



Spectacular Spiced Veggie Chocolate Chili + Herb Sour Cream Dollop

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 25 / **Cook Time** 18 / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

knife skills: Bear Claw (growl), Pinch, Plank, and Bridge (look out for trolls).

blend spices: to choose and mix together complementary spices in order to add complex flavor to a dish.

dice: to cut foods into small pieces of equal size so that the food is cooked evenly or looks uniform and pleasant when used in the recipe.

mince: to chop into teeny tiny pieces.

simmer: to cook a food gently, usually in a liquid, until softened.

Equipment

- ☐ Large soup pot
- ☐ Cutting board + kid-safe knife
- ☐ Measuring spoons
- ☐ Wooden spoon
- ☐ Small spoon (to mix spices)
- ☐ Can opener
- ☐ Liquid measuring cup
- ☐ Citrus juicer (optional)

Ingredients

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☐ Veggie Chili:

- ☐ 2 garlic cloves
- ☐ 3 green onions
- ☐ 1 green bell pepper
- ☐ 1 large carrot
- ☐ 2 T olive oil
- ☐ 2 T chili powder
- ☐ 2 tsp salt
- ☐ 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- ☐ 1/4 tsp black pepper
- ☐ 1/2 tsp dried oregano
- ☐ 1 14.5-oz can diced tomatoes
- ☐ 1 T tomato paste
- ☐ 1 C veggie broth
- ☐ 2 16-oz cans pinto or black beans, drained, or 1 can of each ******(for LEGUME ALLERGY sub chopped cauliflower florets, zucchini, or mushrooms)******
- ☐ 1/4 C bittersweet chocolate chips ******(for CHOCOLATE ALLERGY sub carob chips and for DAIRY/NUT/SOY ALLERGY sub Enjoy Life brand chocolate chips)******
- ☐ Sour cream dollop:
- ☐ 1/2 C sour cream ******(for DAIRY ALLERGY omit or sub dairy-free/nut free sour cream—more info below)******
- ☐ 1/4 tsp ground coriander or few sprigs fresh cilantro or parsley (your choice!)
- ☐ 1 pinch salt
- ☐ 1 lime, juiced

Food Allergen Substitutions

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Chocolate: Substitute carob chips for chocolate chips in Chili.

Nut/Soy: Substitute Enjoy Life chocolate chips in Chili.

Dairy: Substitute Enjoy Life chocolate chips in Chili. Substitute dairy-free/nut-free sour cream in Sour Cream Dollop, or omit sour cream and top chili with lime wedge and sprinkle of coriander.

Instructions

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chili: mince + dice + sauté

Mince **2 garlic cloves** and **3 green onions** (both white and green parts). Dice **1 green bell pepper** and **1 large carrot**. In a large soup pot, heat **2 tablespoons of olive oil**. Sauté garlic and green onions for 30 seconds. Then add diced bell pepper and carrot and sauté until soft, about 5 minutes.

measure + blend + stir + add

Measure **2 tablespoons chili powder**, **2 teaspoons salt**, **1 teaspoon cinnamon**, **1/4 tsp black pepper**, and **1/2 teaspoon oregano** and add to one bowl. Blend these spices by stirring with a spoon. Then add the spices to the sautéed veggies and stir to coat them.

add + stir + simmer + add

Add **1 can diced tomatoes**, **1 tablespoon tomato paste**, and **1 cup of veggie broth** to the soup pot. Stir and bring to a boil, then reduce heat and let simmer on low heat for 10 minutes. Add more water if the chili gets too thick. Then add **2 cans of beans** and **1/4 cup of chocolate chips**. Let the chocolate melt. Serve with a dollop of Herb Sour Cream (next step)!

dollop: measure + squeeze + stir

Measure **1/2 cup sour cream**, **1/4 teaspoon coriander**, and **1 pinch of salt** in a bowl. Squeeze the juice from **1 lime** into the bowl. Stir to mix it all together! Add a dollop on top of each bowl of Veggie Chocolate Chili. Muy delicioso!

Featured Ingredient: Chocolate + Cocoa!

Hi! I'm Chocolate!

"Hello! Let me introduce myself! I can be dark brown, light brown, or even white. I'm sometimes bitter, sometimes a little sweet, and often very sweet. I add flavor and excitement to many other foods! Have you guessed yet? I'm Chocolate! You may be familiar with me from candy bars or chocolate sundaes, but I can liven up many other foods, too, including chili, butter, and milk!"

History

The cacao (kahKOW) tree is native to equatorial South America and the rainforests of Mesoamerica. It was

first used 5,300 years ago by indigenous people in South America. Mesoamericans who lived in the rainforests of Mexico and Central America domesticated the tree about 1,500 years later. They drank chocolate as a bitter beverage—far from the sweet treat most of us are familiar with today. The Mayan people of Central and South America used cocoa as currency and as medicine: it was very valuable, just like vanilla! In fact, it was so precious that they made counterfeit cocoa beans out of clay and avocado seeds!

The Aztec people are a nomadic tribe in Northern Mexico. When the Aztec empire began to expand, they demanded that the Mayan people pay tribute to them through gifts of cacao.

The Aztec people ruled until Spaniards arrived and conquered the land and its people. The Spanish explorers took cacao beans back to Europe, where they experimented by adding cinnamon and sugar to sweeten it. For a long time, only aristocratic people enjoyed chocolate.

Princess Maria Theresa married Louis the 16th from France and gave him chocolate as a wedding present! Demand for chocolate soon grew very fast, and as a result, people were enslaved on plantations to grow cacao to meet the high demand.

In 1847, Joseph Fry invented the first chocolate bar. By 1907, Hershey was manufacturing millions of chocolate kisses each day.

Cacao trees grow best in the rainforest underneath the branches of taller trees. However, they won't bear fruit until they are at least three to five years old.

Most early Spanish sources refer to chocolate as "cacahuatl" (cah-cah-Hwat), which translates to "cacao water."

The word chocolate comes from a combination of a Mayan word for hot, "chocol," and an Aztec word for water, "atl."

How Chocolate is Made

All chocolate comes from the beans of the cacao tree. Cacao trees produce pods containing pulp-covered seeds. Before cacao is processed, it would be hard for most of us to recognize it as chocolate! This is because the pulp-covered seeds taste bitter and raw and look nothing like the chocolate products we see in stores.

The seeds go through a process called fermentation, and then they are dried and made into nibs before being turned into chocolate.

A cacao pod contains about 30 to 50 almond-sized seeds—enough to make about seven milk chocolate candy bars!

After roasting and grinding cocoa beans, chocolate liquor is left, which is about equal parts cocoa solids and cocoa butter. After the cocoa butter is mostly extracted, the result is dry cocoa solids. Cocoa powder is the powdered form. Natural cocoa is a light brown color and tastes bitter.

Dutch chemist Coenraad van Houten created the "Dutch process" method in the early 19th century to reduce the acidity in natural cocoa powder by treating the beans with alkaline salts. As a result, Dutch

process cocoa is less bitter and has a dark brown color.

How to Enjoy Cocoa & Chocolate

You can add unsweetened cocoa to milk with sugar, honey, or stevia for a delicious and warming beverage. You can also add it to smoothies for a delicious chocolaty taste and an extra hit of magnesium and polyphenols.

Chocolate comes in many forms: bars, kisses, chips, powder, shavings, puddings, syrups, and sauces. Unconventional chocolate flavor pairings: cardamom, lavender, wasabi, chili, chipotle, sea salt, lime, matcha, curry, ginger, mint, figs, fennel, sesame, parmesan, and Earl Grey tea. Seriously, what doesn't go well with chocolate?! Can you think of any other fun and delicious pairings?

Nutrition

Dark chocolate helps protect your heart, blood, and brain! To get the full health benefits of chocolate, choose at least 85% cocoa content or higher. The higher percentage makes the chocolate more bitter, but those bitter compounds, called polyphenols, are antioxidants that provide several health benefits. Many people prefer very dark chocolate!

Polyphenols help prevent heart disease by maintaining healthy blood pressure levels, keeping vessels flexible and allowing the blood in our body to flow easier (good circulation), and reducing inflammation. In addition, they help control blood sugar levels, lower cancer risk, and boost immunity. Polyphenols also promote good digestion.

Cocoa is a great source of magnesium. We need magnesium for good health! For strong bones, healthy teeth, and as a building block for proteins within the body.

Cocoa can protect our teeth?! Cacao contains antibacterial elements that fight tooth decay. However, this is true with unsweetened cocoa only, as most mass-produced chocolate has a lot of sugar. We know what sugar does to our teeth—it causes decay!

One study has shown that the smell of chocolate may actually relax you by increasing theta waves in the brain!