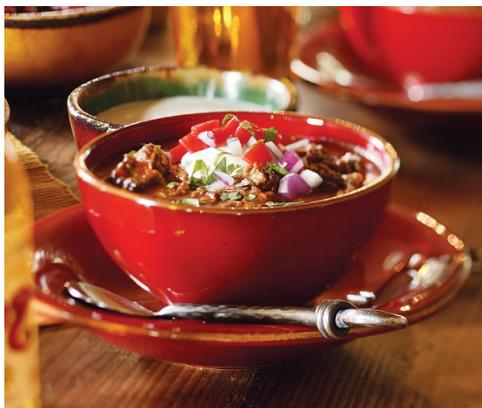


fine Cooking

Texas Beef Chili with Poblanos & Beer

By Paula Disbrowe, David Norman Fine Cooking Issue 70



Scott Phillips

Yield: Yields 8 cups.

Servings: 8

This chili has a pleasant kick. It thickens as it sits overnight, and the flavors round out and deepen. We like it best with chipotle and New Mexico chile powders, but ancho, another pure chile powder, is a good substitute for New Mexico. Both ancho and chipotle powders are available from McCormick in your grocery store.

Ingredients

3 Tbs. olive oil; more as needed

2 large sweet onions, diced (about 4 cups)

2 large fresh poblano peppers (or green bell peppers), stemmed, seeded, and diced (about 1-1/2 cups)

5 cloves garlic, minced

1 tsp. kosher salt; more to taste

4-1/2 lb. boneless beef chuck, cut into 1-inch cubes

2 bay leaves

2 cinnamon sticks, 3 dried ancho chiles long

3 Tbs. New Mexico chile powder (or 2 tablespoons ancho chile powder)

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1 Tbs. chipotle chile powder

1 Tbs. ground cumin

1/8 tsp. ground cloves

12-oz. bottle amber ale, such as Shiner Bock (made in Shiner, Texas), Dos Equis Amber, or Anchor Steam Liberty Ale

1-1/2 qt. homemade or low-salt beef broth

For the garnish:

2 14-oz. cans kidney beans, rinsed and drained

1 medium red onion, chopped

3 medium tomatoes, cored, seeded, and chopped

1/3 cup coarsely chopped fresh cilantro

12 oz. sour cream or whole-milk plain yogurt

Preparation

In a 12-inch skillet, heat 2 Tbs. of the oil over medium-high heat. Add the onions and sauté until softened, translucent, and starting to brown, 8 to 10 min. Add the poblanos, reduce the heat to medium, and cook, stirring occasionally, until the poblanos soften, another 8 to 10 min. If the pan seems dry, add a little more olive oil. Add the garlic and 1 tsp. salt and sauté for another 5 min. Set aside.

Meanwhile, heat the remaining 1 Tbs. olive oil in an 8-quart or larger Dutch oven (preferably enameled cast iron) over medium-high heat. Sear the beef cubes until browned and crusty on two sides, working in batches to avoid crowding the pan. With tongs or a slotted spoon, transfer the browned beef to a bowl. During searing, it's fine if the pan bottom gets quite dark, but if it smells like it's burning, reduce the heat a bit. If the pan ever gets dry, add a little more oil.

Once all the beef is seared and set aside, add the onions and peppers to the pan, along with the bay leaves, cinnamon sticks, chile powders, cumin, and cloves and cook, stirring, until the spices coat the vegetables and are fragrant, 15 to 30 seconds. Slowly add the beer while scraping the pan bottom with a wooden spoon to dissolve the coating of spices. Simmer until the beer is reduced by about half and the mixture has thickened slightly, 5 to 7 min. Add the beef, along with any accumulated juices, and the beef broth. Bring to a simmer and then reduce the heat to medium low. Simmer, partially covered, for 3 hours, stirring occasionally. Test a cube of meat—you should be able to cut it with a spoon. Discard the cinnamon sticks and bay leaves.

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 If not serving immediately, chill overnight. The next day, skim any fat from the top, if necessary, before reheating.

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To serve, heat the chili gently. Using a slotted spoon, transfer about 2 cups of the beef cubes to a plate. Shred the meat with a fork and return it to pot. (The shredded meat will help create a thicker texture.) Taste and add more salt if needed. Heat the beans in a medium bowl covered with plastic in the microwave (or heat them gently in a saucepan). Arrange the beans, chopped red onion, tomatoes, cilantro, and sour cream in small bowls to serve as garnishes with the chili.



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