

Spicy Sloppy Joes

When you want sloppy joes, but you don't want the same old sloppy joes (and you like a bit of heat), make this your go-to recipe.

There are a lot of variables in this recipe. The results you get will, of course, depend on your inputs.

For regular sloppy joes, I will use 80/20 ground beef, or preferably, 85/15 ground beef. "Fat is flavor" is a thing, but there are plenty of other seasonings in most sloppy joe recipes. There are, quite frankly, *lots* of seasonings in this recipe. And as most store-bought chorizos are already high in fat, you can probably get by with very lean ground beef. I've made this with 90/10 ground beef, and still had quite a bit of fat floating on the top. (And I do like it "lunch lady style"—see the notes—but I realize not everyone else may, or is trying to avoid high-fat dishes.)

When vegetables are used as seasoning, there is quite a bit of difference between types and amounts. I could say "1 cup of diced onion" but is that one cup of diced sweet onion or one cup of diced Spanish onion? And how finely are they diced? (The finer something is cut up, the more flavor it will release, but it will also lose its texture more quickly.) Jalapeños are notoriously unreliable in my part of the

world—sometimes they have almost no heat, while at other times they are unbelievably spicy.

I have no answers here. My only suggestion is to taste as you go, and to always buy things from the same source. When it comes to vegetables, try to grow your own. Both peppers and onions are fairly easy to grow once you meet their basic needs with regard to sun and water.

Also, this recipe calls for a cup of beer. There are so many beers out there that I can't recommend one. I usually use a light lager when I'm experimenting, and I've made this recipe multiple times with Corona to great success. But because I usually make this a day ahead of time (sloppy joes are always better that way), whatever contribution the beer makes to this dish is minimal. I suspect that a dark beer (Corona makes one, and I have found it quite tasty, although I generally don't like darker beers) or a decent IPA that tends away from the sweet end of the IPA spectrum and more toward the hoppy end would work well here. Of course, if you are making this ahead of time, this could all be a mute point. The point of the beer is to add a bit of liquid so that you can simmer this for an extended period of time.

Ingredients

- 3/4 pound (12 ounces) ground beef
- 14 ounces chorizo
- 3/4 white or yellow onion, finely diced*
- 1 small to medium poblano pepper, seeded and finely chopped*
- 1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and finely chopped*
- 1 cup beer
- 3/4 cup ketchup
- 1 Tbs brown sugar
- 2 tsp granulated garlic
- 1 1/2 tsp chili powder
- 1/2 tsp mustard powder

*See notes

Method

1. Add the chorizo and ground beef to a large, deep frying pan and cook, breaking it up with a spatula, until it is completely cooked.
2. Add the onion and peppers, and cook for 2-3 minutes, until they begin to soften.
3. Add the beer and deglaze the bottom of the pan.
4. Add the ketchup and spices. Stir to combine and bring to a simmer.
5. Reduce heat as necessary and simmer, covered, for 15-20 minutes. (If necessary, add additional beer or water if the mixture becomes too thick.)

Notes

1. Fat is flavor, and depending upon the brand of chorizo you use, and the type of ground beef, this recipe may produce a lot. You have a few options for the excess fat this dish produces:
 - Drain the excess fat after the meat is cooked.
 - Drain the excess meat after the onions and pepper are cooked.
 - Add a tablespoon or so of flour before adding the beer and cooking for a minute to cook out the raw flour flavor.
 - Leave it as it is, and serve it "lunch lady style". (In my opinion, school lunchroom sloppy joes were delicious precisely *because* the fat was left in it. Happy times, happy times.)
2. You can use mild, medium, or hot chorizo, depending on your family's tolerance for heat.
3. As always, adjust the amount of peppers and onions to your family's liking.