

THE MICRO WAY LANI BLOOMER



Microwave a Pot of Chili For a Warm Meal!

Chili and corn based bread is a terrific combination for a warm and hearty meal. With a fresh green salad, you're all set for company, or a quick hot lunch.

For vegetarians, or an inexpensive meal, make the chili without meat. The beans, cornmeal and flour complement each other to give you a complete protein.

I've tried many recipes for chili, but the recipe below for Cincinnati Chili is our favorite. A friend shared her family's recipe, and I adapted it for microwaving.

She also sent some interesting directions for serving it without the cornbread:

- **Two-way-chili** is chili made without beans and served over spaghetti. It is sprinkled with grated cheddar cheese.

- **Three-way-chili** is two-way-chili (no beans) with raw minced onions sprinkled on top as well as the cheddar cheese.

- **Four-way-chili** has kidney beans added to the chili, and is served on spaghetti with the raw onions and cheddar cheese on top.

If you have your own favorite chili recipe, it can be adapted to the microwave. Just remember

these simple adapting directions: Brown any meat first. Cook on high power, stirring several times, until pink color is gone.

A good way to brown hamburger in your microwave is to place it in a plastic colander sitting in a pie plate or dinner plate. The fat that cooks out of the meat drains away and can easily be discarded.

If reducing fat in your diet is important, this is the best way to brown ground meat in the microwave. However, I should warn you that the plastic colander is hard to clean. The meat juices stick in all those little holes!

Raw chopped vegetables, such as onions, garlic, green peppers, or celery, should be sauteed until tender before adding other ingredients. Microwave on high power for about 3 minutes per cup of vegetables, stirring once or twice.

Oil can be added for flavor, but is not necessary to prevent scorching. Vegetables can also be sauteed with the meat, as in the recipe below.

Reduce the liquids from a conventional recipe by about half, since there is less evaporation in the microwave.

Once it is hot, simmer the chili on medium, (50, 5) for half an hour. If starting with raw cubed or shredded meat, longer simmering time may be needed for the meat to get tender.

- Cincinnati Chili**
- 1½ pounds hamburger
 - 1 large onion chopped (1½ cups)
 - 2 cloves garlic, minced
 - 2 28-ounce cans tomatoes
 - 2 teaspoons (very mild) to 6 teaspoons (HOT!) chili powder
 - 2 16-ounce cans kidney beans, optional
 - 2 teaspoons dried oregano
 - 1½ teaspoons salt
 - 1 4-ounce can chopped green chilies, optional

1. Combine hamburger, onion and garlic in a 3- to 4-quart casserole. Cover and microwave on high for 6 to 7 minutes, stirring twice, until meat is no longer pink and vegetables are tender.

2. Chop tomatoes coarsely, and add with remaining ingredients to casserole. Cover and microwave on high for 10 minutes, stirring once, until very hot.

3. Leave uncovered, and microwave on medium (50,5) for 30 minutes, until thickened. Flavor develops more fully if allowed to stand before serving. For best flavor, refrigerate and reheat to serve next day.

Tips: recipe may be cut in half by cutting ingredients in half. In step 1 microwave for 4 minutes, in step 2, microwave for 7 to 8 minutes, until hot. Simmering time for step 3 remains the same. (Since you don't save much time, why not make the full amount and freeze the extra?)

— Reheat chili on high, stirring every 5 minutes. Or, set probe for 160 degrees, but don't forget to stir.

Note: The times above are for microwaves with 600-700 watts of power; for 500 W, add 10 to 15 seconds to each minute.

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THINK AHEAD...
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