

Classic Pinto Beans & Ham Hocks: Southern Comfort Food

Get ready for a taste of true Southern comfort with this incredible



TIME
5-7 min

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INGREDIENTS

- 2 lbs Ham Hocks (smoked ham hocks recommended)
- 1 lb Pinto Beans, dried
- 3 cloves Garlic, minced
- 1 (32 ounce) carton chicken broth
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 medium onion, minced
- 1 stalk celery, minced
- 1/2 green bell pepper, minced
- 1/2 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp dried parsley and thyme (1/2 tsp each, or 1 tsp blend)
- 1 cube vegetable or chicken bouillon

DIRECTIONS

1. Let's get these delicious : Pinto Beans & Ham Hocks simmering!
2. Prepare : Ham Hocks: Rinse the 2 lbs ham hocks thoroughly under cold water. Add them to a large stock pot or Dutch oven with 6 cups of fresh water. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and boil (simmer) for 1 hour. This step helps tenderize the hocks and create a flavorful base broth.
3. Prepare : Vegetables: While the ham hocks are boiling, in a separate small skillet, melt 1 tbsp butter over medium heat. Add the 1 medium minced onion, 1 minced celery stalk, and 1/2 minced green bell pepper. SautØ until softened, about 5-7 minutes. Add the 3 cloves minced garlic and cook for 1 minute more until fragrant. Remove from heat.
4. Add : Beans & Seasonings to Pot: After the ham hocks have boiled for 1 hour, clean your 1 lb pinto beans by rinsing them thoroughly and picking out any debris. Add the cleaned beans to the stock pot with the ham hocks (don't drain the water from the hocks). Pour in the 32 ounce chicken broth. Add the sautØed vegetables and minced garlic (if not already added). Stir in the 1/2 tsp cumin, 1 tsp paprika, 1/2 tsp black pepper, 1 tsp dried parsley and thyme (or 1/2 tsp each), and 1 cube vegetable or chicken bouillon. Stir everything well to combine.
5. Long : Simmer: Bring the mixture back to a boil, then reduce the heat to low, cover the pot, and continue to cook for another 3 hours, or until the beans are cooked soft and buttery, and the ham hocks are very tender and falling apart. Check occasionally to ensure there's enough liquid; add a little more water or

broth if needed to keep the beans submerged. Note: The recipe creator cooked theirs on the stovetop for 4 hours total to achieve desired tenderness. Adjust cooking time based on your stovetop and how soft you prefer your beans and meat.

6. **Serve:** Remove from heat. The meat will fall apart easily. You can carefully remove the ham hocks, pull the meat from the bones, and return the shredded meat to the beans. Taste and adjust seasoning with additional salt or pepper if needed. Enjoy!

SWAPS & NOTES

Ham Hocks: Smoked ham hocks are traditional and provide incredible smoky flavor.

You can use a ham bone, smoked turkey leg, or other smoked pork product for similar flavor.

Pinto Beans: Dried pinto beans are essential for this recipe's texture and flavor.

Sort and rinse them thoroughly before cooking.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Soaking Beans (Optional): While this recipe uses a long simmer, soaking dried pinto beans overnight (then rinsing) can reduce cooking time by about an hour.

However, the long simmer here works well to develop flavor and tenderize.

Ham Hocks are Key: The ham hocks provide incredible smoky, savory flavor.

Consistent Heat: Maintain a low, gentle simmer to ensure beans cook evenly and don't burst, and that the ham hocks become fall-apart tender.

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