacon-onion-bell-pepper-easy-side-dish/>