

RECIPES

Encharitos de California

Many years ago I tried the recipe for Red Enchiladas with Sautéed Onions in Jacqueline Higuera McMahan's excellent books, *The Salsa Book* and *California Rancho Cooking*. The recipe became an immediate favorite. Over time I made some changes and included the resulting recipe in my second book, *La cocina de la frontera, Mexican-American Cooking from the Southwest*. Because the dish is part enchilada and part burrito and because it came from California's rancho cooking, I called it *Encharitos de California*. To this day it is one of my favorite Mexican-American dishes and would be a hit if served in restaurants. The real secret is in the caramelized onions, so make sure they are done properly.

Ingredients

2 ½ tablespoons olive oil
2 large white onions, sliced
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 cup sliced, black California olives
4 nine-inch diameter very thin flour tortillas
1 recipe [New Mexico enchilada sauce](#), made without the pork
½ pound grated mild cheddar cheese
½ pound grated, part skim milk mozzarella
Green part of 2 large green onions, thinly sliced



Directions

- 1. Make the onion and olive part of the filling.** Heat the olive oil in a very large skillet over medium heat, add and sauté the onions until they are a deep golden brown, turning down the heat as necessary to keep them from burning. The entire process may take up to an hour. During the last few minutes, add the garlic and ¾ cup of the sliced olives to the onions and continue cooking until the garlic is cooked through but not browned
- 2. Toast the tortillas.** Cook the tortillas briefly in an ungreased skillet over medium heat, just until they are soft enough to easily roll.
- 3. Sauce and fill the tortillas.** Warm the enchilada sauce and brush a thin coating of it onto both sides of each tortilla. Mix the cheeses together and put ½ - ¾ cup in a line just off center of each tortilla. Top the cheese with equal portion of the onion olive mixture, and roll the tortillas as you would enchiladas.
- 4. Finish and heat the encharitos.** Top each rolled encharito liberally with the enchilada sauce and top each with equal portions of the remaining cheese, then garnish them with the remaining olives and minced green onions. Heat each encharito in a microwave over high heat until the cheese has melted and the sauce bubbling, about 45 seconds.