

## Black Bean Stew

I read several recipes for black bean stew and then ultimately created my own based on what I like and what I had on hand. This can be thinned out for more of a soup consistency or served thick on top of rice with tortillas and lime wedges on the side. This recipe serves 8-10 so can easily be halved for smaller groups.



- 2 T olive oil
- 1 large onion chopped.
- 2 garlic cloves minced.
- 1 jalapeno (seeds removed and minced)
- 3-4 stalks celery
- 3-4 carrots
- 1 cup frozen corn (or fresh if you had it cooked cut off cob)
- Large can diced tomatoes (or fresh if you have them, 2 cups)
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 Cup fresh lime juice (could substitute orange)
- 1 bag dried black beans (or 2 15 oz cans)

½ cup chopped cilantro/plus more for topping

2 Tablespoons lime zest

Lime wedges

2 Bay leaves

Salt and pepper

Cooked rice for serving (optional) and tortillas (optional)

If using dried beans, soak overnight or use the quick soak method. Drain, place in pot covered with water, bay leaves and some salt and bring to boil. Simmer beans until tender but not mushy, drain and keep 1-2 cups of cooking water. Set beans aside.

If using canned beans start here. Heat the oil in a large soup pot or skillet over medium heat and sauté onion, garlic, pepper, celery and carrot. Cook till softened about 5 minutes. Add the cumin, tomatoes and cilantro and cook for another 5 minutes. Add the beans, juice, frozen corn and zest and perhaps some of the preserved bean water or vegetable broth. Simmer 15-20 minutes till beans and vegetables are softened and flavors meld. I think this is best made early in the day let to sit or the day before. Add additional liquid to desired consistency and serve topped with fresh chopped cilantro and lime wedges.