

Country Pinto Beans & Hamhocks: Southern Comfort Classic

Country Pinto Beans & Hamhocks



TIME
5 min

PRINT
Recipe Card

SAVE
PDF

SOURCE
ChefManiac

INGREDIENTS

One 1 lb package pinto beans, picked through and soaked in lots of water overnight

1 quart chicken stock (32 oz / ~4 cups)

1 quart water (32 oz / ~4 cups)

1 onion, halved or roughly chopped

2 smoked hamhocks

1 Tbsp lard (or olive oil/bacon fat)

2 bay leaves

1 teaspoon black pepper, plus more to taste

1 teaspoon garlic powder, plus more to taste

Salt, to taste (be mindful of hamhock and stock saltiness)

Crushed red pepper to taste (optional, for a kick)

Swaps and Notes:

Pinto Beans: Soaking overnight is recommended for faster cooking and more even texture, but if you forget, you can quick-soak them by boiling for 5 minutes, then letting them sit for an hour off the heat before proceeding.

Hamhocks: Smoked hamhocks are traditional and provide incredible flavor. Smoked turkey legs or a piece of smoked ham hock (if you can't find whole hamhocks) can be used, but the flavor will vary slightly. A smoked ham bone or bacon can also add smoky notes.

Chicken Stock/Water: The combination provides a good balance of flavor and liquid for simmering. You can use all water or all chicken stock,

adjusting salt accordingly.

Lard: Lard adds a traditional richness. Bacon fat (saved from cooking bacon) or olive oil can be substituted.

Onion: Roughly chopped onion will break down and meld into the beans, adding sweetness.

Seasoning: Start with the suggested amounts and add more to taste at the end. The hamhocks and stock can be quite salty, so season carefully. A splash of vinegar (apple cider vinegar is great) at the end brightens the flavor.

Crushed Red Pepper: Adjust to your preferred level of heat.

DIRECTIONS

1. Making these soulful pinto beans is all about patience and a long, gentle simmer.
2. **Combine :** Ingredients: After picking through your pinto beans to remove any small stones or debris, and soaking them overnight (drain the soaking water), add the soaked beans to a large stock pot or Dutch oven. Add the chicken stock, water, halved or roughly chopped onion, smoked hamhocks, lard, and bay leaves. Also add the initial crushed red pepper (if using).
3. **Bring to a : Boil, Then Simmer:** Bring the mixture in the stock pot to a rolling boil over high heat for 5 minutes. This helps kickstart the cooking process. Then, immediately reduce the heat to a low simmer.
4. **Slow : Cook:** Cover the pot with a lid, leaving it slightly ajar to prevent boil-over. Cook, stirring occasionally (every 30-45 minutes), until the beans are nice and tender. This will take approximately 2-3 hours, depending on the age and type of beans. You'll know they're ready when they mash easily between your fingers.
5. **Remove : Hamhocks & Debone:** Once the beans are tender, carefully remove the smoked hamhocks from the pot. They will be very hot and fall-apart tender. Allow them to cool slightly. Once cool enough to handle, shred the meat from the bones, discarding any skin, fat, or gristle. Return the shredded hamhock meat to the pot with the beans. Remove and discard the bay leaves.
6. **Season & : Finish:** Stir the hamhock meat back into the beans. Now is the time to taste and adjust the seasonings. Stir in 1 teaspoon black pepper, 1 teaspoon garlic powder, and add salt to taste. A

splash of apple cider vinegar at this point can add a wonderful brightness and lift the flavors. Add more crushed red pepper if you desire more heat.

7. **Serve:** Ladle the hot Country Pinto Beans & Hamhocks into bowls. Serve immediately.

SWAPS & NOTES

Pinto Beans: Soaking overnight is recommended for faster cooking and more even texture, but if you forget, you can quick-soak them by boiling for 5 minutes, then letting them sit for an hour off the heat before proceeding.

Hamhocks: Smoked hamhocks are traditional and provide incredible flavor.

Smoked turkey legs or a piece of smoked ham hock (if you can't find whole hamhocks) can be used, but the flavor will vary slightly.

A smoked ham bone or bacon can also add smoky notes.

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

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/country-pinto-beans-hamhocks-southern-comfort-classic/>