Vegetarian Butternut Squash Chipotle Chili

Prep time: 20 mins  
Cook time: 1 hour

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium red onion, chopped
- 2 red bell peppers, chopped
- 1 small butternut squash (1½ pounds or less), peeled and chopped into ½-inch cubes
- 4 garlic cloves, pressed or minced
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- ½ tablespoon adobo sauce (start with ½ tablespoon and add more to taste)
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 cans (15 ounces each) black beans, rinsed and drained, or 3 cups cooked black beans
- 1 small can (14 ounces) diced tomatoes, including the liquid**
- 2 cups vegetable broth (or one 14-ounce can)
- Salt, to taste

Optional Garnishes:
- 2 Avocados from Mexico, diced
- 3 corn tortillas for crispy tortilla strips (or substitute crumbled tortilla chips)

Instructions

1. In a 4- to 6-quart Dutch oven or stockpot over medium heat, warm the olive oil until shimmering. Add the onion, bell pepper and butternut squash and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onions are turning translucent.

2. Turn the heat down to medium-low and add the garlic, chili powder, ½ tablespoon adobo sauce, cumin and cinnamon. Cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add the bay leaf, black beans, tomatoes and their juices and broth. Stir to combine and cover for about 1 hour, stirring occasionally. Taste about halfway through cooking and add more chopped chipotle peppers if you'd like.

3. You'll know your chili is done when the butternut squash is nice and tender and the liquid has reduced a bit, producing the hearty chili consistency we all know and love. Add salt to taste.

4. To make the crispy tortilla strips: stack the corn tortillas and slice them into thin strips, about 2 inches long by ¼ inch wide. Warm a drizzle of olive oil in a medium pan over medium heat until shimmering. Toss in the tortilla slices, sprinkle with salt and stir. Cook until the strips are crispy and turning golden, stirring occasionally, about 4 to 7 minutes. Remove tortilla strips from skillet and drain on a plate covered with a piece of paper towel.