



Cuban Black Bean Soup

serves 8-10

I began teaching Cuban cooking classes long before I actually traveled to Cuba. I had been to Cuban restaurants in Miami and New York City, and I loved the food so much, I knew I had to study and attempt the cuisine at home. One of my favorite Cuban recipes is black bean soup, made with bacon, chorizo, and warm spices. While visiting Cuba, I realized my recipe is a little more complex than the modest version of black bean soup I ate there. On two occasions I enjoyed bean soup in Havana and Trinidad, served with crusty bread and a cold beer. The beans were cooked in a mild broth with just a few bites of pork, and as much as I enjoyed it in the tropical atmosphere of Cuba, I still prefer my own version at home. You can serve it with a bowl of rice or a piece of crusty bread.

INGREDIENTS

SOUP:

1 pound dried black beans	1 teaspoon chile powder
1/2 pound fresh chorizo link sausages, casings removed	1 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 pound sliced bacon, cut crosswise into 1/4-inch-wide strips	2 teaspoons kosher salt
1 small onion, chopped	3 cups (or more) chicken broth
2 garlic cloves, minced	one 14-ounce can diced tomatoes in juice
1 teaspoon dried oregano	GARNISH:
	1/2 cup chopped fresh cilantro
	Sour cream

PROCESS:

Place beans in a heavy large pot. Add enough cold water to cover the beans by 2 inches. Let sit for 5-6 hours and drain beans. Return to the same pot and add 8 cups of cold water. Bring to boil, reduce heat to medium, and simmer until beans are tender, 1 1/2 to 2 hours.

Heat a medium skillet over medium heat. Add chorizo and bacon and cook until chorizo is brown and bacon is crisp. Add onions, garlic, oregano, chile powder, cumin, and salt. Cook until onion is translucent, stirring frequently, about 5 minutes. Add to the pot of beans, along with chicken broth and tomatoes. . Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium and simmer for 20 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve with sour cream and chopped cilantro.