Three Sisters Stew

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This recipe is one of my favorite recipes and was originally made for the Begay/Whitewater family in Piñon, Arizona for their family gatherings and ceremonies. I usually cook it in a large cast iron soup pot that was passed down to me by my mother. The taste from the cast iron makes this chile bean stew even more delicious. This recipe is so great because you can make one recipe to feed 8 to 12 people or you can add to it and make enough to feed 60 to 600 people. It is a favorite at all family and ceremonial gatherings. This recipe goes great with tortillas, or homemade no fry frybread. It makes a hearty meal by itself or a side to any feast.

1 large yellow onion, chopped (approximately 2 cups)
6 cloves garlic (approximately 1 Tablespoon)
1 green bell pepper, seeded and chopped (approximately 1 cup)
2 Tablespoons sunflower oil
(1)-28-ounce can whole peeled or diced tomatoes
3 cups cooked organic dark red kidney beans (2 15oz. cans)
3 cups cooked organic pinto beans (2 15oz. cans)
2 cups corn kernels (frozen)
3 cups green zucchini squash, cut into small cubes (about 3 zucchini)
3 Tablespoons dried red chile powder (mild)
2 teaspoons dried red chile powder (medium heat) (optional for a slightly hotter stew)
2 teaspoons Kosher salt (or to taste)
1/8 teaspoon black pepper
1/4 teaspoon dried thyme
1/2 teaspoon fresh oregano (dried can also be used)
3 cups water

Heat the cast iron or soup pot over medium-high heat. Add the oil and heat until hot but not smoking. Add the onions, sauté for 2 minutes until translucent, stirring to prevent burning then add the garlic and sauté for another 2 minutes. Add the green bell peppers and sauté another 2 to minutes, stirring to prevent burning. Add the zucchini squash and sauté for another several minutes, stirring constantly to prevent burning.

Cut each of the whole tomatoes from the can into 8 pieces (a large dice) if using whole tomatoes and add them to the onions, garlic, green bell peppers, and zucchini. Cook for another 2 minutes, stirring constantly. Add the kidney beans, pinto beans and the corn and stir well. Bring the chile beans to a boil, and then reduce heat to low.
Stir in the dried red chile powder (mild and medium), black pepper, dried thyme, oregano, and salt. Let simmer for 20 to 30 minutes, stirring occasionally to prevent burning. Serve hot with No fry bread, or homemade corn or flour tortillas.

*Serves 8 to 12*