



Santa's Hearty Send-Off Chili

2 Tablespoons olive oil
1 large onion, peeled, chopped
1 cup chopped multi-colored bell peppers
2 garlic cloves, minced
1(28 ounce) can peeled tomatoes with juice
2 to 3 cups beef or vegetable stock, divided
2 Tablespoons medium hot chili powder
2 teaspoons ground cumin
1/2 cup cooked shredded beef, optional
1/4 cup cooked bacon bits
1/2 Tablespoon dried oregano
2 Tablespoons concentrated tomato paste
1(15 ounce) can black beans, drained, rinsed
1(15 ounce) can red kidney beans, drained, rinsed

Garnish with: 1/2 cup coarse chopped cilantro or parsley
Serve with: shredded cheddar cheese; sour cream as desired

Place oil in Dutch oven or large pot, sauté onions and peppers to soften;
add garlic; cook for 1 minute.

With scissors, cut tomatoes into smaller chunks. Add tomatoes with juice and 2 cups beef or vegetable stock to pot. Add all remaining ingredients; bring to a boil; reduce heat; cover; cook over low heat for 30 minutes; stir occasionally. Add additional stock as desired. Serves: about 8

Garnish chili with chopped cilantro or parsley; serve hot with shredded cheddar cheese and dollops of sour cream.

Cook's note: Make the chili the day before serving; refrigerate. That will enhance the flavors. Also, for a hotter chili, increase the chili powder or add more chopped hot peppers.

About the Recipe: Nothing is better for a cold wintery day than hot chili that's full of festive colored peppers and lots of beans. Santa just loves chili! This is one of his favorites that Mrs. Claus likes to use for his send-off suppers.