

Easy Cowboy Beans: Your New Go-To Hearty Side Dish

Here's what you'll need to whip up a batch of these fantastic Easy Cowboy Beans:



TIME
5-7 min

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INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 pound ground beef, pork, or a mix of both
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 bell pepper (any color), chopped
- 1 (15-ounce) can kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 (15-ounce) can pinto beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 (15-ounce) can great northern beans or cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 (15-ounce) can diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce
- 1/2 cup BBQ sauce (your favorite brand)
- 1/4 cup brown sugar (or to taste)
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional, for heat)
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- Fresh cilantro or chopped green onions, for garnish (optional)

DIRECTIONS

- 1. Brown the : Meat:** In a large Dutch oven or a heavy-bottomed pot, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the ground meat and cook, breaking it up with a spoon, until browned. Drain off any excess grease.
- 2. SautØ Aromatics:** Add the chopped onion and bell pepper to the pot with the browned meat. Cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 5-7 minutes. Stir in the minced garlic and cook for another minute until fragrant.
- 3. Add : Canned Goods:** Stir in the drained and rinsed kidney, pinto, and great northern beans. Add the undrained diced tomatoes and tomato sauce.
- 4. Season and : Simmer:** Pour in the BBQ sauce, brown sugar, apple cider vinegar, Worcestershire sauce, chili powder, smoked paprika, and cayenne pepper (if using). Stir everything well to combine. Bring the mixture to a gentle simmer.
- 5. Cook to : Perfection:** Reduce the heat to low, cover the pot, and let the beans simmer for at least 30-45 minutes, stirring occasionally, to allow the flavors to meld. The longer it simmers, the richer the flavor will be.
- 6. Adjust and : Serve:** Taste the beans and adjust seasonings as needed, adding more salt, pepper, brown sugar, or vinegar until it's just right. Garnish with fresh cilantro or chopped green onions, if desired.

SWAPS & NOTES

Meat: While ground beef is classic, feel free to use ground turkey for a leaner option, or even add some cooked crumbled bacon or sausage for extra smoky flavor.

For a vegetarian version, omit the meat and add extra vegetables like corn or zucchini, or use a plant-based ground crumble.

Beans: The beauty of cowboy beans is their adaptability.
Don't have one of the suggested bean types?

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Don't Rush the Simmer: The longer these beans simmer, the better they taste.

Aim for at least 30 minutes, but an hour or even two on low heat will deepen the flavors beautifully.

Drain and Rinse Beans: This step is crucial to remove excess sodium and any starchy liquid that can affect the texture and flavor.

Customize Your Heat: If you love a kick, consider adding a chopped jalapeño along with the bell pepper, or a dash of your favorite hot sauce at the end.

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