

# Mike's Chili for Hungry Suspenders

*This is the most on-target chili recipe I've found. After the first day in the fridge, the hotness fades just enough to bring out the richness of the other flavors but still has zip. This makes a LOT of chili, so give some to friends. Have oyster crackers, corn bread, warmed flour tortillas, sticks of carrot and celery and blue cheese to serve to chili "wusses," though the sour cream garnish should do.*

**1# hot Italian sausage (either bulk or stripped of casing)**

**1# sweet italian sausage (ditto)**

**1/4 cup olive oil**

**6 cloves garlic (!)**

**2 large vidalia onions (diced)**

**2 pounds ground round**

**1 tsp cocoa**

**2 green bell peppers (diced)**

**2 red bell peppers (diced)**

**6 jalapeno peppers (diced)**

**3 cans (28 oz.) plus 1 can (15 oz.) peeled whole tomatoes (drained, & "gooshed")**

**1 cup hearty beer or ale, or one cup of dry red wine**

**2 tbsp tomato paste**

**1/3 cup dried parsley**

**6 tbsp. chili powder (!)**

**3 tbsp. cumin (!)**

**2 tbsp. oregano**

**1 tbsp. basil**

**2 tsp. salt**

**2 tsp. pepper**

**2# fresh plum tomatoes, (seeded and diced)**

**Monterey Jack cheese**

**sour cream**

**green onions (chopped)**

1. Chop up all onions, peppers and tomatoes, making sure either to wear rubber gloves or wash hands THOROUGHLY after handling jalapenos.

2. Brown sausage in wok or skillet, breaking up with fork. Drain off excess grease.

3. Meanwhile flash garlic in oil in LARGE stock pot. Add onion and cook 5 minutes or so until onion just begins to soften.

4. Add ground round and cocoa. Cook at medium heat breaking up ground round until thoroughly browned and onion is tender.

5. Add sausage and peppers, and cook stirring frequently until peppers just begin to soften (about 10 minutes).

6. Add rest of ingredients except fresh tomatoes and garnishes. Cook 10 minutes more. Lower to a simmer if (when) it starts to boil.

7. Add tomatoes and cook for another 10 minutes.

8. Serve in bowls garnished with cheese, a dollop of sour cream and green onions.

