



Beef Tamales

Makes 16 to 20 tamales

1- 2.5 to 3 pound flank steak or beef round roast
2 TBS ground cumin + 1 tsp. for the chilies
1 small white onion – cut into eighths + ½ for the chilies
1 chili pepper – halved (optional)
8 garlic cloves – smashed + 4 halved ones for the chilies
2 thyme sprigs
4 California dry chilies
2 ancho dry chilies
2 pasilla dry chilies
1½ a cup of soaking liquid
16 to 20 dry corn husks
4 cups masa harina for tamales
4 cups beef broth – hopefully the left over from the beef – luke warm
1 TBS baking powder
1 cup vegetable shortening
Boiling water
Salt & Pepper
2 TBS Canola oil

Rinse and pat dry the beef you are using. Season it with 1 TBS. salt, black pepper and 2 TBS ground cumin. Heat a large braising pan with the canola oil and brown the beef evenly on both sides. Set aside.

Discard all excess rendered fat. Add a little bit of water to the pan and scrape the brown bits from the bottom. Return the beef to the pot. Add the onion, garlic, chili pepper if using and thyme sprigs. Cover with water, bring to a boil, and reduce heat and cover. Braise meat for 2 to 3 hours, until soft enough to shred. Once cooked, remove meat from pan and allow cooling. Shred the beef by hand, discarding any fat. Strain the broth and save it. You will need 4 cups for the masa harina. If you do not have enough add water to complete the 4 cups.

Heat a large skillet. Add the chili pepper and dry roast until a bit charred and blistered on both sides. Place chilies in a bowl and cover with boiling water. Weigh the chilies down with a small plate. Soak for

30 minutes. Once soaked, remove the stems and seeds and place in a blender. Add the half white onion, remaining garlic cloves, 1 tsp. ground cumin, 2 tsp. salt and 1 ½ cups soaking liquid. Blend into a paste and taste for salt. Add more if necessary. Add the chili paste to the beef and mix well.

Carefully separate the corn husks and soak then in warm water in a clean sink for about 30 minutes. Once soaked, remove from sink and carefully pat dry. Place the husks in a baking sheet and cover with a damp kitchen towel.

Place 4 cups of masa harina in a bowl. Add the baking powder and 2 tsp. salt. Mix well. Place the shortening into a small bowl and whip until creamy. Using your fingertips, add the beef broth to the masa and mix well. Once you have incorporated it all, add the shortening and finish mixing.

Place a husk in front of you with the rough side down and the shorter end towards you. Spoon in a thin layer of masa harina – wetting the spoon as necessary to work. Spoon in some beef in the middle. Fold the short end onto the masa and start rolling the husk away from you until you have a nice tight roll. Press the ends. The dough will seal the husks. Do not worry if your filling seeps a little. It will steam into the masa harina and be absolutely delicious.

Stand the rolled tamales in a steaming basket. Cover them with a damp cotton towel. Cover the pot and steam for 1 ½ to 2 hours. Make sure you check the water levels in your steamer about every 30 minutes. Carefully remove the dish rag and one of the tamales. Let it cool a bit and check for doneness. If they are not fully cooked steam for a little longer.

Serve your tamales with your salsa of choice and enjoy. These will freeze beautifully so go ahead and make a bunch. Enjoy!

Note: You will find Mexican chilies, husks and the masa harina in the Hispanic aisle of your grocery store.

1 tamal - CALORIES 385.77; FAT 22.73 grs (sat 7.22; mono 7.21; poly 5.75); PROTEIN 22.56 grs ; FIBER 3.39 grs; CARBS 24.52 grs; CHOLESTEROL 48.98 mg; IRON 4.05 mg; SODIUM 881.85 mg; CALCIUM 90.57 mg