

The Pillar Life Kitchen: Smoky Red Beans & Rice

No matter what, you MUST have a Beans & Rice recipe in your repertoire. This was one of the first things I learned how to make as a college student. In fact, when my kids went off to college I put together a list of 10 easy recipes for them, and this was at the top of that list. It's cheap, it's easy, and you can make a big batch of it and eat it all week.

Now, as a plant-based eater, this is one of my favorite go-to dishes – delicious as an entrée or a side. I love to serve it with a big tossed salad or a mound of sautéed green beans, spinach or collard greens. The key ingredient here is smoked paprika, one of the best spices in the land. Don't use regular paprika in its place, run out and get a bottle of the smoky stuff.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup organic raw brown rice
- 2 cups organic vegetable broth
- 1 teaspoon granulated garlic
- 1 teaspoon granulated onion
- 1 (15 oz.) can small organic red beans
- 1 (14 oz.) can fire roasted organic diced tomato
- 1 cup diced onion
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 Tablespoon smoked paprika
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- A few more splashes of vegetable broth
- Olive or avocado oil
- Your favorite hot sauce for serving

DIRECTIONS

I always cook brown rice in vegetable broth and spices, to flavor it up before putting it in a dish. So bring the rice to boil in the broth, add the granulated garlic and onion, stir, cover, and reduce to simmer until rice is cooked (about 30 minutes, follow directions on package).

When the rice is finished cooking, uncover and set aside.

In a large, deep pan (big enough to hold all the ingredients) sauté the onion in a bit of olive or avocado oil until translucent and slightly browned (about 5 minutes)

Add the diced tomato, diced garlic, smoked paprika and chili powder – simmer and stir for a moment, to let the flavors meld.

Add beans and the rice, stir to combine.

Now add a splash or two of vegetable broth as you stir this up, to get the consistency you want.

Add salt and pepper, stir, and taste for seasoning.

I sprinkle hot sauce on this when I serve it. My faves are Crystal or Cholula.

