

# ***Cuban Black Bean Stew***

Serves 6 to 8

If chorizo proves difficult to find, you may substitute andouille sausage. Bacon will also suffice, but use only 6 ounces and remove all but 2 tablespoons of fat from the pot once the bacon is browned. Beans should be soaked for a minimum of 8 hours and can be soaked for up to 24 hours (though for this length of time they should be stored in the refrigerator). But if time is an issue, the "quick-soak" method will work here. Simmer the beans in water for 2 minutes, then take the pot off the heat, covered, and allow to sit in the water for 1 hour. For a heartier meal, this stew may be served over steamed white rice.

**PLANNING AHEAD:** The stew may be prepared then refrigerated for up to 4 days, or frozen for up to 3 months. (Allow the frozen stew to thaw completely in the refrigerator before reheating, to preserve the texture of the beans.) Bring the stew to a simmer over medium-low heat before continuing with step 3.

- 1   tablespoon olive oil
- ½   pound chorizo sausage, quartered lengthwise and sliced ½ inch thick (see head note)
- 1   large onion, minced
- 1   large red pepper, stemmed, seeded, and chopped fine
- salt
- 8   medium garlic cloves, minced or pressed through a garlic press, divided
- 2   teaspoons dried oregano
- 1½   teaspoons ground cumin
- 4   cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1   cup water
- 1   pound black beans, sorted, soaked overnight, and drained
- 2   bay leaves
- 2   tablespoons lime juice
- ½   cup chopped fresh cilantro leaves
- ground black pepper
- Tabasco sauce

1.   Adjust oven rack to the lower-middle position and heat the oven to 300 degrees.
2.   Heat the oil in a large Dutch oven over medium heat until shimmering. Add the chorizo and cook, stirring frequently, until well browned, about 6 minutes. Transfer to a small bowl using a slotted spoon and set aside in the refrigerator.
3.   Return the Dutch oven with the drippings to medium heat until shimmering. Add the onion, red pepper, and ¾ teaspoon salt; cook, stirring occasionally, until softened and lightly browned, 10 to 12 minutes.
4.   Add half of the minced garlic, the oregano, and cumin; cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add the broth, water, beans, and bay leaves; bring to a simmer, skimming any foam from the surface. Cover, transfer to the oven, and cook until the beans are tender but not splitting, 1½ to 2 hours.
5.   Remove and discard bay leaves. Transfer 2 cups of the beans to a mixing bowl and mash with a potato masher, fork, or hand blender. Stir the mashed beans back into the stew.
6.   Add the remaining garlic, the lime juice, cilantro, and the reserved chorizo. Season with salt, pepper, and Tabasco and serve immediately.