

Cuban Black Beans and Rice

Recipe by Chef Ben Lierman
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For the Soupy Black Beans:

1/2 lb black beans soaked overnight, or
2 cans of cooked black beans
2 slices bacon (optional), julienned
1 T extra virgin olive oil
1 each onion, diced
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 pablano pepper, diced
1 T cumin
1 tsp oregano

1/4 cup lime juice
Kosher salt and ground pepper, to taste
Chicken stock, as needed

For the rice:

1 cup Jasmine, or other long grain white rice
Water, as needed
Kosher salt, to taste

Garnish:

Chopped scallions

If you are using dry beans, soak 1/2 pound of dry beans overnight. Pour the beans and water into a pot and bring to a boil. Skim any foam from the top of the beans and turn down to a low simmer and cook until the beans are soft, about 1 hour. Skip this step and open two cans of cooked black beans if not using the dry beans.

When the beans are ready, heat a sauce pan over medium low heat and render the bacon until almost fully crisp. If you do not want to use the bacon substitute the olive oil. Add the onions, garlic and pepper and cook until soft and fragrant. Now add the cumin and oregano and continue to cook for about one minute. Next add the cooked beans, lime juice and season with salt and pepper, go easy on the salt the mixture will reduce and concentrate you can always add more at the end if needed. Allow the beans to cook on a low simmer for an hour or two adding chicken stock as needed to keep the desired consistency.

Cook the rice according the package directions about 30 minutes before you are ready to eat.

Before you are ready to eat, use a stick blender to partially blend the beans, or use a potato masher to slightly bash some of the beans. This will thicken the beans slightly and give them some body.

Scoop the rice onto the serving plates, top with a good ladle of the beans and sprinkle with the chopped scallions. Serves 4.