

## Quesadillas from Corn Dough – *Quesadillas hechas con masa*

### Grilled or Deep Fried

#### Ingredients (for a dozen)

##### Corn Dough – Masa

2 cups nixtamalized corn flour (*masa harina*, such as Maseca™, or Bob's Red Mill™)  
1 ½ cups water, plus more as needed  
½ tsp salt, or to taste

##### Vegetable oil, **only for deep frying**

½ lb (225 g) melting cheese, preferably stringy such as Oaxaca or Mozzarella; shredded  
Other fillings, to taste, such as: *Hongos* (Mushrooms with Epazote), Huitlacoche (from canned, or homemade), *Papa* (cooked and pressed potatoes), *Pancita* (beef tripe stir-fry), *Flor de calabaza* (Squash Blossoms), *Tinga Poblana* (Puebla Style Shredded Beef), *Picadillo* (Ground Beef Stew), etc.  
Salsas, to serve (homemade, or bottled)

Set up either a tortilla press, or a board or flat-bottomed dish, with plastic lining (such as a large freezer bag, cut open). Set aside. Mix all ingredients for the masa in a bowl, making sure to hydrate all the flour; form a soft dough, and allow to rest for ten minutes, covered. To test for adequate texture, take a portion about the size of a lime, roll into a ball and place between the prepared plastic linings. Gently press to form a thick disc; if it appears cracked, add one tablespoon of water to the dough, mix thoroughly. Once the dough is not cracking, and may be pressed easily without sticking to the plastic sheets (in which case, a little more flour may be added), divide the dough into twelve portions. Keep the dough covered while working with one portion at a time.

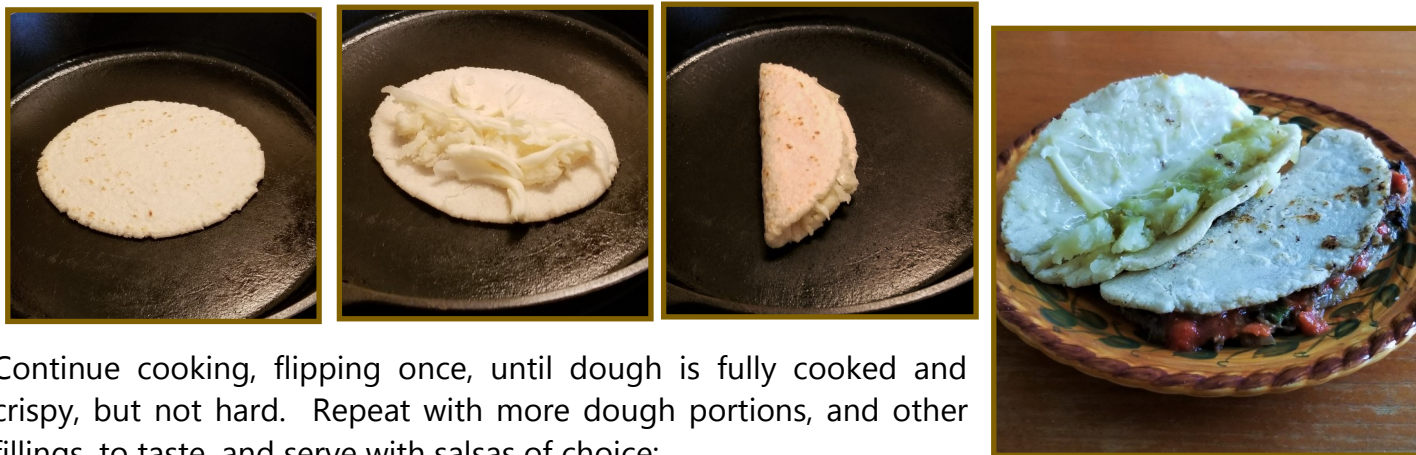
Roll one portion into a ball, slightly flatten into a disc and place on plastic in the tortilla press (photo below, left); close the press (or use board or pan) and flatten disc to a thin circle (photo below, centre). Rotate the disc with plastic a quarter turn (90 degrees), and press again, to obtain a thinner, and slightly elongated shape (photo below, right):



**Note:** if using a board or pan to flatten the discs, roll with a pin instead of pressing twice, to achieve the oval shape.

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**For grilled quesadillas:** Cook oval on a dry iron skillet or large frying pan (no oil), approximately one minute per side, so it is dry but still malleable for folding (photo below, left). Place some cheese and filling of choice on one half of the oval, lengthwise (photo, centre, with pressed potatoes and cheese). Close oval over filling, folding along the longer axis (photo below, right):



Continue cooking, flipping once, until dough is fully cooked and crispy, but not hard. Repeat with more dough portions, and other fillings, to taste, and serve with salsas of choice:

**For deep fried quesadillas:** Prepare a pot with at least one inch of vegetable oil; warm up over medium/high heat. After pressing, still on the plastic sheet, place some cheese and filling of choice on one half of the dough oval, lengthwise, making sure to leave a rim around the edge (photo below, left); Fold plastic over to close dough over filling along the longer axis, and press down with fingers along the rim to seal into a patty (photo below, centre). Remove patty from plastic, set aside and continue forming patties with more dough portions, cheese and fillings, to taste. Once the oil is hot but not smoking, fry patties in small batches without crowding. When placing patties in the oil, it should start foaming and the patty browning quickly, so do not leave unattended. Flip after a few seconds, and continue cooking until golden brown on both sides (photo below, right):



Transfer to paper towels, to remove excess oil. Serve hot with salsas (photo at the top of the post). At the table, open patties, and add salsa of choice:

**About the dough:** A few extras may be used, such as wheat flour, to increase malleability, or baking powder for extra fluffy fried patties. I personally prefer to control the texture of the dough by simply adjusting with water, as described in this recipe, since I like the extra crunchiness and clean flavour from pure corn dough.

