

# Lee Clayton's Award-Winning Chili

(Serves 4-8)

With a spirit of fun and friendship, Lee Clayton, a Locksmith with Duke Facilities Management, builds community through his food. He recently won Duke Facilities Management's Chili Cookoff with this original recipe.

Clayton, who prefers to cook by instinct and feel, said that the beauty of chili is its improvisational nature. Each pot of chili is its own creation. So, the amounts, ingredients and instructions he's listed below are merely suggestions. His recommendation is to give this recipe a try, or use it as a starting point to find your own signature spin on the dish. Whatever you do, just make sure you have fun!



## INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound of pork sausage
- 1 pound of ground beef
- 4 Vidalia or sweet onions, chopped
- 4-6 cloves of roasted garlic
- 6-8 sweet peppers, mix of green, red or yellow, chopped
- 2 12-ounce cans of fire-roasted tomatoes
- 2 small cans of fire roasted green chiles
- Shot of black coffee
- Shot of beer, your choice
- Beef broth
- Dash of coriander
- Dash of dark cocoa powder
- Dash of paprika
- Dash of dried oregano
- Dash of dried basil
- Spoonful of chili powder
- Spoonful of chipotle powder
- 1 12-ounce can of dark kidney beans
- 1 12-ounce can of light kidney beans
- 1 12-ounce can of pinto beans
- Spoonful of capers
- 2-3 jalapeno peppers
- 2-3 habanero peppers
- 2-3 poblano peppers
- Olive oil
- Kosher salt
- Sugar

## INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat your broiler. Place jalapenos, habaneros and poblanos on a baking sheet and lightly drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with kosher salt. Place the sheet beneath the broiler and, with the oven door open, roast them until the skins of the peppers blister and brown. Let cool and save for later.

Place 4-6 peeled cloves of garlic on a baking sheet and roast in a 350-degree oven until they turn golden and soft.

In a large heavy-bottomed pot, brown the sausage and ground beef. **Note:** You can soak up the some of the grease with a paper towel as it renders if you'd like.

As the meat begins to brown, add the chopped onions, roasted garlic and chopped sweet peppers and sauté until soft.

Add the cans of fire-roasted tomatoes and fire-roasted chiles and stir until combined.

Add the coffee and beer and stir. Pour in enough beef broth to get the chili to the consistency you prefer. You can add more as it cooks if it gets too thick.

Add the coriander, cocoa powder, paprika, oregano, basil, chili powder and chipotle powder and stir. **Note:** Make the chili your own by creating your preferred color and flavor through the amount of the dried spices you add. But be sure to taste each spice before you add it so that you know how it will affect the chili. Also taste the chili as you go, adding pinches of salt, if needed, and sugar in case the chili is too acidic.

Pour in the cans of beans, followed by a spoonful or so of capers, and stir to combine.

Simmer for 30 minutes to an hour and taste, seasoning as necessary. When it reaches the consistency and flavor you're after, remove from the heat and let cool. Once it's cool, refrigerate it overnight or for several hours. **Note:** Clayton said he won't serve a chili he made the same day. He said it takes a night in the refrigerator to let the flavors properly come together.

When it's time to serve, reheat the chili in a pot, tasting and adding any final seasonings if needed. For the final 15 minutes before serving, nestle the roasted jalapenos, habaneros and poblanos on top of the chili, adding a fun visual and small dose of heat to the final product.