Cocoa Chili with Refried Beans

Refried beans melt into the chili so the pot turns thick, while a can of kidney beans stays whole. Cocoa and a pinch of sugar take the sharp edge off the tomatoes.

SERVES	HANDS-ON	COOK	TOTAL	SETTING
8	18 min	6 h	6 h 18 min	LOW 6 h

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon (15 ml) olive oil
- 1 large yellow onion (220 g), finely chopped
- 1 stalk celery (40 g), chopped
- 3 cloves fresh garlic (9 g), minced
- 1 1/2 pounds (680 g) lean ground beef
- 2 cans (822 g) diced tomatoes with green chilies labeled gluten-free
- 1 can (425 g) tomato sauce labeled gluten-free
- 1 cup (240 ml) beef broth labeled gluten-free
- 2 tablespoons (16 g) chili powder labeled gluten-free
- 2 teaspoons (5 g) ground cumin labeled gluten-free
- 2 teaspoons (4 g) paprika labeled gluten-free
- 2 teaspoons (4 g) unsweetened cocoa powder labeled gluten-free
- 1 teaspoon (4 g) granulated sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon (1 g) ground coriander labeled gluten-free
- 1 teaspoon (5 ml) gluten-free Worcestershire sauce labeled gluten-free
- 1 teaspoon (6 g) kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon (1 g) black pepper labeled gluten-free
- 1 can (425 g) refried beans labeled gluten-free
- 1 can (425 g) dark red kidney beans, drained and rinsed labeled gluten-free
- Shredded cheddar cheese labeled gluten-free, for serving
- Sour cream labeled gluten-free, for serving
- 2 green onions (30 g), sliced, for serving

> **Gluten-free:** Written so a reader with celiac disease can cook it when every packaged ingredient is one whose label says gluten-free. Read the package you actually buy. This page does not promise a meal with zero gluten.

METHOD

1. Warm the oil in a wide skillet over medium-high heat. Cook the onion and celery until they soften, then add the garlic and stir for half a minute. Scrape the vegetables into the slow cooker.
2. Brown the beef in the same skillet, breaking it into small crumbles, until it is cooked through and no raw color remains, 160 F (71 C). Pour off the extra fat, leaving about 2 tablespoons if you want that flavor. Add the beef to the cooker.
3. Stir in the diced tomatoes, tomato sauce, and broth. Add the cocoa, sugar, coriander, paprika, cumin, chili powder, and Worcestershire. Stir in the salt and pepper. Mash the refried beans a little so they loosen, then stir them in.
4. Cover and cook on LOW for 6 hours. The chili should look thick and smell round, not sharp.
5. In the last 15 minutes, stir in the kidney beans, cover, and let them get hot. They should stay whole.
6. Taste, and add a pinch more salt if it tastes flat. Serve with cheddar, sour cream, and green onions.

NOTES

- Use canned kidney beans. Dried red kidney beans are not safe in a slow cooker; this pot never reaches the hard boil they need.
- The cocoa will not taste like dessert. It softens the acid. Sift it if your tin is lumpy so it does not stay in dots.
- Brown the beef and vegetables a day ahead, refrigerate them, and the morning is just the cans and the spices.