

Northern Style Red Tamales – *Tamales rojos estilo nortño*

Ingredients (for approximately 24 pieces)

3 lb (1.4 kg)	pork shoulder
10	<i>guajillo</i> peppers; wiped clean
1.1 lb (480g, 4 cups)	nixtamalized corn flour (such as Bob's Red Mill™ or Maseca™)
1 tbsp	baking powder
1 cup	lard (see *note)
¼	white onion; peeled
3 cloves	garlic; peeled
5 cups	broth (see **note)
2	bay leaves
½ tsp	Mexican oregano (or marjoram)
½ tsp ground	coriander seed
½ tsp ground	all spice
½ tsp ground	black pepper
Salt	
Water, as needed	
About 40	dry corn husks



Prepare meat: Cut up pork into large chunks and place in a large pot with water over high heat. Bring to boil, then reduce to medium, skimming any foam with a spoon. Add bay leaves and a teaspoon of salt. Cover pot and cook for one hour. Take one piece of meat on a board or plate, and prick with a fork, and as needed, continue cooking and testing, until meat shreds easily. Remove pot from heat and let cool down. Transfer meat and aromatics to a large bowl or container, and pour broth into a large measuring cup or jar. Reserve. **Prepare sauce:** remove and discard stems and seeds from *guajillo* peppers. Place cleaned peppers in a pot with boiling water; allow to soak until they cool down, about twenty minutes. Transfer drained peppers to a blender jar, and add onion, two cloves of garlic, one teaspoon of salt, and about one cup of liquid from soaking the peppers; process until well blended. Strain sauce through a sieve. Reserve sauce and discard solids in the mesh. **Finish filling:** measure seasonings, half a teaspoon each, Mexican oregano (or marjoram), all-spice, coriander seed, salt, and black pepper. Shred the pork, placing aside any membrane or fatty bits, and bay leaves (the garlic dissolved during cooking). Discard bay leaves. Warm up a large pan over medium heat. Add fatty bits, stir and sauté until they turn golden brown, rendering enough fat to coat the bottom of the pan. Remove crisped bits. Add shredded meat to the pan; stir meat, just lightly crisping, for a couple of minutes, then add two cups of the reserved strained sauce (reserve the rest for the corn paste). Mix meat and sauce together, then incorporate seasonings. Cover pan, and cook for another fifteen minutes, then remove from heat and allow to cool down.

Continue on next page ...

... cont. **Northern Style Red Tamales** – *Tamales rojos estilo norteno*

Prepare corn husks: Take dry husks out of their packaging. Wash husks under running water, separating them very carefully, discarding pieces with stains or dark spots, probably from mould. Dunk the good husks in water and drain a couple of times, then let soak in freshly boiled water for at least 20 minutes. Remove from water, gently squeeze excess water and reserve, propped in a colander. If they become stiff, dunk in water and drain again before attempting to fold.

Prepare corn paste: The reserved broth from cooking the pork will separate upon cooling, with lard floating to the top. ***note:** Skim the lard, and measure, if needed, supplement with store-bought lard to one cup. ****note:** measure the broth and transfer to a pot, topping up with water, if needed, to five cups; place pot over high heat and bring to boil, keeping hot until needed. Place the one cup of lard in a large mixing bowl. Beat until creamy and fluffy. Add nixtamalized corn flour, baking powder, and one teaspoon of salt. Mix to incorporate, occasionally stopping to scrap edges with a spatula. Add two cups of hot broth, while mixing. Once incorporated, add the reserved sauce. Mix and knead, until a uniform soft dough is formed. Continue mixing, adding the rest of the broth, as needed, to form a fluffy, spreadable paste. Cover bowl and allow to rest for twenty minutes.

Prepare steamer: Fill the steamer bottom (or a large pot) with at least one inch of water, then place steamer basket on top (or fit a large metal colander on pot), making sure the water does not touch. Place a few of the smallest corn husks at the bottom of the basket/colander. **Assemble and cook tamales:** Take one husk and scoop about a third of a cup of corn paste in the centre, spreading towards the sides; add some filling on top. Fold edges towards each other, overlapping to close. Holding the narrower end, press corn paste away from it with a finger or two, then fold narrower end over, to close the wrap. Place tamale in the prepared steamer, propping vertically. Continue with more husks, paste and filling; insert remaining corn husks around the edge of the basket/colander, then fold to cover the tamales. Top with a clean kitchen towel, tucking over the tamales inside the edge of the basket/colander, so the tamales will not get wet with condensation during steaming; place lid, completely closing the pot. Place prepared steamer on the stove top, and bring water in the pot to a boil over high heat, then reduce to a rolling boil, and let tamales steam for at least one hour. Always check the bottom of the pot halfway through, to make sure it is not drying too fast; if needed, add boiling water. Carefully open the pot and remove one tamale; check doneness by opening husk, the tamale is ready when it separates easily from the husk; this batch took two hours.