



Belizean Black Beans

Yields 16 cups

Ingredients

- 2 lbs black beans
- 1 large peeled white onion, diced ½ inch
- 1 small head garlic cloves, minced (at home I will use 8 cloves since the heads of garlic there are larger)
- 1 whole medium tomato
- 1 whole scrubbed but unpeeled large carrot
- 1 Tbsp sea salt
- 1 tsp ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon Season All
- 2 scant tsp baking powder
- Two bunches culancho or cilantro, cleaned and roots removed - bruise by twisting the leaves with your hands (divide into two bunches).

Instructions

Clean the beans well to remove stones and dirt then rinse them with fresh water in a colander. Place in a large pot and add cold water to cover the beans by 2 ½ inches.

Soak cleaned and rinsed beans overnight or for at least 10 hours. Drain thoroughly and add fresh water to cover the beans by 2 ½ inches in a large soup pot (6-8 quart) and bring to a boil. We don't skim the grey gunk that rises to the top but rather stir it in. My wanna-be-chef husband insists the foam adds nutrients (!).

Reduce heat to a medium boil. Add the remaining ingredients (reserving one bunch of culantro) to the pot once the beans are boiling.

Once the vegetables and seasonings are added, reduce heat to a medium boil and mostly cover the pot for 1/2 hour (I leave a tiny bit uncovered so the steam can escape), stir and then completely remove the lid and continue on medium heat for 45 minutes to an hour until the beans are pretty soft.

With your tongs, fish out the carrot, tomato, culantro or cilantro and add the remaining bunch of fresh culantro along with two or three teaspoons of salt.

Continue cooking with the lid off on medium heat until the beans are much softer, about another half hour . The water should still be one inch above the beans, so add more water if you need to. Taste and season to your liking. Remove culantro or cilantro when done.

Let the beans cool for another 1-2 hrs in the juice, then put half in the freezer with the juice and half in the fridge to eat for breakfast, lunch and dinner! These will last five days in the refrigerator. The bean juice thickens by the next day.

Serve with grated hard cheese (Edam or Parmesan) on top and condiment (link) or chopped tomato.

Notes: If you are serving this to people who dislike cilantro, omit the Culantro or cilantro. In the US I substitute bunches of cilantro for the culantro since cilantro is much easier to procure. Also, the black beans here in Belize are fresh and tiny and cook quickly, so it might take longer to get packaged black beans to soften. Just keep tasting! You can also use these drained in salads or omelets, or blend them for refried beans.