

FOOD & RESTAURANT NEWS
BEST BITES



Super Bowl Recipe: Bidwell's Drunken Bean Dip

Chef John Mooney shares a decadent homemade version of the party staple.

By **Anna Spiegel**

Bean dip is one of those party staples that's often purchased premade but is so much better when you start from scratch. Bidwell chef/owner John Mooney started making his version more than ten years ago, inspired by Mexican frijoles borrachos, or drunken beans. Dried pintos are stewed with beer, tomatoes, and chipotle and made into a creamy purée, which he tops with quick-marinated tomatoes and goat cheese.

The dip and chopping can be done in advance; just add the oil and vinegar to the tomatoes right before serving. Meat fans can sauté fresh chorizo and crumble it on top along with the goat cheese for a version like the one you'll find at Mooney's Union Market restaurant. Either way, this formula will get you to swear off the jarred stuff for good.

Drunken Bean Dip

Serves 6 to 8 as an appetizer

Ingredients

Bean dip

- ½ medium white onion, roughly chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, chopped
- ½ cup dried pinto beans
- 1 can ale, such as Pork Slap pale ale
- 1 pint vegetable stock (or substitute water)
- 1 teaspoon canned chipotle in adobo pepper
- 2 whole canned tomatoes
- ¼ bunch cilantro

Marinated tomato topping

- 1 whole shallot, thinly sliced
- 20 cherry tomatoes, cut in half
- 10 cilantro sprigs
- 1 teaspoon sherry vinegar
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil

To finish

- 4 ounces goat cheese
- 2 flatbreads, warm flour tortillas, or corn chips
- Salt and pepper to taste

Make the bean dip:

- 1) Set a large sauce pot over low heat and add enough oil to coat the bottom. Add the onions and garlic and sweat them until translucent.
- 2) Add beans, beer, stock, chipotle, and tomatoes. Bring to a simmer for 1½ hours, or until beans are soft enough to purée.
- 3) Remove pot from heat. Add ¼ bunch of cilantro and purée in a blender until smooth. Season with salt and reserve. The bean mixture can be made up to three days in advance.

Make the tomato topping:

In a small mixing bowl add shallots, cherry tomatoes, and cilantro leaves with sherry and extra-virgin olive oil. Season mixture with salt and pepper.

To finish:

Place bean dip in a warm cast-iron skillet and sprinkle with dollops of goat cheese. Top with marinated tomatoes. Serve with points of flatbread, warm flour tortillas, or corn chips.



Homemade bean dip: so much better than the jarred stuff. Photograph courtesy of John Mooney.