

Our State eats

Published in the November 2024 issue of Our State

Nico's Grilled Chicken Chili

You don't have to grill. You could broil the peppers and make do with, say, pulled rotisserie chicken. But if you do grill the night before, you are committing to something epic. You are also getting a smokiness that will otherwise be hard to replicate.

On the grill the night before:

- 4 bone-in, skin-on chicken breasts (about 3 pounds or more total)
- 2 bell peppers, halved and seeded
- 3 poblano peppers, halved and seeded

Grill chicken on indirect heat for about 45 minutes, to about 165° — done enough to shred by hand the next day, but cooking to exact temperature is not terribly important. It'll simmer tomorrow for a few hours. Why bone-in, skin-on? Flavor.

Blister peppers on direct heat, then move to indirect heat until soft. Pull when done, about 10 minutes. This can be done anytime during grilling.

Put all of that in a Ziploc bag in the fridge and go to bed.

Day of:

- 3 yellow onions, chopped or diced
- Olive oil
- 6 to 8 garlic cloves, minced
- Roasted peppers, chopped
- Cumin/oregano/salt/pepper to taste (go easy on the salt until the end)
- Chicken, shredded, skin and bones discarded
- 2 to 3 cans white beans (cannellini, navy) and liquid
- 3 (4-ounce) cans Hatch chiles, 2 mild, 1 hot (or all 3 mild, to taste) and liquid
- 3 cans fire-roasted diced tomatoes and liquid
- ½ can cheap light beer
- Red pepper flakes to taste
- Cilantro, lime wedges, shredded cheese (optional, for serving)

In a large pot, sauté onions in olive oil until translucent. Add minced garlic until fragrant, about a minute. Add chopped roasted peppers. Add cumin, oregano, salt, and pepper. Add the chicken. Add all other ingredients: beans (we do not rinse and drain, but you could; just be sure to add more beer to account for liquid), Hatch chiles, tomatoes.



Simmer at least 1 hour, and preferably longer — until beans reach desired consistency and chicken shreds further. Add red pepper flakes as desired.

As for exactly how much chicken/another can of tomatoes/rest of the can of beer/etc.: This is about consistency. We favor a thicker chili, but we also understand that every chili recipe is slightly different every time.

We top with cilantro and shredded sharp white cheddar. Finish with a squeeze of lime and serve with skillet cornbread.

Subscribe to the Our State Recipe Box newsletter and get recipes weekly.
Go to ourstate.com/newsletters