

INSTANT POT: POBLANO AND COTIJA CHEESE WITH AVOCADO TOMATILLO SAUCE

On a scale of 1-10, this has a difficulty rating of about a 2, and a delicious rating of about 12. Plus it's a fun way to start any special evening.

3 dozen tamales

INGREDIENTS

MASA:

- 1 1/3 cups lard or unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 1/2 teaspoons sea salt
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 3 pounds fresh masa (not "masa preparada" which already includes lard and flavorings)
- 2 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth, plus more as needed



PREPARATION

PREPARE THE MASA:

- 1.** In a bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, add the lard or butter, salt, and baking powder; whip on high speed until fluffy, about 2 minutes. Reduce speed to medium and add the fresh masa, alternating with 2 cups of broth. Beat until well mixed. (Depending on the capacity of your mixer, you may need to do this in two batches.)
- 2.** Increase mixer speed to medium-high and whip until masa resembles the consistency of soft yet workable dough, about 3 minutes. If the dough is too firm, add more broth, 1/4 cup at a time, until the correct consistency is attained.

Preparation and ingredients continued on back.

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INGREDIENTS (CONT.)

FILLING:

- filling for about 3 dozen tamales
- 4 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 large yellow onions, cut into 1/2-inch dice
- 8 fresh poblano chiles, roasted, peeled, seeded and chopped
- 2 cups corn kernels, fresh or, if frozen, thawed
- 2 tablespoons fresh oregano leaves
- 1 teaspoon chipotle chile powder
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 3 cups crumbled Cotija cheese

AVOCADO TOMATILLO SAUCE:

- 6 tomatillos roughly chopped
- 1 avocado seeded, peeled and roughly chopped
- 1-2 limes juiced
- 1/3 cup fresh cilantro
- 1/4 cup white onion
- 1/4 of a Jalapeno (1 tablespoon) or to taste
- 1/4 cup water
- kosher salt to taste

PREPARATION (CONT.)

3. To test tamale dough, drop approximately 1/2 teaspoon dough into a cup of cold water. If the masa floats, it is ready to shape into tamales. If it sinks, continue whipping for another minute. Repeat this "float test" until the sample masa dough floats.

PREPARE THE FILLING:

1. In a large skillet set over medium heat, add oil. When oil is shimmering, add onions and cook until soft and lightly browned, 6 to 8 minutes. Add the roasted poblano chiles, corn, oregano, and chipotle chile powder; stir well to combine. Cook until fragrant, about 3 minutes. Taste and adjust seasoning with salt and pepper.

2. Remove the mixture from the heat and set aside to cool. Fold in the cheese.

3. Place the wide end of the husk on the palm of your hand, narrow end is at the top. Starting at the middle of the husk spread 2 tablespoons of the masa with the back of a spoon in a rectangle or oval shape, using a downward motion towards the wide-bottom edge. Do not spread the masa to the ends; leave about a 2-inch border on the left and right sides of the husk.

4. Spoon 1 1/2 tablespoons of your filling down the center of the masa. Fold both sides to the center; finish off by bringing the pointed end of the husk toward the filled end. Make sure it's a snug closure so the tamale will not open during steaming. Secure by tying a thin strip of corn husk around the tamale. This will keep the tamale from unwrapping during the steaming process, especially if the husk is too thick and will not stay folded.

Preparation continued on back.

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PREPARATION (CONT.)

TO COOK THE TAMALES:

- 1.** Add a steamer basket or a rack to the bottom of the Instant Pot. Pour in enough water to reach just below the basket or rack. Arrange wrapped tamales, facing up, in the basket. Secure the lid and select Pressure setting on-high; set a timer for 20 minutes. After 20 minutes, manually release the pressure (quick release) and unlock the lid.
- 2.** Soak corn husks in warm water for an hour before using, rinse well with running water to take off any dust or corn husk fibers. To keep corn husks pliable and easy to work with, keep in water while filling tamales. Place a handful of wet corn husks in a colander to drain before using.

Remove tamales from husks, spoon sauce over to coat, and serve immediately.

PREPARE THE AVOCADO TOMATILLO SAUCE:

Add all of the ingredients to a blender and mix until well blended. Season to taste.

Refrigerate for 3-5 days