

TAMAL DE X'PELON & TAMAL DE CHAYA

INGREDIENTS

2 lbs or 1kg fresh masa for tamales from a tortilleria

10 oz. or 250 grams Maseca flour

5 oz or 150 grams manteca (have a little extra on hand, depending on the dough it may need more liquid fat)

5 good pinches of salt

1.5 cups water or stock of your choice

Additions:

Freshly washed Chaya about 1 cup tightly packed (if you don't have access to chaya you can use spinach, 1 box of frozen squeezed of all moisture will work)



2 cups of washed and par boiled X'pelóns



Small 2 inch square piece of Recado Rojo mashed in water until a smooth thin paste

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DIRECTIONS

1. Melt the lard until it is fairly liquidy and soft, and then combine lard, with the salt.
2. In a large bowl knead the masa dough with your hands adding in the lard and salt mixture, slowly add in the stock or water kneading all the time until the liquids are fully incorporated into the dough.
3. If you wish to add the chaya/spinach or X'pelóns add into the dough and knead until evenly distributed.



4. If you are using the Recado Rojo simply add to the dough mixture with the other liquids.
5. The dough should be firm but pliable and will leave a slight greasy feel on your hands. If you roll a small piece of dough into a ball and flatten it should be easy to make into a flat round

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with no cracking through the centre of the dough, it will crack along the edges. If the dough feels somewhat dry add some more manteca and knead again.

6. The dough is now ready to place on the banana leaves.

7. Take a piece of cleaned banana leaf around 10 inches long and place on a flat surface.



8. Roll a small 2 inch ball (5cm) of masa dough and place in the centre of the banana leaf. If you want to use a tortilla press cover the bottom plate of the press with a banana leaf and place the ball in the centre of the press, cover the top plate and press the ball into a 6 inch round. If you are pressing by hand place a small piece of paper under the banana leaf which will allow the leaf to turn on the table, slowly from the centre out press the ball into a flat round the same size as above.

9. Into the centre of the round place a small handful of meat or filling of your choice (chicken, cooked beans, refried beans, shredded chicken, pork, fish or beef).

10. Spoon around 1 large tablespoon of sauce onto the top of the filling and gently using one side of the banana leaf close the circle on either side with the masa dough. Then seal the ends of the masa to keep the sauce and filling intact. You will get some cracking of the dough so simply use your fingers to pinch closed.

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11. Make sure you wrap the banana leaf closely around the masa and the filling closing the edges (sort of burrito style wrapping).
12. Place on its side in the steamer and add more tamales as you get them wrapped.
13. Cook in the steamer for around 1 and 1/2 hours. Tamales are cooked when a knife or toothpick comes out clean.



14. Remove from banana leaf and add warm sauce on top, garnish Salsa Roja Sofrito, avocado, cilantro and crema if you wish.

Preparing the meat and sauce for the tamales

Ingredients

250 grams or 1/4 lb of the Masa de maiz

1000 grams or 2 lbs pork loin or leg (you need the bones to make a great broth)

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2 skinless chicken breasts (keep the bone in)

50 grams Recado Rojo

50 grams or 3.25 Tbsp Recado Blanco

5 Tomatoes

2 x Chile Dulce (2 very small green peppers)

1 x Onion

1 cup epazote

1 head of garlic

2 medium sized onions

50 grams or 3.25 Tbsp oregano

Good pinch of black pepper

Good pinch of salt

Oil for sautéing vegetables

1. Fill a good sized pot with water, add the salt and place the pork with the bones in the pot.



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When you see the foam forming on top of the pan carefully skim the foam off the top of the mixture.

2. While you bring the meat to a boil, blacken the full head of garlic and the onion on the burner or BBQ. When they are fully blackened add to the pot of meat and lower the heat to a simmer. Simmer the meat for at least 45 minutes until the meat begins to soften.



3. Take the Recado Rojo and mix with water until you have created a smooth thin paste. Sieve this mix over the pot of meat to ensure you remove any potential large pieces of achiote.



4. Add in the black pepper, salt, Recado Blanco and the epazote.
5. Add in the skinless chicken and allow to simmer for at least 30 minutes.
6. Take the tomatoes, green pepper and 2nd onion and roughly slice. Place some oil in the pan and add the onions. When you can smell the onions cooking add in the green pepper and the tomatoes.

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7. Remove the meat from the broth and place on the side to cool. Once cooled you will shred the meat, remove the bones and any large pieces of fat.



8. Take the now cooked vegetables and add them to the pot of broth.
9. Take the 250 grams of the masa dough and mix with water until you have a pancake consistency liquid. This will be used to thicken the broth to make the "kol" or sauce for the tamales.
10. Add the liquid to the stock pot along with the cooked vegetables and stir well, cook this for around 20-30 minutes until it thickens into a sauce like consistency.

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11. When thickened allow to cool down and this is now your sauce to go into the tamales.
12. Take your circular formed masa dough and place the shredded meat in the centre then place around 2 Tbsps of the sauce on the top of the meat and wrap up the tamale.



13. Steam the tamales for around 1.5 hours and serve with Salsa Roja Sofrita.

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Salsa Roja Sofrita

2 small green peppers

1 Chile X'Catic

6 tomatoes

2 cloves garlic

1 medium sized white onion

1 cup epazote

Good pinch of salt

2 Tbsps of manteca

Good pinch of pepper

1. Slice peppers, 1/2 of the onion and tomatoes into small sized pieces and sauté with the Manteca until they soften.
2. Add in 1 cup of water the epazote and cook for around 10 minutes.
3. Add into the sauté pan the chiles, garlic and the rest of the onion that have been diced.
4. Sauté the mixture adding salt and pepper to taste. Cool the sofrito and use the blender to puree into a thick sauce.
5. This is the sauce that is used in the Brazo de Reyna tamales.