

The word chakalaka comes from the Zulu language, meaning all together, but its history is a bit elusive. This dish is said to have originated in the townships of Johannesburg, when Mozambican workers from the goldmines simply cooked canned vegetables such as beans and tomatoes with whatever fresh vegetables, they had available, along with chili to produce a spicy relish with a Portuguese flair. The spiciness of chakalaka depends on the region and the pairings and varies from mild to very hot. Although it was primarily served with corn-based porridges such as pap or mieliepap, making it a well-rounded vegetarian meal, chakalaka became a quintessential part of barbecues because it pairs with meat perfectly. Nowadays, every family has their own special chakalaka recipe, and this dish is also sold in stores and offered in most local restaurants in South Africa.

*Image and text courtesy of The DBE Colorado 2021 Calendar*

## Ingredients

- 3 Tablespoons oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 2 green Bird's Eye or Thai chilis, seeded and chopped (can substitute with jalapeño chilies)
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1-2 Tablespoons finely grated ginger
- 1 Tablespoon mild curry powder
- 1 green bell pepper, finely chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, finely chopped
- 1 yellow bell pepper, finely chopped
- 5 large carrots, peeled and grated
- 14 ounce can chopped tomatoes
- 2 Tablespoons tomato paste
- 14 ounce can baked beans
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

## Directions

1. Heat the oil in a pan and fry the onions until soft and translucent.
2. Add the chilis, garlic, half of the ginger and curry powder and stir to combine.
3. Add the bell peppers and cook for another 2 minutes.
4. Add the carrots and stir to make sure they are well combined with the other ingredients and coated in the curry powder.
5. Add in the tomatoes and tomato paste and stir.
6. Cook until the mixture is well combined and slightly thickened, about 5 to 10 minutes.
7. Remove from heat and add the baked beans, thyme and remaining ginger and stir to combine.
8. Season with salt and pepper.

## Notes

- Serve hot or cold
- This recipe can easily be halved