



Ancho Chili Con Carne

SERVES 6-8

My family had a tradition every Christmas eve. Mom made a huge pot of chili, and we all filled our bowls with Fritos, chili, cheese, and sour cream before loading up in Dad's car to go looking at the neighborhood Christmas lights. After my mom passed away, my sisters and I continued the tradition of making chili, but when it's my turn I put my own spin on the recipe. No matter who makes the chili each year, we always have to have Fritos and cheese, or it's just not right. Here's my version of Christmas eve chili, and you can make it as spicy as you like by adding or reducing the amount of dried chiles you use.

INGREDIENTS

5 dried ancho chiles	1 tablespoon ground cumin
6 dried chile de árbol	1 tablespoon ground oregano
4 cups water	2 teaspoons kosher salt
5 tablespoons canola oil	1 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 large onion, chopped	3 pounds ground beef
1 green bell pepper, chopped	1 (14 ounce) can chopped tomatoes
3 cloves garlic, minced	1 (14 ounce) can pinto beans

PROCESS:

Remove the stems and seed from dried chiles and soak in 4 cups of warm water for at least 30 minutes, until softened. Pour water with the chiles into a blender and blend until smooth. Set aside.

In a 4 quart pot, add 2 tablespoons of oil and heat on the stove over medium high heat. Add onion and green bell pepper and cook until softened. Add garlic, cumin, oregano, salt, and pepper. Cook for one minute and remove from heat. In a large skillet, heat 3 tablespoons of oil and add ground beef, breaking it up as it cooks.

When beef is browned, add to the onion mixture and combine. Add ancho chili mixture, tomatoes (with juice) and beans (with juice) and stir. Simmer for 30 minutes. Taste to see if more salt is needed. Serve with



Fritos, cheese, sour cream, and green onions.