

The Best Baked Beans Ever



Start with eight slices of bacon. The thick stuff is great. The thick, peppered stuff is even better.

Cut the slices in half, then fry them on medium-low heat. You don't want to brown or crisp the bacon at all; the point is only to render the fat and get the bacon pieces ready to bake up and turn brown in the oven.



Remove the bacon pieces once the fat is rendered, and in the name of all that is good and right, do NOT pour out the grease and clean the skillet! If you do, you'll regret it for the rest of your days.



Next, dice up an onion...



And a green bell pepper.



First cut it into strips...



Then dice it right up.



Next, measure 3/4 cup of your favorite barbecue sauce.



Pour it into a bowl...



And throw in 1/2 cup brown sugar.



Add 1/4 cup distilled white or apple cider vinegar.



Finally, add a couple of tablespoons Dijon mustard and mix the whole thing together.

Yummy!

Now. Back to the skillet. You can pour off a little of the excess grease, but leave some in there for good measure.





Put the skillet over medium heat, then throw in the onions and green peppers.





Stir 'em around and cook 'em for a few minutes, or until tender.



Then, pour in three cans of good ol' pork 'n beans. They're the best beans for making baked beans. Everyone who's anyone knows that!

I've made baked beans from scratch before—soaked the navy beans and everything. They just weren't as good as the ones made with pork 'n beans.

Does that make me a bad person?



Stir it together, then pour in the barbecue sauce/brown sugar mixture.



Bring this all to a simmer. And I think if you like things spicy, you could easily add in some chopped fresh jalapeno to the onion/green pepper mixture. That would give these some serious kick.



Then pour it into a large casserole pan.





Finally, put the half-cooked bacon slices all over the top. Since the fat has already been rendered from these, they're going to cook up really nicely in the oven...and there won't be that big layer of grease standing on top of the beans.

Not that I've ever minded that big layer of grease.

I've never minded bacon grease in my life.



Now, here's the key: bake this low and slow—325 degrees for 2 hours. You want the beans to be very, very cooked, the bacon very, very brown, and no soupiness to the dish whatsoever.



You won't *believe* how delicious these are.

Quick Southern-Style Baked Beans

recipe by Pam Anderson

Serves up to 18

8 slices bacon, halved

1 medium onion, cut into small dice

1/2 medium green pepper, cut into small dice

3 large cans (28 ounces each) pork and beans

3/4 cup barbecue sauce

1/2 cup brown sugar

1/4 cup distilled or cider vinegar

2 teaspoons dry mustard or 2 tablespoons Dijon

Adjust oven rack to lower-middle position and heat oven to 325 degrees. Fry bacon in large, deep sauté pan skillet until bacon has partially cooked and released about 1/4 cup drippings. Remove bacon from pan and drain on paper towels. Add onions and peppers to drippings in pan and sauté until tender, about 5 minutes. Add beans and remaining ingredients bring to a simmer. (If skillet is not large enough, add beans and heat to a simmer then transfer to a large bowl and stir in remaining ingredients). Pour flavored beans into a greased 13-by 9-inch (or similar size) ovenproof pan. Top with bacon, then bake until beans are bubbly and sauce is the consistency of pancake syrup, about 2 hours. Let stand to thicken slightly and serve.