

Red Beans and Rice

1 lb. dry red kidney beans
Kosher salt
1 tbs. vegetable oil
4 andouille chicken sausage links, sliced into discs
1 large yellow onion, diced
1 green bell pepper, diced
4 ribs celery, diced
Freshly ground black pepper
6 garlic cloves, minced
1/2 tbs. ground cayenne pepper (more or less depending on how hot you like it)
1/2 tbs. fresh sage, chopped
6 springs fresh thyme
3 bay leaves
1 smoked ham hock (optional)*

Place beans in a large plastic or glass bowl with 2 tbs. Kosher salt. Add cold water until the beans are covered by at least 2". Cover with a dish towel and let sit for at least 8 hours and up to 18. Drain and rinse with cold water.

In a large Dutch oven or skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add the sausage and cook, stirring occasionally, until browned (about 5 minutes). Add onion, bell pepper, and celery. Cook until vegetables have softened, stirring occasionally (about 8 minutes). Add 3/4 tsp. Kosher salt and 10-15 grinds of black pepper (depending on how much spice you want). Add the garlic, stir, and cook until fragrant (about 1 minute). Add cayenne pepper and sage, stir, and cook until fragrant (about 30 seconds). Add beans and 8 cups water, thyme, bay leaves, and ham hock (if using). Stir to combine, cover, and bring to a boil. Reduce to a bare simmer (medium-low-low heat) and cook until beans are tender (about 3 hours).

Remove thyme stems, bay leaves and ham hock. Stir and cook an additional 20 minutes without the cover on. If the mixture is too thick, add 1/2 cup water, cook another 5 minutes. Repeat an additional time if necessary.

Garnish with green onions. Serve over white rice with hot sauce on the side.

*I usually can't find a good ham hock, so I leave this out most of the time.

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