

Frijoles Negros (Cuban Black Beans)

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Rice and beans create a staple in the Cuban—indeed, the Caribbean—diet. They are also a frequent menu item in New Orleans. We've included the traditional cooking method (which takes a bit longer) and a faster version. They're both great!

Faster Version

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 large green bell pepper, finely chopped
- 6 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 3 tablespoons white vinegar
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 tablespoons sazón completa (found in the international section of supermarkets) *or*
 - 1 tablespoon paprika
 - 2 teaspoons oregano
 - 1/2 to 1 teaspoon cayenne
 - 1 teaspoon ground cumin
 - 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 15-ounce can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 3 cups cooked brown rice

Heat the oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-low heat; add the onion, pepper, garlic, cumin, vinegar, bay leaves, and sazón completa (or other seasonings as noted). Simmer gently, covered, for 15 to 20 minutes, until the onion is tender. Remove the bay leaves.

Add half of the beans whole. Crush the other half gently with the back of a spoon; add the crushed beans to the pan (this thickens the juice). Serve over cooked rice.

SERVES: 4

Hands-on time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 15 minutes

NUTRITION PER SERVING

Serving size	1/2 cup bean mixture over 3/4 cup rice
Calories	390 kcal
Fat	10 g
Saturated fat	1 g
Cholesterol	0 mg
Sodium	620 mg
Carbohydrates	65 g
Dietary fiber	10 g
Protein	10 g

Frijoles Negros

(continued)

Longer (Traditional) Version

- 2 cups dry black beans, picked over and rinsed
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 large onions, chopped
- 2 large green bell peppers, finely chopped
- 6 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 1/4 cup white vinegar
- 3 tablespoons sazón completa (found in the international section of supermarkets), or 1 tablespoon paprika
- 2 teaspoons oregano
- 1/2 to 1 teaspoon cayenne
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 6 cups cooked brown rice

Soak the beans overnight in water in a large soup pot, with enough water to cover completely plus 3 inches. Drain; add 10 cups fresh water and the bay leaves to the beans. Bring to a boil; cover, reduce heat, and simmer 1 to 1 1/4 hours, or until the beans are very tender. After the beans have cooked for 45 minutes, heat the oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-low heat; add the onions, peppers, garlic, cumin, vinegar, and sazón completa (or other seasonings as noted). Simmer gently, covered, for 15 to 20 minutes, until the onions are tender. Remove 1 cup of cooked beans from the pot; crush gently with the back of a spoon; add the crushed beans back to the pot (this thickens the juice). Add the cooked onion mixture to the beans; cover and simmer gently for 20 minutes (add additional water as needed to ensure there is just enough for the beans to simmer). Serve over cooked rice.

SERVES: 8

Hands-on time: 20 minutes

Soaking time: Overnight

Cooking time: 1 1/2 to 2 hours

COOK'S TIP

To make 6 cups cooked brown rice, start with 1 1/2 cups uncooked regular brown rice. In general, 1 cup uncooked brown rice yields 4 cups cooked.

NUTRITION PER SERVING

Serving size	1/2 cup beans over 3/4 cup cooked rice
Calories	410 kcal
Fat	6 g
Saturated fat	1 g
Cholesterol	0 mg
Sodium	450 mg
Carbohydrates	77 g
Dietary fiber	11 g
Protein	15 g

Recipes from *Cooking Healthy Across America*, Kristine Napier, M.P.H., R.D., Editor

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