

Yucatan Style Black Beans with Pork – *Frijol con Puerco*

Ingredients (for 4 portions)

1 lb (454 g) pork shoulder with bone;
excess fat removed, cut up into chunks
1 ½ cups dry black beans
1 cup long grain rice
1 white onion; peeled
1 clove garlic; peeled, and minced
1 large tomato; washed
1 bunch red radishes; washed
3 sprigs *epazote*, if available, or omit;
washed, use leaves only
1 bunch cilantro; washed
3-4 limes; washed, and sliced into wedges
Habanero (or Scotch Bonnet) peppers, to taste; washed
2 tbsp oil
Salt and ground black pepper, to taste
Water, as needed
Corn tortillas



Start Beans and meat: rinse beans in water, removing stones, broken beans, and any other impurities. Drain, then allow to soak in cold water for a couple of hours to overnight. Drain water and place beans in a large pot; fill with water. Place pot on the stove over high heat; bring water to boil, reduce heat to medium, then cover pot and cook beans for about two hours, until fully cooked, but still firm. Add meat to the beans, along with a small piece of white onion. Cover pot, leaving a small gap so the broth will not overflow, and cook for one hour. **Meanwhile:** roast tomato, and about one quarter of the onion, on a dry iron skillet (no oil) until charred. Remove stem spot from tomato, then transfer to a blender jar with the onion, one tablespoon of freshly squeezed lime juice, and salt to taste; pulse a few times for a slightly chunky sauce; alternatively, place ingredients in a *molcajete* (Mexican mortar), and grind by hand. Transfer sauce to a bowl and reserve until serving time. Roast hot peppers to char the same way, or by placing on Aluminium foil and roasting in the toaster oven under the broiler. Transfer to a bowl and reserve. Remove ends from radishes, chop, transfer to a bowl, and reserve. Chop cilantro, transfer to a bowl, and reserve. Chop *epazote* leaves (if using), and reserve. Chop the rest of the onion, reserve half a cup (for the rice), and transfer the rest to a bowl. Reserve. **After the meat and beans have been cooking for one hour**, uncover and add more water, as needed, to cover, and make the broth thin again. Continue cooking for half an hour, then scoop two cups of broth from the pot into a measuring cup (reserve for rice). Season beans and pork with salt and pepper, to taste, then add two tablespoons of chopped *epazote* (if using, or may substitute with some of the chopped cilantro). The meat should be fully cooked, but might not be fork-tender yet; cover and continue cooking, adding more water, if needed.

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Prepare rice: Warm up two tablespoons of oil in a pot over medium heat. Add reserved rice and half cup of chopped onions; fry until onions are translucent, and rice has turned opaque and starts to change colour, then add one teaspoon of salt (or to taste), minced garlic, and one tablespoon of chopped *epazote* (if using, photo below, left). Stir to mix for a few seconds, then add reserved hot broth. Stir to scrape any food from the bottom of the pot, then reduce heat to the lowest possible, cover pot and allow rice to cook, undisturbed, for twenty minutes. Uncover, and check for a dry bottom of the pot, but also to see if the rice is cooked; this is because the broth could have been thicker than water, hence might need more liquid. If the rice is hard or tastes uncooked, add half a cup of boiling water, cover, and let cook for a five more minutes, then allow to rest for another five minutes, with the stove off. Keep warm until serving time. **Finish beans and pork:** check beans and continue cooking until the meat falls off the bone. Adjust seasoning with more salt and pepper, to taste.

To serve: The traditional way to serve is to scoop rice into bowls, then top with beans and pork, and offer all the toppings and seasonings at the table, to allow each person to build their portion to taste:



Another way is to place a portion of beans and pork on each plate, add rice, and reserved fresh veggies, and offer with warm corn tortillas, sauce, charred hot peppers, and lime wedges on the side:

