

# Poppy's Pantry



# What's in the pot is Love!

## Poppy's Cowboy Chili

If you are herding beef then beef it should be. Our transplanted chef attempted to corral the long-horned gift of the Texas plains. Beef, marbled with fat cut into bite sized chunks start the journey to the heavenly delight that is known by the name of its spice.

### Ingredients

- 🍲 1 tablespoon cumin seeds
- 🍲 1 ½ teaspoons coriander seeds
- 🍲 4 pounds beef chuck roast or steak
- 🍲 1 teaspoon salt, more to taste
- 🍲 1 teaspoon pepper
- 🍲 3 tablespoons vegetable oil, plus extra as needed
- 🍲 1 large yellow or white onion, chopped, plus extra chopped onion for serving
- 🍲 6 large garlic cloves, minced (3 teaspoons of garlic powder)
- 🍲 4 to 7 large fresh green jalapeños (depending on how much heat you like), stemmed, seeded and chopped. For extra spice add the last two sliced in rings with seeds.



- 🍲 2 tablespoons ground pure chili powder, such as pasilla, Chimayo or ancho
- 🍲 1 tablespoon dried oregano
- 🍲 1 28-ounce can diced tomatoes, or 3 10-ounce cans Ro-Tel canned tomatoes with green chilies
- 🍲 1 ounce unsweetened chocolate (I used 3 tablespoons)
- 🍲 3 whole dried large red chilies, such as New Mexico or guajillo
- 🍲 Fritos or warmed flour tortillas, for serving

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## Preparation

- ☪ Roughly cut beef into 2-inch cubes, or slice it against the grain into pieces about 1/4-inch thick by 1 1/2 inches square. Sprinkle with salt.
- ☪ In a large, heavy pot over high heat, heat oil until shimmering. Working in batches to avoid crowding the pan, brown the meat, turning occasionally until crusty. Adjust heat to prevent scorching. As it is cooked, remove the meat to drain on paper towels. Add more oil as needed for browning, but do not clean out the pot.
- ☪ To the empty but crusty pot, add onion, garlic, jalapeños, chili powder, cumin-coriander powder and oregano. Cook, stirring, until onion has softened, 5 to 10 minutes.
- ☪ **STOVE TOP** - Add meat, tomatoes, chocolate, whole dried chilies and 4 cups water. Bring to a gentle simmer and simmer about 1 1/2 hours, or until meat is fork-tender. Remove the dried chilies. Taste and add salt if necessary.
- ☪ **CROCK POT** - Add meat, tomatoes, chocolate, whole dried chilies. Set on High and bring to a bubble, then set to lower setting and simmer about 2-3 hours, or until meat is fork-tender. Remove the dried chilies. Taste and add salt if necessary. (Water is usually not necessary with covered Crock Pot.)
- ☪ Serve immediately or let cool and refrigerate. The chili tastes best one or two days after it is made.
- ☪ Reheat over low heat if necessary and serve in bowls, sprinkled with chopped onion. Add Fritos for crunch, or dip tortillas into the spicy gravy.



There is playfulness about the process of adding chili peppers to the pot. Stopped by for some grilled pork and rice—chilies pepper the precocious plate. Dropped in for a morning meal—chili peppers perk-up the poultry's pouched.

Oh, just to be clear. Beans belong in a pan of their own. Let the eater decide what is the right

mixings.



Heated debates will ensue and gun fights are not out of the question so be prepared!

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# Side Bean Chili

### Ingredients

- 🍲 1/4 tablespoon cumin seeds
- 🍲 1/8 teaspoon coriander seeds
- 🍲 4 cans of beans of your choice. (If dried beans are used, properly soak before continuing)
- 🍲 Salt and pepper to taste
- 🍲 1 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 🍲 1/4 large yellow or white onion, chopped, plus extra chopped onion for serving
- 🍲 1 large garlic clove, minced (1/2 teaspoons of garlic powder)
- 🍲 2 large fresh green jalapeños sliced in rings with seeds.
- 🍲 1/2 tablespoon ground pure chili powder, such as pasilla, Chimayo or ancho
- 🍲 1/4 tablespoon dried oregano



### Directions

- 🍲 In a frying pan add oil, onion, garlic, jalapeños, chili powder, cumin-coriander powder and oregano. Cook, stirring, until onion has softened, 5 to 10 minutes.
- 🍲 Using a pot, bean pot, or slow cooker combine ingredients, simmering while the chili is cooking. You know the deal—beans tender but not mushy, etc. etc.
- 🍲 Serve alongside your wonderful chili and let the cowboys and cowgirls mix as they like.

## The Critter You Love



reign to experiment as you choose.

This recipe allows for many variations, including the meat that you put in your pot. Steer, Pork or Chicken do very well within the stew and you have free

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## Yankee Playing Cowboy Chef



*to write is to place love  
in the hands of  
generations to come*

Article first appears in the May 2017 issue of [Monthly Conversation](#)



He was no stranger to food but the secret ingredients found on the trails of his new southwestern home created a unique dilemma. He was, for the first time in his culinary life, scared of a spice. He trembled when he looked at those green and red peppers decorating the produce section. Could he take a chance with his taste buds? Would the southwestern heat prove too much for the boy from New York?

Realizing there was only one solution to his trepidation, he selected a chili recipe and gathered the ingredients. Die in the fire or earn his spurs, he was going to make some chili!

The boy had been raised by Irish parents living in an Italian neighborhood of Yonkers New York. That gave him two culinary skills. *Anything in the pot stew* and a *spaghetti sauce to sing for*. His culinary bones were made and people came from far and wide for tastes of his creations. In fact, in college, his Wednesday spaghetti dinners paid for nearly half his education.

He added dishes and recipes over the years and had kids clamoring for the likes of *Ham Bone Heaven* (April 2016 *MC*) or his famous *r.e.joyce Apple Pie* (May 2015 *MC*). The days were bright and the laughter around the table wonderful to behold. Life made sense and the tummy was happy.

His world changed when a career opportunity made a pioneer of the boy, packing his family and moving them to Texas. It was a done deal when a very nice gentleman made him a Texas omelet with chilies and salsa. The warm feeling stayed with him all day and he was hooked.



## Poppy's Pantry



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But to actually cook with them himself – to risk self-annihilation by chili? It is one thing to earn your spurs by training your tongue to perform a Texas drawl. It is another to actually pick up a pepper and use it in a dish!

Now it is important to understand that the goal is not the best chili recipe but one that can be considered proper for a Yankee transplant and still create smiles on those whose roots were planted in the Lone Star State.

### **Ground beef just will not do**

The ground beef concoction, liberally slopped on plates and buns just would not do for our Yankee cowboy. That left him three choices—the cow the pig and the chicken. If the recipe was to stand, it needed to provide wonder to any and all of the Texas feedstock.

Yes, Yes, I know. If my taste-tester ate fish, shrimp would need to be on the menu. Another transplant will need to test those waters. Right now my son's tongue is required to make this adventure happen.



The wide Texas sky fills with stars as the cowboys return from moving the herd. Cookie has no meat grinder or can opener and the stew pot needs to be filled. If you are herding beef then beef it should be. Our industrious chef attempted to corral the long-horned gift of the Texas plains. Beef, marbled with fat cut into bite sized chunks start the journey to the heavenly delight that is known by the name of its spice.



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### **If at first, you don't...**

The first attempt had plastic gloves and goggles instead of a chef's hat, preparing three jalapeno peppers de-seeded and diced. Of this attempt, the son looked sadly at his old man and took pity, talking about the weather as he added more fresh chilies to his bowl. Even the cook realized the overcooked and cleaned chilies failed to provide the kick required. The rest of the ingredients were close and the experiment continued.

Attempt two had six chilies, two with seeds. "I felt that dad – a little..." Attempt three dumps all six in, seeds and all. "Yup. This is getting good, old man." The Yankee noticed his son didn't reach for additional chilies this time. He tasted it and sat up in his chair as the wonderful fire of the spicy pepper exploded in his mouth.



Now there was playfulness about the process of adding chili peppers to the pot. Chili, for the transplanted cook, became a game. Stopped by for some grilled pork and rice. Chilies peppered the precocious plate. Dropped in for a morning meal. Chilies perked up the poultry's pouched. The now mad chef from New York was going pepper crazy.

The fear was gone and the enjoyment began. There is a way to make hot spices work even for the subtle palette of a Yankee chef. And it is a fun. Oh, just to be clear. Beans belong in a pan of their own. Let the eater decide to mix them in.

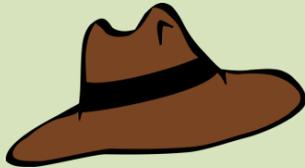
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### Let it be known...

With all the fanfare of the new recipes added to my collection, Chili, in all its forms has been wonderful. I have learned three marvelous truths for this Yankee Cowboy Chef.



One—I am not now nor never will be a five-alarm-chef. If you need higher Scoville Ratings, make it yourself or add your own when served.

Two—The wonderful jalapeño is not to be feared but to be embraced in many dishes adding that fiery excitement without taking away the taste of the underlying food.



Three—My son, somehow has an asbestos tongue. Seems if you transplant them early enough they sprout up fully Texan including the need for chilies.

**Enjoy the recipe and don't forget to say howdy when we meet.**



### *r.e.joyce*

We were approached by a rather dusty old gentleman who stated flatly in a west Texas drawl, that he “found the scrolls while looking for gold.” His only requirement was to be left alone and that any reward could be left at Western Union for his eventual return to civilization.

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