

## RECIPES

### Cochinita Pibil

In this country and in many restaurants in Mexico, even in Yucatan, this dish is unfortunately made entirely in an oven. That version is good but lacks the vital smoke flavor that made the original so popular. This version, which combines the use of an inexpensive water smoker with an oven, captures both elements! Please note that *achiote* paste, available at Hispanic markets and some supermarkets, may be substituted for the following *recado* (spice rub).

#### Ingredients for the *recado* (rub)

1 tablespoon annatto seeds (available at Hispanic markets)  
½ teaspoon whole cumin  
1 teaspoon oregano  
1/4 teaspoon powdered allspice  
3/4 teaspoon powdered cinnamon  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon ground coriander  
1 ½ teaspoons ancho chile powder  
4 cloves garlic, minced and mashed to a paste  
2 tablespoons orange juice  
½ tablespoon lime juice

#### Directions for making the *recado*

Grind the annatto seeds and cumin to a powder in a spice or coffee grinder, add the oregano, allspice, cinnamon, salt, coriander, and chile powder and grind until the spices are thoroughly mixed. Place the powder in a small bowl, mix in the garlic, orange juice, and lime juice. You want a smooth paste that spreads easily. If the *recado* seems dry add a little more juice.

#### Ingredients for the pork

2 ½ - 3 pound one-half boneless, Boston butt roast  
The *recado*  
Banana leaves to wrap the pork (optional)  
Cotton string to tie the bundle (Do not use nylon cord as it may melt, creating unpleasant fumes and possibly causing burns).

#### Directions for making the pork

- 1. Marinate the pork.** Slice a crosshatch of cuts, about 1/4 inch deep, on both sides of the pork and rub the *recado* into it. Refrigerate the pork overnight.
- 2. Wrap the pork.** If you are using banana leaves, roll them up, fold them in half, and steam them for 20 - 30 minutes to make them pliable. When the leaves have cooled, place them, shiny side up, on a work surface. Alternately, you can heat them over an open flame until they become flexible. Place the pork on the leaves, wrap into a tight bundle, and tie with the string.

**3. Smoke the pork.** Place some soaked wood chips near the heating element of a water smoker (according to the manufacturer's instructions), pour 3 quarts boiling water into the water pan, and smoke the pork for 4 hours at between 225 and 275 degrees. Check the smoker after 2 hours and add additional boiling water to the pan, if necessary. When done, the internal temperature of the pork should be 160 - 170 degrees.

**4. Bake the pork.** While the pork is finishing smoking, preheat your oven to 325 degrees. When the pork is finished smoking, place it in a foil baking pan, seal it with heavy duty aluminum foil, and put it in an oven preheated to 325 degrees. Bake for 1 hour and 45 minutes.

**5. Finish the pork.** Remove the package from the oven, and place it in a large, paper, grocery bag. Fold the bag tightly to seal it and leave it for 45 minutes. (If your foil pan is too large for one bag, use two, overlapping them to completely cover the pan). Remove the pork from the roasting pan, and unwrap the banana leaves or foil. The meat should be so tender that it will literally fall apart! Chop and shred the pork into small pieces. Serve with guacamole, salsa, and hot corn tortillas.