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**The Secret To Making Perfect Chili Fit For A King**

**By John Foutz**

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Every autumn my thoughts turn to making chili. The garden is about done. The freezer is full of veggies. All the canning is done, and winter is coming. Just before winter hits, the price of beef drops as cattlemen sell off any remaining stock that they don't want to "winter over". It is the perfect time to stock the freezer with homemade chili.

There is nothing better than to come home at the end of a cold winter day, chilled to the bone, and sit down to a bowl of piping hot chili and steaming black coffee. It is more than food for the body. It is truly a comfort worth remembering.

By itself, chili is absolutely delicious. As a side dish to grilled cheese sandwiches, tuna melts, or toasted BLTs, it is out of this world. But there is a fabulous meal I call "perfect chili fit for a king" that is even better. It is a masterpiece of cookery.

There are two great secrets to making "perfect chili fit for a king". One is in the making, and the other is in the serving. The first secret involves understanding the word "perfect". More people disagree on what makes good chili than any other dish. Some think that hotter is better. Others say milder. Some like it soupy. Others like it thick. And that is the secret to this recipe. When you finish making it, you will have 3-4 gallons of chili that is perfect FOR YOU...not for me. Yes, I said 3-4 gallons. When frozen in quart containers, you will have 12-16 wonderful meals that can be served in a matter of minutes. Just remove it from the container, add about a 1/4 to 1/2 cup of water (depending on how you like it), turn on the burner, put on the coffee, and start the grilled cheese and garlic sandwiches. Your family will be eating in about 20 minutes.

To begin with, you will need at least a 16 quart pot. I use the same 20 quart pot normally used for canning just to be sure I have a pot that's big enough. And you will need the following ingredients. 5 lbs. of ground chuck 5 Family size (40 1/2 oz.) cans of dark red kidney beans (drained) 1 Institutional size can (6 lb. 9 oz.) of whole peeled tomatoes 3 large bell peppers (washed, cored, and seeded)

## The Secret To Making Perfect Chili Fit For A King

mixed colors preferred 3 medium to large onions (about the size of an orange...peeled and washed)

2 to 4 TBS (tablespoons) Ground black pepper 1 1/2 tsp (teaspoons) to 1 TBS of crushed red pepper  
1 to 2 TBS of salt 1/4 to 1/2 cup of chili powder grated sharp cheddar cheese sour cream chopped

chives (fresh or dried)

Open the tomatoes and carefully pour the entire contents into the cooking pot. Making sure you keep your hand submerged below the liquid line, find the whole tomatoes one by one. Poke a hole in them with your thumb, then squeeze the tomato until the pieces squish out between your fingers.

**WARNING.** If you do not poke a hole in the tomato before you squish it, I promise you that both you and your kitchen will be wearing tomato juice. The same is true if you squish them with your hands above the liquid. Continue squishing the pieces of tomato until they are the size you prefer.

Chop all the bell peppers into dime-sized chunks and divide into two equal portions. Put one half into a bowl and the other in the pot with the tomatoes. Do the same with the onions, placing half in the pot

and the other half in the same bowl as the bell peppers. Add the drained kidney beans to the pot. Add 2 TBS (tablespoons) of Ground black pepper to the pot. Add 1 1/2 tsp (teaspoons) of crushed red pepper to the pot. Add 1 TBS of salt to the pot. Add 1/4 cup of chili powder to the pot.

Take a strong spoon and mix all the ingredients thoroughly. Put the pot on the stove, and set the burner on the **LOWEST** possible setting that will boil water. At this point, you may feel that the chili is too thick. If you are not sure, the best way to tell is if the chili is too hard to stir. If it is, add water to the pot until it is the consistency you prefer. Stir again. Cover the pot. (Note: if you are adding more than two glasses of water, you may want to substitute tomato juice for part of it.)

>From now on, two things are very important. Always keep the chili at the consistency you want by adding water when necessary. So that when the chili is done, the consistency will be perfect for you. It is equally important to stir the pot every 5–10 minutes. When you are cooking this much chili at one time, it is possible to burn it on the bottom while the chili on the top is still cold. Stirring keeps the chili evenly heated from top to bottom.

Take a large frying pan and press enough ground chuck into the pan to cover the bottom with a layer about 1 to 1 1/2 inches thick. Salt and pepper the meat and then top with a handful of the chopped onions and peppers from the bowl. Cover and cook with the burner set about one notch higher than the pot is set on. Your goal is to partially cook the ground chuck, onions and peppers. Check the meat about every 5 minutes until it starts to firm. When the meat firms and starts changing colors on the bottom, take a strong spatula (the kind used for flipping hamburgers) and use the edge to start cutting the meat into pie shaped pieces. Flip the pieces to the opposite side, cover, and continue cooking. When the other side starts to firm, using the edge of the spatula, cut the hamburger into the size pieces you prefer (Again, I prefer mine about the size of a dime). Keep flipping the smaller pieces until they have completely turned on the outside and are firm. Remove the pan from the burner, and transfer the meat to the pot using a slotted spoon. Allow all the grease to drain from the spoon before you put the meat in the pot. Pour off the grease in the frying pan, and repeat until you have used all the ground

## The Secret To Making Perfect Chili Fit For A King

chuck. When you are finished, pour any remaining chopped peppers and onions into the pot. Again, each time you add meat to the pot, adjust the consistency with water if necessary.

Now, everything is in the pot, and it is the perfect consistency. Now, it's time to adjust the spices. If you haven't been doing so, you should begin tasting the chili. If you want a stronger chili flavor, add more chili powder 1 or 2 TBS at a time. To make it more spicy, add black pepper 1 TBS at a time. If you want it to have more bite, add crushed red pepper 1 tsp at a time. If it needs salt, add salt 1/2 TBS at a time. Stir thoroughly each time you alter the flavor, and continue cooking for at least 5–15 minutes before tasting again. ALWAYS stir the pot thoroughly before you taste. Continue altering the flavor until it's perfect for you.

Remember the half of the raw onions and peppers that were added directly to the pot? They will tell you when the chili is done. When the raw onions in the pot start to turn clear, turn the burner off. Do not overcook the peppers and onions as they add a wonderful sweet crisp texture to the chili. If you can stand it, allow the chili to sit covered for about an hour to allow the flavors to mature and mingle. Stir and serve. If you prefer, reheat a portion of the chili in a smaller pot and serve bubbling hot. Allow the remaining chili to stand in the original pot until it cools enough to place in containers and freeze.

There you have it. Perfect chili. Just the way YOU like it.

The second secret that makes perfect chili fit for a king is in the serving. While perfect chili is in a

category all by itself, it can be wonderfully enhanced by making it into a meal that rewards all your tastes and senses. Hot, cold, sweet, spicy, sharp, flat ... something for every aspect of your culinary pallet.

With that in mind, let's plan the meal. To begin with dispense with the ordinary salad and add something with more zest and contrast. To accomplish this, there is nothing finer than an ice-cold fruit plate served with bubbling hot chili. For the fruit plate, you will need the following ingredients. 1 20 oz. can of pineapple chunks. 1 29 oz. can of peach halves (heavy syrup preferred) 1 29 oz. can of pear halves (heavy syrup preferred) 1 6 oz. jar of red maraschino cherries 1 6 oz. jar of green maraschino cherries 1 small jar of spiced crabapple rings crisp cold lettuce jalapeno pepper-jack cheese

Put all of the ingredients in the bottom of the refrigerator for at least 24 hours (48 hours would be better).

Just before serving time, remove the ingredients from the refrigerator and drain all the fruit. Divide the pear and peach halves equally on six salad plates covered with a bed of cold crisp lettuce. Fill in around the fruit halves with pineapple chunks and crabapple slices. Spread the cold red and green maraschino cherries equally over all the fruit plates, and line the outer edge of each plate with bite-size nuggets of jalapeno pepper-jack cheese.

Fill the bowls of chili straight from the bubbling pot. Top with grated sharp cheddar cheese and a dollop of sour cream. Finish with a light dusting of chives. Serve the fruit plate and chili with hunks of hot buttered garlic bread and sweet iced tea. For dessert, follow up with pecan pie, lemon meringue pie, or

## The Secret To Making Perfect Chili Fit For A King

hot blueberry cobbler topped with vanilla ice cream ... served with steaming cups of strong black coffee. Oh! My!

Perfect chili can be more than just stick-to-your ribs "down home" cooking. It can be a culinary masterpiece that produces such delicious complementing and contrasting flavors and sensations that it is quite literally "Fit for a King".

Bon appetit!

John Foutz has been marketing quality internet products since 1999. His latest offering "Cat Head Biscuits and Garlic Fried Chicken" represents Southern cooking at it's finest. 180 mouth-watering dishes that are family tried and tested. Authentic heirloom recipes from the heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains. For more information, visit

### **How to Make a Tantalizing White Lightening Chili**

**By Pau;a McCoach**

#### **How to Make a Tantalizing White Lightening Chili**

by: **Pau;a McCoach** Chili cooks always want to discover that award-winning chili recipe that will be tantalizing for their family and friends and maybe even impress a few chili contest judges. Wouldn't it be exciting to UNLEASH your chili and rock your family and friends' worlds, save money and have a great time preparing it?

In my interviews with outstanding chili cooks, I have developed some tantalizing chili recipes that are easy, time and money saving and make your body tingle from the first taste right down to your toes.

The secret ingredient is the key to this tantalizing recipe. This secret ingredient sets this chili apart from the rest. Actually, it is so sensational that it makes this easy and timesaving chili unbelievably flavorful.

Finding a recipe that uses your local grocery store ingredients is another time and money saving benefit of this chili. There are no fancy ingredients that you have to go to a specialty shop to buy. So, you can get the ingredients during one of your weekly food shopping trips.

This recipe produces a sultry chili that your family and friends will think came from a high-class restaurant.

Try this recipe and send us your comments and suggestions.

#### Ingredients

3 lbs. of pork, chicken or turkey  
2-4 cloves of garlic to taste  
1 large chopped onion

## The Secret To Making Perfect Chili Fit For A King

1–2 tablespoons of cumin  
1 large bell pepper – green, yellow or red  
4–6 16 oz. cans of your favorite white bean  
1–3 finely chopped jalapeno peppers

To discover the "Secret Ingredient" that makes this chili tantalizing plus 5 SECRET TIPS for "unleashing" your chili, email

If using pork, use a pork shoulder and cook about 2 ½ – 3 hours until you can pull it. With chicken or turkey, cook it for about 1½ hours in an inch of water at 350 degrees in a large covered roasting pan with a good lid to hold in the steam.

Use chicken or turkey breasts with the skin and bone for the extra flavor. Not necessary to use boneless breasts because more flavor is available with the skin and bone and it is more economical too.

If the chicken does not pull apart at 1½ hours, cook an additional 15 minutes until it does pull apart.

With chicken or turkey, before you add the following ingredients, pull out the bones and unwanted gristle, etc. Only the meat is used in the chili.

The last half hour of the cooking process, add the following ingredients.

Cook chili mixture an additional ½ hour. Add 4–6 16 oz. cans of your favorite white bean.

Stir in the beans and leave it in the oven until the beans are warm and let it cool for 20–30 minutes. Reheat to serve.

To discover the "Secret Ingredient" that makes this chili tantalizing plus 5 SECRET TIPS for "unleashing" your chili, email

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Coach and Paula McCoach are the owners of Coach's Coffee Company, Inc. They have created special blends of coffee for coffee connoisseurs who like a caffeine kick. Coach's Coffee started by serving America's Civil War reenactors in 1997. Cups of their coffee are made by using Open–Pot Brewin,'ä a coffee brewing technique created by Coach and Paula to get the best brew from their high–altitude beans. Paula McCoach is now publishing her gourmet recipes, which are another of her culinary creations. For more information on Open–Pot Brewin,' send an email to

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