

RECIPES

Enchiladas Zacatecanas

There are many versions of enchiladas zacatecanas. The following is a combination of the best aspects of the ones I have tried.

Filling Ingredients

3/4 pound boneless pork loin cut into 3/4 inch or less pieces
2 cups water
2 teaspoon ancho chile powder
1 tablespoon vinegar
½ teaspoon oregano
½ teaspoon salt

Filling directions

To make the filling place the meat and water in a saucepan, bring the water to a simmer, and skim off any scum that rises to the surface. Stir in the remaining ingredients, and cook at a bare simmer until the water has evaporated, about 1 hour. Remove the meat and shred it, either by hand or with the dough blade of a food processor. The meat can also be finely chopped, if you wish. Reserve.

Sauce ingredients

1 cup *poblano* chiles that have been roasted, peeled, seeded, and chopped
3/4 cup half and half
2 1/4 cups whipping cream
1 tablespoon butter
3/4 teaspoon salt

Sauce directions

1. Roast the chiles. To roast the chiles, broil them as close under your broiler as possible until the skins are charred (I often use a toaster oven), roast them over an open flame, or deep fry them until the skins turn opaque. In either case, place the chiles in a plastic bag to sweat for twenty minutes, then peel them.

2. Prepare the sauce. Place the chiles and half and half in a blender and blend until they are just pureed. Add the cream and pulse once or twice to mix with the other ingredients. Melt the butter in a saucepan over medium heat, add the contents of the blender and the salt. Bring the mixture to a simmer and cook until it is thickened to the consistency of a very thin milkshake, about 20 minutes. There should be about 2 cups of sauce.

Topping/garnish ingredients

2 cups water
1 tablespoon vinegar
½ teaspoon salt

½ cup carrots that have been peeled and cut into less than 1/4 inch pieces

¾ cup boiling potatoes that have been peeled and cut into less than 1/4 inch pieces

Topping/garnish directions

Mix together the water, vinegar and salt, and bring it to a boil. Add the carrots and cook them until they are just tender. Remove the carrots and cool them off with cold water to prevent them from cooking further and drain them. Cook and cool the potatoes in the same way, then add them to the carrots, and reserve.

Ingredients to finish the enchiladas

8 corn tortillas

Cooking oil or spray oil

The reserved filling

The sauce

½ cup grated Oaxaca or Chihuahua cheese, or substitute mozzarella or mild white cheddar

2 small avocados or 1 large avocado, peeled, seeded, and sliced

Directions to finish the enchiladas

1. **"Soften" the tortillas.** Spray each tortilla on both sides with oil, place them in a plastic tortilla warmer or wrap them in a towel, then microwaving them for about 30 to 45 seconds on high.

2. **Roll the enchiladas.** Place 2 tablespoons of the meat filling just off center on each softened tortilla and either roll or fold the tortillas into cylinders.

3. **Cook the enchiladas.** Place two of the filled tortillas on each of four oven proof serving plates. Top the enchiladas with about 1/3 cup of the sauce, then sprinkle on a little of the potato/carrot mixture and cheese. Bake the enchiladas for 5 minutes, add a little more sauce, then cook another 5 minutes. Just before serving, add a little more sauce, lay a few slices of avocado on top of the enchiladas and serve with white, Mexican style rice, and perhaps some steamed squash.