

# RED BEANS AND RICE

This is a Cajun classic, and I want to do it the justice it deserves. Traditionally in New Orleans, Monday was the day to do laundry. Doing laundry took all day, and having a pot of beans simmering on the back burner was a way to accomplish dinner at the same time. Although washing machines have replaced the washboard, Red Beans remain a Gulf Coast staple. This recipe takes a long time, but it's not labor intensive. Several things to note: Although Kidney Beans are red, try not to use them. Look for "small red beans" or ideally, "camellia beans". Also, the brining step is *very* important: more for the beneficial effect on texture than on the seasoning, believe it or not. Finally, I have found that Uncle Ben's Rice is far superior to any other rice I have tried. It's twice as expensive as Minute Rice, but I'd gladly pay ten times as much. Small things make a *big* difference.

## INGREDIENTS:

1 Pound small red beans (about 2 Cups), rinsed  
3 Tablespoons Salt  
4 Quarts cold water

Mix together and soak for at least 8 hours and up to 24. Drain and rinse well.

4 Slices Bacon (about 4 oz.) chopped finely  
1 Cup Onion, chopped finely  
½ Cup Green Pepper, chopped finely  
½ Cup Celery, chopped finely  
1 Tablespoon Garlic, minced  
½ teaspoon Thyme  
1 teaspoon Paprika  
2 Bay Leaves  
¼ teaspoon Cayenne Pepper  
3 Cups Chicken Broth  
6 Cups Water  
8 ounces Andouille Sausage (or Kielbasa) halved lengthwise and cut into ¼ inch slices

## *(Toppings)*

1 teaspoon Red Wine Vinegar  
3 Green Onions (Scallions) sliced thinly  
Hot Sauce

**DIRECTIONS:**

Heat bacon in large Dutch Oven over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until brown and almost fully rendered, 5-8 minutes. Add onion, green pepper, and celery. Stirring frequently, cook until vegetables are softened, 6-8 minutes.

Stir in garlic, thyme, paprika, bay leaves, and cayenne, and stir/cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds or so.

Stir in the beans, broth, and water. Bring to boil over high heat. Reduce heat and vigorously simmer, stirring occasional, until beans are just soft and liquid begins to thicken; 45-60 minutes.

Stir in sausage and cook until liquid is thick and beans are fully tender and creamy, about 30 minutes. Taste it. Add salt if needed. If it needs “brightening”, add 1 teaspoon red wine vinegar at a time if desired.

Serve over rice, sprinkling with scallions, vinegar, and hot sauce as desired.