Microwave Chili (for National Microwave Oven Day)

Did you know tomorrow, December 6, is National Microwave oven day! Well, there is a day for just about everything and here is one for that trusty little appliance most of us use almost daily!

I don’t know about you, but mine is used primarily for reheating and melting butter, but in honor of this handy little appliance, here is a really quick weeknight meal – Microwave Chili!
MICROWAVE CHILI

The Lazy Gastronome
But first, a little history of the Microwave....

The cooking ability of microwave energy was discovered by accident! In 1942 Dr. Percy Spencer was testing a magnatron when he noticed the candy bar in his pocket had melted! (What a laundry mess that must have been). He did a little more experimentation and found that microwave energy not only cooked food, but it cooked it faster than convention heat!

Now every American will need one of these! The first commercial “Radarange” was available in 1947 weighing over 700 pounds and standing over six feet tall! That’s almost as big as my refrigerator! Now, more than 90% of Americans has a much smaller version of the original in their kitchen.

Microwave ovens work with electromagnetic radiation – this is NOT the same kind of radiation used in medical devices, like x-rays. It is a non-ionizing radiation that poses far fewer risks. It is highly unlikely for your microwave to expose you to any radiation unless there is a leak in the unit itself (and that is highly unusual). So please don’t mess with the structure of the oven! The electromagnetic radiation causes the water molecules to vibrate in the food and this vibration is what heats it up!

Did you know microwaving vegetables is an incredibly healthy way to cook them? They cook quickly and without nutrient leaching water. It’s closer to eating hot raw veggies!

But do be careful what you cook in. Plastics and paper that are not intended for microwave use can leach chemicals into your food and, more likely, will melt into it (ah, plastic toast!).

And now – onto the recipe!

What you need:
- ¾ pound of ground beef
- 3 Tablespoons chili powder
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 2 teaspoons onion powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 cup prepared pico de gallo salsa
- 2 cans (16 oz) of pinto beans
- 4 Tablespoons Masa flour
- Cheddar cheese and green onions to garnish

How to Do it:

In a large glass bowl, thoroughly mix the beef with all the spices.

Cook in the microwave on high for 3-4 minutes, until cooked through.
Using the back of a wooden spoon, break up the big chunks of meat into smaller bite sized pieces. Stir in the beans, salsa and flour, mixing well.

Heat on high for 4-6 minutes or until it is heated through and the flavors have melded together.
Place in serving bowls and top with cheese. Heat again on high, 1-2 minutes or until the cheese is melted in each bowl. Top with green onions and serve with tortillas (warmed in the microwave of course).

Serves 4

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