

Chili Experiment #1



So I tried my hand at making chili today, without a recipe. It turned out pretty well, but I think it could have used a little more heat. Here's what I did..

First I put a couple of dried chilies into a 350° oven for about 10 minutes. I'd read that this sort of brightens their flavor a bit, and is supposed to add some smoky undertones. Not sure if that happened. I used two kinds [Guajillo](#) and [Cascabel](#), a couple toasted and a couple not, with their stems and seeds removed, then ground up in my spice grinder. I also had some ground [Aleppo](#) chilies, too.

Then I took a large sweet onion and chopped it pretty thoroughly in the food processor, along with an orange bell pepper and three cloves of garlic. I put that in my dutch oven with a little olive oil, and cooked it over medium heat. I cut

2lbs of brisket into 1" cubes, removing the larger pieces of fat from each piece, and browned them in a cast iron pan. To the onions, I added a whole can of tomato paste, 2T of the chili powder, 1 T of oregano, and 1T of ground cumin, plus some salt and pepper. I let the tomato paste cook a bit, then added the beef and a can of Guinness Stout – (admittedly, not a very mexican touch), plus, 2T of dark chocolate cocoa powder. I stirred all of this together, and let it come to a boil, and then I put in in the 350 oven with the lid on. After about 2 hours, I could smell that the liquid had cooked down quite a bit, so I pulled it out, and let it cool, since I wasn't going to be eating for awhile.

A couple hours later, I soaked up what grease had floated to the surface with a paper towel, and then put it back on the heat. I was afraid it wouldn't be substantial enough, and considered making some rice, but ultimately added a can of black beans, rinsed.

Ok. Not exactly authentic. But it tasted pretty good. Next time, I think I'll skip the Guinness and add some tomato sauce and some water instead. I also think it could have used a bit more heat... though my wife is pretty sensitive to spicy food. We'll see. What's your favorite chili recipe?