

How to Make Tamales

If you've never made your own tamales, it's really helpful to watch someone else making them. Youtube has some good tamale videos. I picked *Simply Mamá Cooks*.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4xiwU4mNDwY> - This video happens to offer a beef filling, but you can use any filling that appeals to you --green chile and cheese, green chile and pork, green chile and chicken, all veggies, etc. With the video images in your head, you will find it easier to understand the written instructions.

Next review the ingredients and make your shopping list. This is a perfect opportunity to shop at a local Mexican market. If you're short on time Amazon has the ingredients. If it's more convenient and you frequent Walmart, the prices are a lot less than Amazon's.

INGREDIENTS for Beef in the middle

4 1/2 to 5 cups beef broth or water
4 lbs boneless chuck roast beef
1 small onion
3 to 4 cloves garlic
1 beef bouillon cube (or 2 tsp salt)
1 dried bay leaf
8 dried guajillo chiles (stems and seeds removed), 2 dried Pasilla chiles (stems and seeds removed) 2 dried ancho chiles (stems and seeds removed)
2 cloves garlic
4 cups (475 g) instant corn flour (Maseca brand)
2 1/2 tsp baking powder
1 1/4 cup lard or shortening, salt to taste
2 Tbsp oil (to simmer puree)
35 to 40 corn husks and a 12 to 16 quart steamer pot

INSTRUCTIONS

Braise beef in olive oil. In a 4.5 crock pot add beef, bouillon cube, dried bay leaf, onion, garlic, 2 cup water, cover with lid, set to high and cook for 6 hours or until beef is tender.

Once beef is cooked, remove onion, set aside and reserve. Remove beef from crock pot, shred or chop to desired texture. Strain out any liquid from crock pot and reserve.

CHILE PUREE - remove stems, seeds and rinse the dried chiles - place in a small pot, cover with water, bring to a boil, remove from heat and steep until soft and pliable - Once chiles are soft,

remove from boiling liquid and place in to a blender along with 1 2/3 cup of beef broth or water, 2 cloves of garlic, reserved onion from crock pot and puree well - Strain puree for any bits that did not puree - Reserve 1/3 cup of chile puree to add to masa dough.

MEAT FILLING - In a preheated skillet add 2 Tbsp oil, strained chili puree, salt to taste and simmer for 3 minutes over a medium heat

« Now add chopped beef to simmering chili puree and continue to combine and simmer for another 3 to 5 minutes

«Now set aside until ready to assemble tamales

MASA PREPARATION

- In a large bowl add instant corn flour, baking powder, salt to taste and combine well
- Now add lard or shortening, 1/3 cup of chile puree and combine well
- Next start by adding 2 cups of warm beef broth or water and mix well
- Now add an additional 1 to 1 1/2 cups of broth or water until masa dough is the texture of play dough and can squeeze through your fingers easily
- Keep extra warm water or broth on the sided just in case masa dough starts to dry out

TAMAL

ASSEMBLY

- Take your softened pre-soaked corn husk and spread from the center 3 to 4 T of masa dough on the corn husk leaving a one inch space from the top of the husk
- Next add meat filling and enclose the tamal - Now fold the bottom part of the husk up and continue the process

COOK TAMALES

- In a 16 quart steamer pot add 9 ½ C of water to the pot then place the steamer plate into the pot.
- Place a small heat proof ceramic or stone bowl upside down in the center and start stacking all of your tamales around the bowl
- the cook time will vary depending how tightly you pack the pot
- Now place extra corn husks on top to cover tamales, a cloth and cover with the lid
- Bring the water to a boil first, lower the heat to a medium heat and cook for 1 hour to 1 hour and a half or once a tamal comes out easily from the corn husk
- Remove all the tamales from the pot and allow to set for at least 20 minutes then serve
- This recipe makes at least 30 tamales