



ALPHA OMEGA

Alpha Omega Chili con Carne

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Yield: 12 cups, serves 6 to 8

Ingredients:

Chile Powder

3 medium dried ancho chiles, stems and seeds removed, spread flat
½ teaspoon cumin seeds
½ teaspoon dried Mexican oregano
¼ teaspoon garlic powder

Chili

8 ounces bacon
3 pounds boneless beef chuck, buffalo or venison, cut into ¼-inch cubes
1 pound (2 medium) white onions, chopped
2 teaspoons paprika
1 teaspoon dried Mexican oregano
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
½ teaspoon dried thyme leaves
½ teaspoon salt
4 large garlic cloves, minced
1¾ cups beef broth
1 28-ounce can puréed tomatoes
2 ancho chiles, stems and seeds removed



Method:

Chile powder: Place the chiles flat in a cast-iron skillet over medium heat and cook, turning as needed, until lightly toasted. Transfer to a plate to cool. Put the cumin seeds in the hot pan and stir until fragrant. Transfer to a bowl to cool.

Cut the chiles into small strips. Using a spice grinder or a clean coffee grinder, grind in batches into a powder. Pour into a bowl. Grind the cumin seeds into a powder and add to the bowl. Add the oregano and garlic powder. If the mixture is still coarse, grind again until fine. Reserve 3½ tablespoons for the chili; save the rest in a jar.

Chili: In a Dutch oven or stainless steel pot over medium-high heat, add the bacon and fry until crisp, 5 to 8 minutes. Transfer to paper towels to drain.

Increase the heat to high. Working in small batches, add the beef cubes to the pot and cook, stirring, until well browned on all sides. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the beef to a bowl.

Reduce the heat to medium, add the onions to the remaining bacon fat and sauté until lightly browned, about 8 minutes.

Add the reserved chili powder, paprika, oregano, black pepper, thyme, salt and garlic and cook, stirring often, for 1 minute. Crumble in the bacon and add the broth, tomatoes, 1 cup water, anchos and the browned beef. Increase the heat to high and bring to a boil, then decrease the heat to low, cover partly and simmer for 2 hours, until the meat is very tender. Add water as needed to maintain a good chili consistency.

Remove the anchos, purée them in a food processor or blender and return the purée to the pot. Stir well, simmer for a few minutes to incorporate flavors.

Enjoy!