



Cuban-Style Black Beans and Rice (Moros y Cristianos)

Servings: 8

Preparation Time: 20 minutes

Start to Finish Time: 26 hours 30 minutes

This dish has a load of flavors from the enriched beans to the sofrito spices. The salt pork added a "meat" dimension.

- 3 tablespoons salt (divided)**
- 1 cup dried black beans, rinsed and picked over**
- 2 1/2 cups low-sodium chicken broth**
- 2 cups water**
- 2 large green bell peppers, halved and seeded**
- 1 large onion, halved at equator and peeled, root end left intact**
- 1 head garlic, 5 medium cloves removed and minced or pressed through garlic press, remaining head halved at equator with skin left intact**
- 2 each bay leaf**
- 1 1/2 cups white rice, long grain (uncooked)**
- 2 tablespoons olive oil (divided)**
- 5 ounces salt pork (trimmed lean), cut into 1/4-inch dice (see TIP for bacon substitute)**
- 1 tablespoon oregano**
- 4 teaspoons ground cumin**
- 1 tablespoons tomato paste**
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar**
- 1 tablespoons unsalted butter**

GARNISH:

- 2 each scallions, sliced thin**
- 1 each lime, cut into 8 wedges**
- 1/2 cup sour cream (optional)**



Rendering lean salt pork creates a rich foundation, while onion, peppers, garlic, and bay leaves infuse the rice with flavor. Rinsing the rice keeps the grains separate, and oven baking ensures even, tender results.

TIP: Serve this recipe as a side dish or as a main course with a simple green salad.

TIP: It is important to use lean-not fatty-salt pork. If you can't find it, substitute six slices of bacon. If using bacon, decrease the cooking time in step 4 to eight minutes.

TO REHEAT: Place leftover rice & beans in a bowl, sprinkle a bit of water over rice, douse a paper towel with water, cover bowl w/wet paper towel, microwave.

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 301 Calories; 7g Fat (20.8% calories from fat); 10g Protein; 50g Carbohydrate; 6g Dietary Fiber; 7mg Cholesterol; 2638mg Sodium; 3g Total Sugars; 0mg Vitamin D; 80mg Calcium; 4mg Iron; 588mg Potassium; 176mg Phosphorus.

SOAK BEANS (24 hours):

Dissolve 1½ tablespoons salt in 2 quarts cold water in large bowl or container. Add beans and soak at room temperature for at least 8 hours and up to 24 hours. Drain and rinse well.

COOK BEANS:

In large Dutch oven with tight-fitting lid, stir together drained beans, broth, water, 1 pepper half, 1 onion half (with root end), halved garlic head, bay leaves, and 1 teaspoon salt. Bring to simmer over medium-high heat, cover, and reduce heat to low. Cook until beans are just soft, 30 to 40 minutes.

Using tongs, remove and discard pepper, onion, garlic, and bay leaves. Drain beans in colander set over large bowl, **RESERVING** 2-3/4 cups bean cooking liquid. (If you don't have enough bean cooking liquid, add water to equal 2 3/4 cups). Do not wash out Dutch oven.

Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 350°F.

Place rice in large fine-mesh strainer and rinse under cold running water until water runs clear, about 1½ minutes. Shake strainer vigorously to remove all excess water; set rice aside.

Cut remaining peppers and onion into 2-inch pieces and process in food processor until broken into rough ¼-inch pieces, about eight 1-second pulses, scraping down sides of bowl as necessary; set vegetables aside.

In now-empty Dutch oven, heat 1 tablespoon oil and salt pork over medium-low heat; cook, stirring frequently, until lightly browned and rendered, 15 to 20 minutes.

Add remaining tablespoon oil, chopped peppers and onion, oregano, and cumin. Increase heat to medium and continue to cook, stirring frequently, until vegetables are softened and beginning to brown, 10 to 15 minutes longer.

Add the minced garlic and cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Stir in the tomato paste and cook, stirring constantly, until it darkens slightly and becomes fragrant, about 2 minutes.

Add rice and stir to coat, about 30 seconds.

Stir in beans, reserved bean cooking liquid, vinegar, and ½ teaspoon salt. Increase heat to medium-high and bring to simmer. Cover and transfer to oven.

BAKE & SERVE:

Bake, covered, for 25 minutes. Carefully remove the lid and check the rice. It should be tender around the edges, with a few small pockets of liquid still visible between the grains. If the surface is completely dry but the rice is still firm, add 2 to 3 tablespoons of hot chicken broth, cover, and continue baking for 3 to 5 minutes. If the rice is tender and only slightly moist, remove it from the oven, cover, and let it rest for 10 minutes.

Add 1 tablespoon of butter and then fluff gently with a fork.

Serve, passing scallion and lime wedges separately.

