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Inspector Praline's Gastronomically Volatile Chili

1 1/2 lbs (680g) ground beef (sirloin works best)
2-3 tbsp chili mix (I use a brand called "Carroll Shelby's," that is a blend.)
4 8 oz cans tomato sauce
2 6 oz cans tomato paste
1 small whole yellow onion, finely chopped
2 tbsp olive oil or other cooking oil
2-3 tbsp creole seasoning (I like Tony Chachere's "More Spice" seasoning)
1/2 tsp cayenne pepper, more if you like it hotter
1 clove fresh garlic
1/2 tsp oregano
1/2 tsp onion powder
1 green bell pepper, diced (optional)
1/2 cp shredded cheddar cheese (optional)

1. Place ground beef in saucepan over medium heat. Break it up thoroughly until it forms a layer on the bottom of the pan. Cook, covered, until meat is browned throughout and no pink remains in meat.
2. While the meat's cooking, saute the onions and garlic over low heat, in the olive oil. Cook about five minutes or until the onions begin to turn clear.
3. Remove both meat and veggies from heat, drain away the grease on the meat. (Use the lid as a shield to stop the meat from falling down the drain if you don't have a strainer or colander.)
4. Turn heat down to low, put saucepan back on heat. Dump tomato sauce, tomato paste, and the chili seasoning into the pot. If you can't find chili seasoning that's fully blended, use about the same amount of chili powder combined with 1/2 tsp of cumin seed and 1 tsp of ground oregano. Stir vigorously until well blended. Mixture should look chunky.
5. Throw in sauteed onions and garlic, bell pepper, creole seasoning, cayenne, oregano, and onion powder until the mixture reaches desired spiciness. Taste frequently as you cook.
6. Let simmer, covered, 20 minutes. Remove from heat and enjoy.

Variation:

Prepare as above, except add 1 small peeled potato, diced, and 1 12 oz. can of red kidney beans. Add about 1/4 cp of water, then let simmer 2 1/2 hours. Place in refrigerator and let it sit, covered, for 48 hours. Reheat and enjoy.

Courtesy Open Source Cookbook, Fuel for Geeks, Mathew Balmer

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