Coconut Rice with Black Beans

2 creamy rice-and-black-bean bowls, each with half the pepper and coconut sauce | Active 15 min | Cook 10 min | Total 30 min

Ingredients

- 250 g (9 oz) commercially ready-to-eat cooked long-grain rice from a newly opened shelf-stable pack, with label directions allowing microwave-bowl reheating
- 200 g (7 oz) canned ready-to-eat black beans, drained and rinsed
- 100 g (3 1/2 oz) prepared red bell pepper, seeds removed and cut into 5 mm/3⁄16 in dice
- 120 ml (1/2 cup) canned unsweetened coconut milk, stirred before measuring
- 30 ml water (2 tbsp), for the pepper stage
- 5 ml neutral oil (1 tsp)
- 10 ml lime juice (2 tsp), seeds removed
- 4 g washed fresh cilantro/coriander leaves and tender stems (about 2 tbsp chopped)
- 0.5 g fine salt, a small pinch, or omit if the beans are salty
- 0.3 g ground black pepper (about 1/8 tsp)

Set out

1000 W microwave with turntable, Kitchen scale and measuring jug, Knife and board, Spoon, Oven mitts, Two serving bowls, Microwave-safe bowl, at least 2 L/about 2 1/8 US qt measured capacity, about 20 cm/8 in inside diameter and 9 cm/3 1/2 in deep, Microwave-safe vented cover, Fork, Can opener and sieve, Food thermometer, Citrus juicer

Allergens

No major US allergen identified in base ingredients. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Put the diced pepper, oil and all 30 ml water in the 2 L bowl. Cover with a vent. Microwave at 1000 W full power for 3-4 minutes, stirring after 2 minutes, until the pepper is softened. Retain its small cooking liquid.

2. Fluff the ready-to-eat rice with a fork to separate clumps. Add it to the pepper with all the drained beans, stirred coconut milk, salt and black pepper. Stir thoroughly and cover with the vent open.

3. Heat at full power for 2 minutes. Stir the bottom and center, then cover with a vent and heat for 2-4 minutes more, following any longer minimum bowl-reheating directions on the rice label. The rice and beans must be steaming hot throughout, not just around the edge.

4. Stand covered for 2 minutes. Stir and check several places for at least 165°F/74°C. If any part is cooler, use additional 30-second bursts and repeat the covered stand and check. Stir in all the lime juice and chopped cilantro. Divide every component equally between two bowls and eat immediately.

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No dry-rice replacement

The 250 g is already cooked ready-to-eat rice, not 250 g dry grain. Dry rice would need a different liquid quantity and cook.

Keep the small pepper liquid

The 30 ml water stays with the pepper and becomes part of the creamy bowl. It is not drained away.

Ingredient labels

Check the ready-to-eat rice and coconut-milk labels for additional ingredients or allergens. Coconut is part of the formula; label-compatible ingredients are necessary for anyone avoiding it.

A useful detail

The 30-minute plan allows 8 minutes of preparation, up to 10 minutes of sequential heating, the 2-minute stand and 10 minutes for fluffing, stirs, temperature checks and portioning. Times start from a 1000 W microwave and use already cooked rice. Longer actual package reheating directions or corrective endpoint bursts extend the plan.

Another way

Use 200 g/7 oz drained ready-to-eat pinto beans instead of black beans. Keep the rice, coconut milk and pepper quantities unchanged.

Replace 4 g/about 2 tbsp cilantro with 4 g/about 2 tbsp finely chopped fresh parsley, stirred in at the same final stage. No extra herb garnish is needed.

Keep it well

This bowl is a continuous reheating meal. Prepare only what will be eaten now, and do not cool the finished rice for another reheating. Keep unused, unmixed ingredients under their original package storage and opening deadlines. Never use previously reheated cooked rice or restart its clock by mixing it with beans. Discard served portions left out beyond 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F/32°C.