

Rice & Beans: Comfort for the Winter Seasons

Ingredients

- 1 package GOYA black beans (16 oz / 1 lb) or 2 cans (about 30 oz total)
- 300 g (about 10–11 oz) smoked sausage (turkey, chicken, pork, or beef), sliced
- 6 cups water or beef/chicken/bone broth
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 yellow onion
- 4 cloves garlic
- 1 tbsp salt
- 3 tbsp bacon grease or canola oil
- 2 tsp black pepper (or to taste)

How to Prepare

1. Add beans, bay leaf, and water or broth to a slow cooker. Cook for about **1 hour**, or until tender.
2. Brown the sliced sausage in a pan with 1 tbsp oil until lightly crispy. Set aside.
3. Smash the garlic with salt using a mortar and pestle until it forms a paste.
4. Chop or finely process the onion. Sauté it in the same pan until translucent. Add garlic and cook briefly until lightly golden.
5. Add the cooked beans to the pan along with the sausage and black pepper. Simmer gently until the broth thickens to your liking, adding more liquid if needed.
6. Serve warm with rice and a simple salad.

There are dishes that nourish the body, and others that quietly comfort the soul. Rice and beans, for me, has always been both.

This simple meal carries generations, cultures, and memories at the table. It reminds me that God often meets us not in excess, but in what is steady, warm, and faithful – especially during the colder seasons of life. Winter has a way of slowing us down, inviting us inward, and teaching us to receive care rather than rush forward. And sometimes, comfort looks like a pot gently simmering on the stove.

Rice and beans is a daily staple in Brazil, but its beauty goes far beyond simplicity. Together, they form a complete protein, are affordable, sustainable, and deeply nourishing. A single serving offers balance – fiber, protein, warmth – and a quiet sense of home.

In our home, this recipe is an adaptation of tradition. While classic Brazilian beans are often prepared with linguiça calabresa, I use smoked Polish sausage (kielbasa), which is widely available in the U.S. and easily adaptable to different diets. What remains unchanged is the heart of the dish: patience, intention, and care.

This is the kind of food you make when the days are shorter, the mornings are colder, and you need something steady to remind you that you are held.

“The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.”

Psalm 34:18

May this meal remind you that God is near – in winter seasons, in quiet kitchens, and in the ordinary rhythms that sustain us.