

## INVITING IDEAS

# Chili with a bang to celebrate the 4th of July



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An invitation that looks like a firecracker ... could it be a Fourth of July party? It's too early for Guy Fawkes — a firecracker invitation could be sent anytime of the year as long as the central theme was CHILI WITH A BANG!

A number of years ago, my husband David and I had a 5th of July surprise party to welcome my former British roommate back to America (it was Mandy's second trip to the States and first time meeting my new husband). The cover of this invitation read — "July 5th - All Is Forgiven." The party was as American as we could make it. Small American flags lined either side of the driveway, bunting of red, white and blue decorated the inside and outside of our 1860 brick Greek Revival home, bouquets of American flags placed in early tins became centerpieces, and papergoods/tableware of wonderful patterned stars and stripes were available for serious use.

The menu for the day: grilled hot dogs topped with beanless hot and spicy chili, potato chips placed in huge bowls, red-white-blue Jell-O, punch bowls filled with Faygo Red Pop and slices of homemade apple pie spiked with flag tooth picks.

This was perhaps one of the most delightful and stress-free parties we have ever given — the decorations were fun to put together and the menu simple! Incorporate some of these ideas for a chili party of your own. Have available different types of chili topping for your hot dogs — from fiery hot to relishy sweet — nouveau to nostalgic. If you are hooked on Coney Island-type Chili or want to use it as a base, most Coney Island Restaurants will sell you a



Hot dog: Old-time Coney Island hot dogs are a delicious treat.

"brick" of it or try Gordon Food Service (the public is welcome), which also sells prepared chili.

The American Flag and Banner in Clawson on 28 South Main St. (810-288-3010) has a fabulous selection of flags, banners and other red-white-blue decorations.

### Hot Dog Chili For A Crowd

Yield: will smother about 60-75 hot dogs.

This recipe can be changed and adapted to many flavors — Chili is truly a combination of meat, (in the past grease) and fire. Instead of wine try beer or sweet alcoholic cider (from England), add some fresh chopped chiles after the onions and garlic are lightly browned, add sugar, honey or maple syrup to make the chili sweet. Experiment!

- ¼ cup light olive oil
- 2 pounds onions (Vidalia if possible), chopped into fine dice
- 4 tablespoons garlic cloves, peeled and minced
- 2 pounds sweet Italian sausage meat (bison if possible) removed from casing
- 8 pounds ground meat (bison if possible)
- 2 cans (12 ounces each) tomato paste
- 5 cans (large) diced Italian tomatoes
- 3 ounces ground cumin
- 4 ounces chili powder
- 4 tablespoons dried oregano
- 4 tablespoons dried basil
- 6 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped fine
- ¼ cup honey mustard
- ¼ cup Burgundy wine (good quality)
- Cayenne pepper
- Sea salt

Heat light olive oil in a very large pot. Add onions and garlic and cook over medium heat until lightly browned.

Crumble the sausage and ground meat over the onion mixture, lightly brown and remove all the visible liquid (a baster works great!)

Reduce heat and add tomato paste and canned tomatoes, cumin, chili powder, oregano, basil and parsley cook for 10 minutes then add the honey mustard, Burgundy wine, cayenne pepper and salt to taste.

Cook over simmer for one half hour and adjust seasonings.

### Chile Information

Poblano — comes in green or red (the red is ripened). Not very hot but has a thick flesh and is always cooked — never eaten raw. When roasted, this chile has a full earthy, and smoky flavor. This chile be added to your chili when cooking the onions, or if you want a more roasted flavor, blacken them over a flame and place in a covered glass container to let sweat — when cool, remove from the counter, peel and remove seeds — add to your chili with the tomatoes.

Ancho — is a dried poblano chile. This is probably the most widely used dried chile in Mexican cuisine. Anchos can be added to your chili by pouring boiling water over them and letting them soften — chop and add when you are adding in the diced tomatoes.

Jalapeno — comes in green or red (the red is ripened and sweeter) named from the town of Jalapa this bright medium green to dark green chile is familiar to us from Mexican cuisine — medium hot it can be diced and added to your chili when you are cooking the onions. If fresh ones are not available, they come pickled or in jars and cans. If using the canned peppers, make sure you rinse them thoroughly.

# Fusion food cookbook combines a world of flavors

BY BARBARA ALBRIGHT  
AP News Features

Husband and wife duo Hugh Carpenter and Teri Sandison are at it again with their third coffee-table cookbook, "Fusion Food Cookbook," published by Artisan books.

As with their previous cookbooks, "Pacific Flavors" and "Chopetix," this new cookbook is packed with full-page photos taken by Sandison.

While the term "fusion" is a relatively new word to cooking, it has been frequently applied to other arts such as jazz. This book displays flavor-intense American cuisine in which distinctive seasonings and cooking styles from Asia, Mexico, the American Southwest, New Orleans, the Caribbean and the Mediterranean are incorporated into home cooking.

There is a strong emphasis on Asian cooking.

Each recipe in the "Fusion Food Cookbook" has been labeled with its

ease of preparation as well as giving advance preparation information. There are also menu ideas as well as information on making larger quantities of each recipe. For instance, the following recipe for braised beef can be quadrupled for a party.

### BRAISED BEEF WITH MUSHROOMS, THYME AND ASIAN ACCENTS

- 4-ounce slab bacon
- 1½ pounds beef stew meat, such as cubed chuck meat
- 2 pounds medium-sized button mushrooms, cut in half
- 1 yellow onion, chopped
- 1 medium carrot, peeled and thinly sliced
- 4 garlic cloves, finely minced
- 2 cups good red wine
- 1 cup homemade chicken stock or chicken broth
- 2 tablespoons heavy soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- ½ teaspoon Asian chili sauce

1 bunch fresh thyme (tied together with kitchen string)

- 1 bay leaf
- 2 tablespoons light-grade olive oil
- 1½ tablespoons unbleached all-purpose white flour

Salt, to taste  
Cut the bacon crosswise into ¼-inch thin slices. Cut the cubes of beef into ¼-inch thin slices. Combine the mushrooms, onion, carrot and garlic; set aside. In a medium bowl, combine the wine, chicken stock, soy sauce, tomato paste, chili sauce, fresh thyme and bay leaf.

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F. Place a 12-inch cast-iron skillet or heavy saute pan with ovenproof handles over medium heat. Add the bacon; cook until it becomes crisp and all the fat is rendered. Using a slanted spoon, temporarily remove the bacon from the pan. Turn the heat to high, and when the pan is very hot, add the beef. Cook the beef until it loses its raw outside color and becomes lightly browned, about 8 minutes. Temporarily

remove beef from the pan.

Add the olive oil to the pan. When the oil becomes hot, add the vegetables. Turn the heat to medium; saute the vegetables until the moisture expelled by the mushrooms evaporates and the mushrooms acquire a dense texture, about 15 minutes.

Sprinkle the beef and bacon across the surface of the vegetables, then sprinkle the flour evenly across the surface of the meat. Place the pan in the preheated 450-degree F oven for 6 minutes; then stir the meat and continue cooking in the oven another 6 minutes. Stir in the wine sauce, then reduce the heat to 325 degrees F, cover the pot and cook the stew until the meat becomes very tender, about 1½ hours. Remove all the fat from the surface of the sauce using strips of paper towels. Taste and adjust the seasonings. Transfer to four heated dinner plates and serve at once or cool and refrigerate. This stew can be made a day in advance and reheated on the stovetop over low heat. Makes 4 servings.