

Smoked Cornbread Chili Casserole

Prep: 20 minutes • Cook: 1 hour 30 minutes

Crumbly, fluffy, golden cornbread crowns a smoky, savory ground beef chili, all kissed with wood smoke for a cozy, backyard-comfort casserole.

Ingredients

- 2 pounds ground beef (85/15 meat-to-fat)
- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- 1 medium yellow onion (diced)
- 1 red bell pepper (seeded and diced)
- 1 jalapeño (seeded and diced)
- 4 cloves garlic (minced)
- 4 cups beef stock
- 2 (15.5-ounce) cans kidney beans (drained and rinsed)
- 1 (6-ounce) can tomato paste
- 1 (15-ounce) can tomato sauce
- 1 (15-ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 1/4 cup Hey Grill Hey Fiesta Rub
- 2 Tablespoons brown sugar
- 1 1/4 cups cornmeal
- 3/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1/3 cup milk
- 2 eggs
- 4 Tablespoons butter (melted)

Instructions

1. Preheat smoker to 350°F. Heat olive oil in a deep, heavy-bottomed or cast iron pan over medium heat. Add ground beef and cook 4–5 minutes, breaking it up, until just browned.
2. Stir in onion, red bell pepper, and jalapeño; cook 4–5 minutes until softened. Add garlic and cook 1–2 minutes until fragrant.

3. Pour in beef stock, scraping up browned bits. Stir in kidney beans, tomato paste, tomato sauce, and diced tomatoes.
4. Add Fiesta Rub and brown sugar; stir to combine. Cover, place the pan in the smoker, and simmer 25–30 minutes, stirring every 5–10 minutes.
5. Make cornbread batter: In a large bowl, combine cornmeal, flour, sugar, baking soda, and salt.
6. In a separate bowl, whisk buttermilk, milk, eggs, and melted butter. Pour wet into dry and stir lightly just to combine; do not overmix.
7. Carefully pour batter evenly over the chili in the pan; smooth the top without stirring into the chili.
8. Smoke 40–45 minutes until cornbread is golden, lightly crisp at the edges, and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
9. Rest a few minutes before serving. Top as desired (e.g., shredded cheddar, sour cream, diced red onion, jalapeño slices).

Tags: Beef, Casserole, Smoked, Cornbread, Chili, Comfort Food
