



**Southern Black-Eyed Peas Chili with Fried Chickee Meatballs**  
*Simple to make using traditional Southern ingredients*

**Southern Chili**

- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 1 cup diced red onions
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 Tablespoons tomato paste
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 (14.5 oz.) can diced tomatoes with juice
- 1 (14 oz.) can seasoned black-eyed peas with liquid
- 1 cup beer
- 2 cups chicken or bone broth
- 1 (4 oz.) can green chiles
- 4 ounces applewood smoked natural uncured ham, diced
- 1/2 cup Professor Torbert's orange corn grits

**Optional:** 4 ounces fried chicken meatballs, sliced if desired  
2 Tablespoons cilantro  
1 cup sour cream or plain yogurt as desired

**Prepare Chili:** Add oil to Dutch oven or soup pot over medium heat. Sauté onion; add garlic; cook for 1 minute. Add tomato paste; cook until starting to caramelize; stir in chili powder and cumin to activate the scents. Stir in tomatoes with juice, black-eyed peas with liquid, beer, bone broth, and green chiles. Bring to a boil. Stir in ham and grits; reduce heat to low simmer, cover; cook for 10 to 15 minutes or grits soften. Stir often to prevent the grits from sticking to the bottom of the pan. Stir in sliced mini meatballs and cilantro. Remove from heat. Yield: about 6-1/2 cups

**Fresh Salsa Topping:**

1/2 cup diced red onions  
1/2 cup chopped seeded tomatoes  
1/2 cup diced avocado  
1 Tablespoon fresh lemon juice  
1/2 cup coarse chopped cilantro leaves

Combine onions, tomatoes, and avocado chunks with lemon juice to coat. Toss in chopped cilantro.

**To Serve:** Spoon chili in serving bowl; top with dollops of sour cream or yogurt; spoon fresh salsa topping over sour cream. Serves: 4 to 6

**Cook's Note:** I didn't add salt or additional pepper since the product ingredient lists included these seasonings. Taste the chili and season as desired. Chili is usually more delicious the second day since the spices tend to mellow.

**About the Recipe:** Chili, lightly spiced and warm, is a comfort dish that's perfect to serve on a chilly cold day. This Southern dish uses black-eyed peas with some natural smoked diced ham. A stir in of grits adds a creamy consistency and unique texture. A few fried mini chicken meatballs and fresh salsa toppings help to create a delicious Southern chili.

**Optional Recipe – Serve with Chili or as Appetizers**  
**Fried Chickee Mini Meatballs**

2/3 cup fine unseasoned breadcrumbs

1 Tablespoon cornstarch  
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper  
3/4 teaspoon salt  
1/8 teaspoon ground red pepper  
1 egg  
1 Tablespoon plain yogurt  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1-pound ground chicken  
4 to 6 Tablespoons oil or as needed

**Combine Crumb Mixture:** In a shallow dish, combine breadcrumbs, cornstarch, black pepper, salt, and red pepper; set aside.

**Form Mini Meatballs:** In medium sized bowl, beat egg, yogurt, and salt to combine. Mix in ground chicken to form a thick mixture. To form each mini chickee meatball, form 1 Tablespoon chicken mixture into small ball; roll in bread mixture to coat; set aside. Place in refrigerator for 15 minutes; roll each chunk in crumbs again to coat.

**Cook Meatballs:** Place 2 to 3 Tablespoons oil in 10-inch skillet; heat oil to 350 F degrees medium heat; fry each chickee meatball for about 6 minutes; turning to brown on all sides until 165 F internal temperature doneness. Set aside. Yield: about 24 small chickee meatballs

**About the Recipe:** Ground chicken meatballs dress up fried chicken style with a flavorful center and crispy outer crust. It's so easy to make and uses traditional ingredients, reminding us of those comforting days in the South. Serve it as an appetizer or add it to other recipes.