GRANNY PLANTS

Pumpkin Chili

real pumpkin, real spice, zero cinnamon in sight

Hearty and savory, with pumpkin doing the work squash usually does. Serves 6.
About 1 hour, mostly simmering.

You'll need:

- 1 lb ground beef (or turkey, or skip it for a vegetarian pot)
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 bell pepper, diced
- 2 cups pumpkin puree
- 1 can (28 oz) crushed tomatoes
- 1 can (15 oz) black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 can (15 oz) kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 cups beef or vegetable broth
- 2 tbsp chili powder
- 1 tbsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- Salt and pepper to taste

Good to know:

This is pumpkin’s savory side — no brown sugar, no cinnamon. The pumpkin adds body and a subtle earthiness without announcing itself as "pumpkin" at the table.

How to make it

1. **Brown the meat.**
   In a large pot over medium heat, brown the ground beef, breaking it up as you go. Drain excess fat if needed.

2. **Build the base.**
   Add the onion and bell pepper, cook 4-5 minutes until softened. Stir in the garlic, chili powder, cumin, and smoked paprika, and cook 1 minute more.

3. **Add pumpkin and everything else.**
   Stir in the pumpkin puree until combined, then add the crushed tomatoes, both beans, and the broth. Stir well and bring to a gentle boil.

4. **Simmer.**
   Reduce heat, cover partially, and simmer 30-35 minutes, stirring occasionally, until thickened.

5. **Season and serve.**
   Taste and season with salt and pepper. Ladle into bowls with shredded cheese, sour cream, or cornbread on the side.

Granny’s notes:

Freezes beautifully for up to 3 months — portion into containers and label with your printer.
A great way to use up pumpkin puree from a big cooking-down session without going sweet.
Top with roasted pumpkin seeds for a little crunch and a nice full-circle touch.