

Shortcut Refried Beans

Refried beans are the mashed potatoes of Mexican cuisine. You can buy them in a can or at the local Mexican cocina, but those preparations usually have lots of things I don't like: lard, preservatives, soy, and tons of sodium. Here's a quick and easy shortcut to great tasting authentic refried beans without all the bad stuff. When talking about refried beans, you have to talk sodium and fat. Two cans of refried beans contain 3,800 milligrams (mg) of sodium, which is 475 mg per serving. That's without any seasoning, and they're pretty bland. If you add my Adobo/Sazón seasoning mix that has a total of 2,000 mg of sodium, you get a whopping 750 mg of sodium per serving! However, if you use two cans of organic pinto beans, you start with only 600 mg sodium instead of 3,800. Adding 2 teaspoons of my generously salty seasoning mix to organic pinto beans results in only 325 mg sodium per serving. By cooking and mashing the beans, you get the best "refried beans" you've ever tasted with huge, massive flavor and half the sodium. Organic pinto beans have 0 grams fat and 0 grams saturated fat, versus 5 grams of fat and 2 grams of saturated per serving of regular refried beans. And, my recipe is vegetarian!

Ingredients

2 TBS canola oil
2 cloves garlic, cut fine brunoise
2 15.5-ounce cans organic pinto beans
1 tsp Goya Adobo all-purpose seasoning
1 tsp Goya Sazón con Culantro Y Achiote (one 5-gram packet)
1 TBS Nellie and Joe's Key West lime juice
3 green onions, sliced into 1/8-inch-thick rounds



Preparing the Beans

Heat a 4-quart sauce pan to medium/medium-low heat. When hot, coat the bottom of the pan with oil. Add the garlic and stir until fragrant (about 20 to 30 seconds). Add the entire contents of the cans of beans and the Goya seasonings and stir. Cook until the beans are thoroughly heated (about 5 to 8 minutes). The juice and beans will become the same color and steam will rise from the surface, but don't allow it to boil. Remove the pan from the heat and smash the beans with a potato masher until all the beans are broken up and the mixture is mostly creamy. Pour the lime juice over the beans and stir.

Presentation

When serving refried beans as a side dish, top each serving with a few green onion pieces. You can add a tablespoon of shredded Colby-jack cheese and microwave 15 seconds to melt it, though the cheese will increase the sodium and fat content. Serves 6 to 8 people (about 2 cups). My sodium calculations are based on 8 servings.