BOURBON BAKED BEANS FROM THE SMOKER

Creamy white beans in a thick, sweet and savoury sauce with bacon, mustard and a splash of bourbon. The pan sits in the smoker under your ribs or pork shoulder and catches all the good stuff that drips down. The classic side dish at every American BBQ.



INGREDIENTS

For 8 people

- 150 g diced smoked bacon
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, cut into small dice
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1.2 kg white beans in tomato sauce, canned or jarred
- 400 g cooked white beans from a jar, drained and rinsed
- 100 ml tomato-based BBQ sauce
- 60 ml bourbon
- 50 g dark brown sugar
- 2 tbsp molasses or dark candi syrup
- 1 tbsp coarse-grain mustard
- 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- ½ tsp coarsely ground black pepper

HOW TO MAKE BOURBON BAKED BEANS

1. Cook the bacon in a frying pan over medium-high heat until the fat renders out, without letting it crisp up.
2. Add the onion and bell pepper and cook for about 5 minutes until soft and translucent.
3. Add the garlic and cook for 1 more minute.
4. Deglaze with the bourbon and let it bubble for about 1 minute, so the harshest alcohol cooks off.
5. Stir in the BBQ sauce, sugar, molasses, mustard, vinegar, Worcestershire sauce and pepper.
6. Tip the beans in tomato sauce and the cooked white beans into a large, shallow heatproof pan.
7. Pour the bacon mixture over the top and stir gently, without breaking up the beans.
8. Taste and adjust with a little extra sugar for sweetness or a splash of vinegar for tang.
9. Set up the smoker for indirect cooking at 125 to 135 °C (255 to 275 °F), or use the smoker your meat is already in.
10. Place the pan uncovered on a grate under the meat, so the fat and juices drip into it.
11. Cook the beans for about 2 to 3 hours with the lid closed.
12. Stir every 30 minutes and give the pan a quarter turn, so the beans get even smoke and heat.
13. If the sauce gets too thick, stir in a splash of water or apple juice.
14. Take the pan off the smoker once the sauce is thick and glossy and the top has turned dark.
15. Let the beans rest for 10 minutes and give them one more stir before serving.