

Black Bean Soup
From "Soup Suppers"
Arthur Schwartz
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Ingredients

1-pound dried black beans, rinsed and picked over, then soaked overnight in cold water to cover by several inches
1 large bay leaf
1 medium green bell pepper, seeded and finely chopped

For the sofrito:

1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil preferably Spanish
4 large garlic cloves, finely chopped
1 large onion, finely chopped (about 1-1/2 cups)
1 large green bell pepper, seeded and finely chopped (about 1 cup)
1 tablespoon ground cumin
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1 teaspoon (or more) finely chopped, seeded, tiny hot green or red chili pepper
8 cups cooked white rice
Chopped raw onion
Shredded Monterey Jack, crumbed queso blanco, or American farmer cheese
pico de gallo, or pickled, sliced jalapeños

1. Drain the beans and place in a 4- to 6- quart pot. Cover with water by about 2 inches. Add the bay leaf and green pepper. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Stir well, adjust the heat, partially cover and simmer briskly until very tender, about 2 hours. Stir regularly and add more water if necessary.
2. Meanwhile make the sofrito: In a medium skillet, heat the oil over medium heat, then add the garlic, onion and bell pepper. Cook, stirring often, until the onion is transparent 8 to 10 minutes. Add the cumin, vinegar, and chili pepper. Mix well and bring to a boil.
3. Add the simmering sofrito to the beans after 2 hours. Mix well, then continue to simmer gently another 30 to 40 minutes. The beans should be disintegrating at this point.
4. Taste and correct seasoning with salt, pepper, and more chili pepper, as desired. Let cool slightly.
5. In a blender or food processor, or using an immersion blender, process the beans until very smooth.
6. Reheat, adding more water if a thinner soup is desired.
7. Serve piping hot in deep or flat bowls, on around a mound of boiled white rice. Garnish with cheese and pass the chopped onion and pico di gallo salsa and/or pickled jalapeños.

Advanced preparation: May be refrigerated for up to a week; it freezes perfectly for up to a year. The soup must be thinned with water while reheating.

Donna's notes: This soup can be made in an InstaPot/pressure cooker. I began by par-cooking the beans following the directions from the website "The Spruce Eats" and added a bay leaf to the pot.

Once the beans were done, they were drained and set aside. I picked up the soup recipe in step 2 with the sofrito. When it was done, the par-cooked beans and 6-1/2 cups of water were added to the pot and covered. The soup was cooked under high pressure for 30 minutes.