FEIJOADA (BRAZILIAN BLACK BEAN STEW)

Feijoada is pronounced "fay-zhwah-duh."

16 oz dried black beans
Water as needed
1 bay leaf

1/4 cup sherry or other liquid, more as needed
1 onion, peeled and finely chopped
2 or more cloves garlic, minced
1 carrot, finely chopped
1 stalk celery, finely chopped
1 bell pepper, any color, finely chopped
1 -2 cups of water or veg broth, more as needed
1 tsp ground cumin
1/2 tsp ground coriander
1/2 tsp dried oregano
1/2 tsp dried thyme
1/4 - 1/2 tsp salt
1/4 tsp chipotle powder or other chipotle source*

Chopped fresh coriander or parsley (optional)

Soak the beans in water to cover them by an inch, overnight or for several hours. Pour off the soaking water, add water to cover along with the bay leaf, and bring them to a boil. Lower the heat to medium low, partially cover, and cook until done, about 45 minutes to 1 hour, checking frequently to see if you need to add water. If you prefer, you can cook the beans in a pressure cooker or Instant Pot.

In a large pot, pour in the sherry, then add the onions and garlic. Cook over medium heat, 3-5 minutes, until the onions get soft and translucent. Add the carrot, celery and pepper and cook for a minute or so before adding the beans and all the other ingredients except the garnish. Bring to a boil, then lower to a simmer and cook at least a half hour or longer if you have time, to cook the vegetables through and allow all the flavors to meld. Serve hot.

*Chipotle lends a wonderful smoky flavor to this dish, but chipotle peppers carry a lot of heat. Know your own preference and proceed carefully. You can get the smoky goodness without a lot of "heat" if you use a small amount.

Sources of chipotle flavor include: chipotle powder; dried chipotles; canned or jarred chipotles in adobo; and chipotle flavored jarred sauces. For those who don't like a lot of heat, try using a small amount of one of the jarred sauces, as it won't be as hot-spicy as straight chipotle. Consider storing the jarred sauce in the freezer to keep it fresh.

Feijoada is a bean-and-meat stew. When making a plant-based version, you can have a lot of fun adding some vegan "meat" to the dish, whether homemade or commercially prepared. Some options are seitan; tempeh or tempeh bacon; or vegan sausage diced fine. You can use your imagination or not use any "meat" at all.







