

The Ultimate Cooking Challenge: Beans and Bread on a StoveTec Rocket Stove

Advance preparation

1. Soak the desired beans for 8 hours ahead. Drain, rinse, and add the desired ingredients to the pot.
2. Prepare the bread recipe and place the dough in a greased 8-inch cake pan.
3. Place 3 one-inch-tall stones into the StoveTec pot to provide a hot-air buffer between the pot bottom and the pan of bread.
4. Place the pan of bread into the wire holder and lower the pan into the StoveTec pot. Place the lid on the pot to keep the bread warm.

Starting the fire

1. Set 4 little sticks onto the grate in the stove to create a platform. Open the bottom door for full airflow.
2. Make a “jelly donut” with Vaseline and a cotton ball.
3. Place the “jelly donut” on the little sticks in the stove.
4. Place 4 larger sticks on top of the “jelly donut.”
5. Light the “jelly donut” with a match.
6. As the fire gets going, help it along by gently blowing on it and by adding more sticks. You will need more sticks to produce enough heat to bring the pressure cooker up to steam.
7. Use tongs to place six coals into the stove chimney, being careful not to smother the fire.

Cooking the beans

1. Immediately, place the pot of beans into the wind-protection ring and then onto the stove.
2. Keep an eye on the fire, adding more sticks as needed.
3. The pot of beans should reach desired pressure (when the pressure regulator jiggles, which is 15 lbs. pressure) after about 15 min.
4. When the pressure regulator starts to jiggle, begin timing for 30 min.
5. After 30 min. of cooking, remove the pot of beans. (Carefully pour water over the pot of beans to bring down the pressure enough to release the pressure lock, so you can open the pot safely.)

Baking the bread

1. Immediately, place the special StoveTec pot containing the bread onto the stove.
2. Begin timing for 30 min.
3. You should have a pile of hot coals in the stove sufficient to cook the bread. Place the firebrick into the upper doorway and shut the upper door. Open the bottom door halfway for moderate airflow. Check on the fire occasionally to ensure that it doesn't go out. Add extra sticks only as needed.
4. Check the bread after 30 min. It will not brown on the top, so you must poke at it a little to see if it still seems a little soggy. If so, continue cooking a little longer.
5. Remove the pot from the stove, and remove the bread from the pot.

Eat bread with butter and a cup of soup!

What we learned from the first Stovetec cook-off:

1. Add extra water to the bean recipe if you have a pressure cooker with a weight pressure regulator that jiggles. It lets some of the water from the beans escape as steam. Some of the beans will be crunchy, if there is not enough liquid.
2. Stoves with metal liners take longer to heat up than the stoves with exposed firebrick.
3. Bringing the pressure cooker up to steam takes extra fuel at the beginning.
4. The website for the stoves is stovetec.net.