

Mexican Red Pork Tamales

Steamed masa parcels in corn husks - makes about 20

Makes 20 • Prep 1 hr • Cook 90 min • Mexico

INGREDIENTS

The masa

- 4 cups masa harina para tamales
- 1.33 cups lard or shortening
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 2 tsp salt
- 3 to 4 cups warm broth
- 25 to 30 dried corn husks, soaked in hot water 30 min

The red pork filling

- 2 lbs pork shoulder, simmered and shredded
- 5 guajillo + 2 ancho chiles, stemmed and seeded
- 3 garlic cloves, 0.5 onion
- 1 tsp cumin, 1 tsp oregano, salt
- 1 cup pork cooking broth

METHOD

1. Simmer the pork with onion, garlic and salt until shreddable, about 90 minutes. Reserve the broth. Shred the meat.
2. Toast and soak the chiles 15 minutes, then blend with garlic, onion, cumin, oregano and a cup of broth. Strain. Simmer the sauce with the shredded pork 10 minutes.
3. Beat the lard until fluffy. Add masa harina, baking powder and salt, then warm broth, beating to a soft spreadable dough. A pea of dough should float in water when it is ready.
4. Spread 3 tbsp masa in a thin layer over the smooth side of a soaked husk, leaving a border. Add a line of pork filling down the center.
5. Fold the sides of the husk over the filling so the masa edges meet, then fold up the bottom. Stand upright, open-end up, in a steamer.
6. Steam upright over simmering water 75 to 90 minutes, until the masa pulls cleanly away from the husk. Rest 10 minutes before unwrapping.

Tip • The float test is everything: drop a small ball of beaten masa into cold water. If it floats, the masa is aerated enough for light, fluffy tamales. If it sinks, beat in more air and a little more broth.