

TexasMonthly

Featured in the [September 1999 issue of Texas Monthly](#)

Jailhouse Chili From *Eat, Drink and Be Kinky*

3 or 4 pounds beef (such as shank, round steak, flank steak, or lean chuck)
1 or 2 beers for marinade
1/4 cup canola or other vegetable oil
1 or 2 onions, finely chopped
5 garlic cloves, minced, or 1 tablespoon garlic powder
2 to 4 seeded jalapeños (more if preferred)
2 tablespoons cumin seeds, toasted and ground
1 or 2 tablespoons paprika (Texans will want to use 4 to 6 tablespoons dried red chile powder in addition to the paprika)
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper, or to taste
2 tablespoons dried oregano
2 chicken bouillon cubes
salt and pepper to taste
2 cans (15 1/2 ounces each) pinto beans, drained and rinsed

Can be made in the average jail cell with minimal equipment. Trim the beef of fat and cut into thumb-size pieces. If you don't have any thumbs, use your neighbors' for measuring purposes. Do not drink the marinade but use it to soak the beef for at least 2 hours.


In a skillet on your hot plate brown the beef in the oil. If the meat was gray when you started, try for new meat and start over. Some jailhouse cooks, especially in Texas, like to throw in onion while browning the meat. Also, in New York City's Metropolitan Correctional Center, some of the old-time Guidos drop in some garlic here.

Purée jalapeños in 2 cups water. In a large pot combine the browned meat, puréed jalapeños, and the marinade. Bring to a boil and simmer for 45 minutes.



Kinky Friedman is a man of many talents: cult country musician, professional Texan, and mystery writer (his thirteenth novel, [Spanking Watson](#), was just published by Simon and Schuster). He's also expert at surrounding himself with entertaining characters, many of whom end up in his books. This month his pal Mike McGovern, a former *New York Daily News* reporter, has returned the favor by writing a cookbook featuring more than seventy dishes and an equal number of outrageous quotes from the Kinkster. The recipe for Jailhouse Chili, a creation of another Kinky friend, [New York City private detective Steve Rambam](#), is a hoot to read--and it makes a darn good bowl of red. [Eat, Drink and Be Kinky](#) will be published this month, also by Simon and Schuster.

Add cumin, paprika, cayenne, and oregano (but unless your neighbors, like Vinnie the Hook and No-Knuckles Sal, are expected for dinner, go light on the oregano--say, 2 teaspoons--or your chili will taste like marinara sauce).

Bring to a boil, add the bouillon cubes, salt, and pepper and simmer for 1 hour, or until the meat is tender. (If the chili is allowed to cool, the fat will rise to the top. If you are a health nut, spoon it off. For the best taste, leave it alone. If you want health food, eat a freakin' salad.) Add pinto beans and serve. Serves 3 or 4 felons, or 6 to 8 normal eaters. (Remember, before eating, always wash your hands and say your prayers because God and germs are everywhere.) 

Patricia Sharpe



Butcher
beef

Produce
onions
garlic
jalapeños

Grocery
cumin seeds
oregano
paprika
cayenne pepper
chicken bouillon cubes
canola oil
pinto beans (canned)
beer

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