

## Huasteca Corn Patties – *Bocoles*



### Ingredients (for one dozen)

#### Dough

- 2 cups nixtamalized corn flour
- 1 ½ cups water, as needed
- ¼ cup lard (or oil, for vegetarian)
- 1 tsp salt, or to taste

#### Fillings

##### Bean Filling (for 6)

- 1 cup cooked black beans; drained (homemade *de la olla*, or from can)
- ¼ cup cilantro; washed, and chopped

##### Cheese Filling (for 6)

- 1 cup unripened cheese, such as Mexican *añejo*, or light feta; crumbled
- 2 *guajillo* peppers (or 2 tbsp ground *guajillo* from jar)

#### Salsas

**Green tomatillo *salsa*** (see last page for homemade, or from jar)

##### Red *guajillo* *salsa*

- 2 tomatoes; washed
- ¼ white onion; ends removed, peeled, layers separated
- 3 *guajillo* peppers
- 3-4 *chiles de árbol*, to taste, or omit for mild
- 1 clove garlic; peeled
- ½ tsp salt, or to taste
- 1 cup water; freshly boiled
- 1 tbsp oil, plus more for greasing griddle

#### Toppings and extras (optional)

- White onion; peeled, and chopped
- Cilantro; washed, and chopped
- Avocados; washed
- Grilled meat, chorizo, etc.

**Prepare dough:** Place nixtamalized corn flour in a bowl, sprinkling salt on top; open a well in the middle, to add lard (or oil), and half a cup of water. Break up lard, mixing with the other ingredients, gradually adding more water. Continue kneading by hand, adding enough water to completely hydrate the flour (1¼ to 1 ½ cups, total), and form into a ball of soft dough. Allow to rest for 20 to 30 minutes, covered with a clean kitchen towel.

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... Cont. **Huasteca Corn Patties – Bocoles****Prepare salsas:**

**Green Charred Tomatillo:** See full directions on last page.

**Red *guajillo*:** Place tomatoes, onion, *chiles de árbol* (if using) and **all five *guajillo* peppers** on a lightly greased *comal* (Mexican flat griddle) or skillet. Turn peppers every few seconds, and remove as soon as they are roasted, to avoid burning. **Reserve two of the *guajillo* peppers for cheese filling.** Place the other three *guajillo* peppers and the *chiles de árbol* in the freshly boiled water; allow peppers to soak for a few minutes. Meanwhile, continue roasting tomatoes and onions, turning to char all around. Remove stems from peppers and *chiles*, and transfer to a blender jar, along with their soaking water; remove stem spots from tomatoes, and cut up into quarters, then add to the blender jar; add roasted onions, garlic clove, and salt; process until smooth. Warm up one tablespoon of oil in a pan over medium heat, then pour in sauce from the blender jar; cook for 10 to 15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until all flavours have melded, and salsa has thickened. Reserve.

**Prepare dough with fillings:**

**Cheese feeling:** remove and discard stems from the two reserved roasted *guajillo* peppers, cut peppers into pieces and place in a spice grinder (such as an old coffee grinder dedicated to spices). Pulse until ground to a powder. Place crumbled cheese in a bowl, and add *guajillo* powder, mixing together. Uncover corn dough, and divide in half. Place the cheese mixture in a bowl with one half of the dough, and incorporate with a spatula, then knead lightly with hands until uniform.

**Bean filling:** place beans and cilantro in another bowl with the other half of the dough. Incorporate with a spatula, then knead lightly with hands, as with the other filling.

**Cook *Bocoles*:** Place a *comal* or an iron skillet over medium heat, then reduce heat to low. Divide each dough into six portions, forming 12 individual balls. Working with one ball at a time, pat back and forth between hands, to flatten into a disk (first and second photos, below). Gently drop patty on hot *comal* or skillet, then continue with more dough portions (third photo, below). Allow patties to cook until bottom is dry and starting to brown, then flip (photo below, right):



Continue for about ten minutes, flipping and rotating the patties until fully cooked, then transfer to a plate and cover, to keep warm. Repeat with more patties until all are cooked.

Slice and peel avocados right before serving.

Offer hot *bocoles* with chopped onion and cilantro, salsas, and sliced avocado on the side:



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## Charred Green Sauce - *Salsa Verde Tatemada*

### Ingredients (for approximately two cups)

1 lb (454g) tomatillos; papery wrap removed, washed  
¼ white onion; peeled  
1 serrano pepper, or more, to taste; washed  
Small bunch cilantro; washed  
½ tsp coarse salt, or to taste

Place a *comal* (Mexican flat griddle) or an iron skillet over high heat, and allow to become very hot, then arrange tomatillos, onions and pepper(s) on the hot surface; roast the veggies, turning as they brown, and continue until all the ingredients are nicely charred.

Remove from heat. Remove and discard stem from pepper(s) and place in a *molcajete* (Mexican volcanic rock mortar)\* along with the coarse salt. Grind with the *tejolote* (pestle); add onions and continue grinding, breaking the veggies into small chunks using short strokes, trying not to smear them. Continue these movements, pounding close to the bowl to avoid splattering; this is a labour of love, and might take some time. Add tomatillos one by one, to finish grinding and incorporating everything together. Finish the sauce by tearing cilantro leaves and short stem segments by hand, and mixing in.



\* This sauce may be prepared in a blender or food processor, by pulsing, trying to get a chunky texture. However, there is always some material being ground off the molcajete as it is used, adding unique salty and mineral notes to the flavour of the sauce. In addition, as ingredients are added, the last might remain chunkier as the *molcajete* gets full and there is less contact between the mortar and the pestle. The resulting non-uniform texture is a big part of the charm of making a *salsa molcajeteada*; it is said that not two batches will ever be exactly the same.