

The Best Snack Ever (from Frita Batidos)

I love to order this layered dish when I go to Frita Batidos. This “Best Snack” consists of ginger-coconut rice layered with black beans cooked extra-long; grated, melty, muenster cheese, and cilantro-lime salsa with tomatoes.

The beans began with a recipe from Deb Perelman’s Smitten Kitchen Cookbook. I incorporated other aspects of the recipe from gatheranddine.com and from my own sleuthing.

BLACK BEAN RAGOUT

1 large onion, finely chopped
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 Tb ground cumin
½ tsp dried oregano
2 tsps smoked paprika
1 Bay Leaf
1 pound dried black beans, rinsed if not already soaked
1 dried chile
2 Tb tomato paste
2 tsp table salt
9 to 10 cups water or unsalted vegetable or chicken stock
1 Tb lime juice or sherry vinegar
2 Tb corn starch & ¼ cup water

Put all the bean ragout ingredients except lime juice or vinegar and cornstarch/water into a large pot and bring to a boil. Reduce to a very low simmer and cook for approximately 4-5 hours. Add lime juice or sherry vinegar. Mix thoroughly. Next add cornstarch mixed with water & stir. Season with salt to taste. Set aside.

COCONUT GINGER RICE

1 Tb olive oil
1 ½ tablespoons grated fresh ginger
1 Tb minced garlic
1 ½ cups brown jasmine rice, rinsed and drained (I used brown rice)
1 (14 -ounce) can coconut milk
1 cup water
¾ teaspoon kosher salt
1 Tb chopped fresh cilantro

In a large pot, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the ginger and garlic and stir until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add the rice and give a quick stir to evenly coat the rice. Add the coconut

milk, water, and salt. Bring to a boil and then turn heat to low. Cover and simmer for 30-35 minutes, until rice is tender. Turn off heat and allow rice to sit for another 10 minutes. Stir in chopped cilantro and set aside.

CILANTRO-LIME SALSA:

2 tomatoes, seeded and chopped
2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
2 teaspoons fresh lime juice
salt and pepper

In a medium bowl, combine the tomatoes, cilantro, and lime juice. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

FOR ASSEMBLY:

12 oz. Muenster Cheese
½ teaspoon chili powder

ASSEMBLE:

1. Spread a layer of coconut ginger rice in the bottom of six individual bowls or in a 9×13 baking dish. Next layer with the black beans and then the grated Muenster cheese. Sprinkle with chili powder.
2. Bake at 375 for 15-20 minutes until cheese is bubbly and melted. Top with cilantro-lime salsa for serving.

This dish would be delicious for a pot-luck or to share with someone needing a comfort meal. It can be frozen without the salsa, too.