

Chilli Con Carne (for a crowd)

As Jo mentioned in the Lasagne intro, bonfire night at Flitwick Manor was all about chilli & jacket spuds. As children we loved the build-up – helping Pop, Joe & John to build the bonfire. There were always lots of people there to celebrate with us, and bonfire night has held a special place in my heart ever since, despite living in France where it doesn't exist.

I have written this recipe to feed 12 so just multiply up if your crowd is larger.
(Becca)

Ingredients

3 medium onions
4 cloves garlic
3 medium carrots
2 sticks celery
2 red peppers
olive oil
2 heaped tsp chilli powder
1 heaped tsp chipotle chilli flakes
2 heaped tsp ground cumin
1 heaped tsp ground coriander
1 heaped tsp ground cinnamon
(Star Anise) 1 or 2 (Oilly)
1 beef jelly stock pot
2 x 400 g tin of red kidney beans or black-eyed beans
2 x 800 g tin of chopped tomatoes
1kg quality minced beef
(I would swap some out for 250g of diced beef steak) Oilly
a bunch of fresh coriander (20g ish)
S + P
(A splash of Whisky – or Bourbon – or Vodka) (Oilly)

Method

Peel and finely chop the onions, garlic, carrots and celery. Halve the red peppers, remove the stalks and seeds and roughly chop.

Heat a decent glug of oil in a large casserole pan on a medium-high heat, add the chopped veg, chilli powder and flakes, cumin, coriander, cinnamon and a good pinch of sea salt and black pepper, then cook for about 10 minutes, or until softened, stirring regularly.

(If you are going to use my tip – empty the stock pot keeping every available morsel of flavour, and then heavily brown the diced steak in the same pan. Carry on Becca)

Add the minced beef, stirring regularly to colour the mince as much as possible. Once all the mince is browned, tip in the tomatoes, (and the veg if you took them out earlier) then pour in 1 tin's worth of water and the beef stock.

Pick the coriander leaves and put aside, then finely chop and add the stalks to the pan, with the balsamic vinegar. Season with a good pinch of sea salt and black pepper.

Bring to the boil, (add the star anise now if you want to)* then reduce the heat to low and simmer with a lid ajar for at least 1 hour, or until thickened and reduced, stirring occasionally, adding the rinsed and drained kidney beans half way through.

*At this point I would probably transfer it to a low oven with the lid on – say 150°C - for about 3 hours. Less stirring and watching needed but don't forget about it entirely. Long and slow is always best for a dish like this. If you are serving Jackets however you will need a hotter oven so maybe get the chilli done ahead of time and just reheat it to serve.

Serve up with jacket potatoes (we think) but fluffy rice or couscous, or just a hunk of crusty bread is good too, with some sour cream/creme fraiche, [guacamole](#), grated cheddar and wedges of lime on the side for squeezing over. Sprinkle over the reserved coriander, and some fresh chilli, if you like, then tuck in.

(If you are serving to the table – add the booze just before you serve and it will help improve the aroma and the taste!)