

History of chili con carne essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Chili con carne literally “Chili with meat”, often known simply as chili is a spicy stew. The name “chili con carne” is taken from Spanish, and means “peppers with meat”. Traditional versions are made, minimally, from chili peppers, garlic, onions, and cumin, along with chopped or ground beef. Beans and tomatoes are frequently included. Variations, both geographic and personal, may involve different types of meat as well as a variety of other ingredients. It can be found worldwide in local variations and also in certain American-style fast food restaurants.

The variant recipes provoke disputes among enthusiasts, and the dish is used as an ingredient in a number of other foods. A Native American legend from Texas, Arizona and New Mexico claims that Chili was a dish taught to them by Venerable Sister Maria Agreda. Described as a beautiful young foreign lady dressed in blue “The Lady in Blue” or “Lama De Azul”, in the early 1600s. This mysterious lady was a Spanish Nun who taught the Indians how to prepare a dish made with venison, spices and assorted peppers.

Support for this legend can be found in the earliest known record of Sister Agreda missionary exploits in the New World as recounted in 1670 by Bishop Jose Jiminez of Spain. In 1888, Fr. Michael Muller’s book Catholic Dogma also recounts Sister Agreda’s interactions with Native Americans in Southwestern United States. Chili peppers originated in the Americas and were in wide use in pre-Columbian Mexican culture. Masa — a meal made from either corn flour or corn that has been treated with caustic lime to make hominy is often used as a thickener and flavoring.

The Americanized recipe used for expeditions consisted of dried beef, suet, dried chili peppers, and salt, which were pounded together and left to dry into bricks, which could then be boiled in pots on the trail. The “ San Antonio Chili Stand”, in operation at the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago, helped people from other parts of the country taste and appreciate chili. San Antonio was a significant tourist destination and helped Texas-style chili con carne spread throughout the South and West.

Chili con carne is the official dish of the U. S. State of Texas as designated by the House Concurrent Resolution Number 18 of the 65th Texas Legislature during its regular session in 1977. During the 1880s, brightly dressed Hispanic women known as “ chili queens” began to operate around Military Plaza and other public gathering places in downtown San Antonio. They appeared at dusk, when they built charcoal or wood fires to reheat cauldrons of pre-cooked chili. They sold it by the bowl to passersby. The aroma was a potent sales pitch; mariachi street musicians joined in to serenade the eaters. Some chili queens later built semi-permanent stalls in the mercado a local Mexican market.

In September 1937, the San Antonio Health Department implemented new sanitary regulations that required the chili queens to adhere to the same standards as indoor restaurants. Unable to provide lavatory facilities, the queens and their “ street chili” culture disappeared overnight. Although Mayor Maury Maverick reinstated the queens’ privileges in 1939, the city reapplied the more stringent regulations permanently in 1943. San Antonio’s mercado was renovated in the 1970s, at which time it was the largest

Mexican marketplace in the U. S. Local merchants began staging historic re-enactments of the chili queens' heyday.

The “ Return of the Chili Queens Festival” is now part of that city's annual Memorial Day festivities. Before World War II, hundreds of small, family-run chili parlors also known as “ chili joints”, could be found throughout Texas and other states, particularly those in which emigre Texans had made new homes. Each establishment usually had a claim to some kind of “ secret recipe. As early as 1904, Chili parlors were opening outside of Texas. After working at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, Charles Taylor opened a chili parlor in Carlineville, Illinois, serving “ Mexican Chili”.

In the 1920s and 1930s hains of diner-style “ chili parlors” grew up in the Midwest. As of 2005, one of these old-fashioned chili parlors still exists on Pine Street in downtown St. Louis. It features a chili-topped dish called a “ slinger”, two hamburger patties topped with melted American cheese and two eggs, then smothered in chili, all topped off with shredded cheese. One of the best-known Texas chili parlors, in part because of its downtown location and socially connected clientele, was Bob Pool's “ joint” in Dallas, just across the street from the headquarters of the elite department store Neiman Marcus.

Stanley Marcus, president of the store, frequently ate there. He also bought Pool's chili to send by air express to friends and customers across the country. Several members of General Dwight Eisenhower's SHAPE staff during the early 1950s were reported to have arranged regular shipments of chili from Pool's to their Paris quarters. Texas-style chili contains no beans

and may even be made with no other vegetables whatsoever besides chili peppers. President Lyndon Johnson's favorite chili recipe became known as "Pedernales River chili" after the location of his Texas Hill Country ranch.

It calls for eliminating the traditional beef suet, on Johnson's doctor's orders, after LBJ suffered a heart attack while he was U. S. Senate Majority Leader and adds tomatoes and onions. LBJ preferred venison, when available, to beef; Hill Country deer were thought to be leaner than most. Lady Bird Johnson, the First Lady, had the recipe printed on cards to be mailed out because of the many thousands of requests the White House received for it. Vegetarian chili, also known as chili sin carne, chili without meat, acquired wide popularity in the U. S. during the 1960s and 1970s with the rise of vegetarianism.

It is also popular with those on a diet restricting the use of red meat. To make the chili vegetarian, the cook leaves out the meat or replaces it with a meat substitute, such as textured vegetable or tofu, or a complementary vegetable, such as potatoes. These chilies nearly always include beans. Variants may contain corn, squash, mushrooms, potatoes, and even beets. Corn, squash, and beans are known as the "Three Sisters" of Native American agriculture in the American Southwest. They were cultivated together, and complement each other as foods. Corn and beans together make a complete protein.

Instead of a tomato-based sauce and red meat (beef), white chili is made using great northern beans and turkey meat or chicken breast. The resulting dish appears white when cooked. Cincinnati-style chili is usually eaten as a

topping for hot dogs called “Coneys” or spaghetti rather than as a stew by itself. Louisville-style chili includes spaghetti pasta. Chili verde (green chili) is a moderately to extremely spicy Mexican and Mexican-American stew or sauce usually made from chunks of pork that have been slow-cooked in chicken broth, garlic, tomatillos, and roasted green chilies.

Tomatoes are rarely used. The spiciness of the chili is adjusted with poblano, jalapeno, Serrano, and occasionally habanero peppers. Chili verde is a common filling for the San Francisco Burrito. Beef was plentiful and cheap in San Antonio and other cattle towns. As chili spread east into areas where beef was more expensive, however, chili made with beans became more prevalent. In some eastern areas, this dish is referred to as chili beans while the term chili is reserved for the all-meat dish. are commonly used as chili beans, as are black-eyes peas, kidney beans, great northern beans, or navy beans.

Chili bean can also refer to a small red variety of common beans also known as the pink bean. The name may have arisen from that bean’s resemblance to small chili peppers, or it may be a reference to that bean’s inclusion in chili recipes. Most commercially prepared canned chili includes beans. Commercial chili prepared without beans is usually called “Chili No Beans” in the United States. Some U. S. manufacturers, notably Bush Brothers and Eden Organic, also sell canned precooked beans (with no meat) that are labeled “chili beans”.

These beans are intended for consumers to add to a chili recipe and are often sold with spices added. A chili purist’s proverb says “If you know

beans about chili, you know chili ain't got no beans," though the evidence suggests that there is nothing inauthentic about their inclusion. The Chili Appreciation Society International specified in 1999 that, among other things, cooks are forbidden from including beans, marinating any meats, or discharging firearms in the preparation of chili for official competition.

Pinto Beans, a staple of Tex-Mex cooking, have long been associated with chili. The question of whether beans "belong" in chili has been a matter of contention among chili cooks for an equally long time. It is likely that in many poorer areas of San Antonio and other places associated with the origins of chili, beans were used rather than meat, or in addition to meat. Tomatoes are another ingredient on which opinions differ. Wick Fowler, north Texas newspaperman and inventor of "Two-Alarm Chili", insisted on adding tomato sauce to his chili — one 15-oz. can per three pounds of meat.

He also believed that chili should never be eaten freshly cooked but refrigerated overnight to seal in the flavor. Matt Weinstock, a Los Angeles newspaper columnist, once remarked that Fowler's chili "was reputed to open eighteen sinus cavities unknown to the medical profession". Cooks may also include sweetcorn, peanut butter, oranges, tomatillos, chorizo, chocolate, coffee, cola, honey, cinnamon, allspice, saffron, vinegar, wine, whiskey, bourbon, beer and/or others. Cornstarch is frequently used as a thickener, as is masa.

Dark chocolate provides an authentic richness akin to that found in Mexican mole sauce (negro, rojo, or poblano varieties). Several beverages are commonly used to accompany a bowl of chili, including ice-cold beer, cola to

provide a sweet contrasting taste, or a glass of cold milk to moderate the impact of the pepper on the throat. The dish may be served with toppings or accompaniments; shredded cheese is a common topping, as are broken saltine crackers, commercial corn chips, Jalapeno cornbread, rolled-up corn tortillas, and pork tamales.

Willie Gebhardt, originally of New Braunfels, Texas, and later of San Antonio, produced the first canned chili in 1908. Rancher Lyman Davis near Corsicana, Texas, developed Wolf Brand Chili in 1885. He owned a meat market and was a particular fan of Texas-style chili. In the 1880s, in partnership with an experienced range cook, he began producing heavily spiced chili based on chunks of lean beef and rendered beef suet, which he sold by the pot to local cafes. In 1921, Davis began canning his product, naming it for his pet wolf "Kaiser Bill."

Wolf Brand canned chili was a favorite of Will Rogers, who always took along a case when traveling and performing in other regions of the world. Ernest Tubb, the country singer, was such a fan that one Texas hotel maintained a supply of Wolf Brand for his visits. Both the Gebhardt and Wolf brands are now owned by Con Agra Foods Inc. In the UK, the most popular brand of canned chili is sold by Stagg, a division of Hormel foods. Another method of marketing commercial chili in the days before widespread home refrigerators was "brick chili."

It was produced by pressing out nearly all of the moisture, leaving a solid substance roughly the size and shape of a half-brick. Wolf Brand was originally sold in this form. Commonly available in small towns and rural

areas of the American Southwest in the first three-quarters of the 20th century, brick chili has mostly outlived its usefulness and is now difficult to find. In southern California, the Dolores Canning Co. still makes a traditional brick chili called the “Dolores Chili Brick”.