

## Why I Love Making Green Chili Tamales

Green chili tamales hold a special place in my heart because they represent the perfect combination of tangy, savory, and comforting flavors wrapped in tender, fluffy masa. The bright, zesty tomatillo sauce balanced with rich carnitas creates a filling that's impossible to resist.

What makes this green chili tamales recipe truly special is how approachable it is for home cooks. While tamales may seem intimidating at first, breaking the process into manageable steps makes it surprisingly straightforward. The steaming process fills your kitchen with incredible aromas.

These tamales are perfect for batch cooking and freezing, making them ideal for busy weeknights or entertaining guests. Whether you're celebrating a special occasion or simply craving authentic Mexican cuisine, this recipe delivers restaurant-quality results every time.

Using only a heaping tablespoon of filling prevents bursting during steaming. Less is more when it comes to preventing leakage and ensuring proper sealing.

The water level needs checking every 20 minutes during steaming, and hot water should be added as needed. Never let the pot run dry or the tamales will have an uneven texture.

### Ingredient Notes

**Masa Harina:** Not interchangeable with cornmeal or corn flour. Look for brands specifically labeled for tamales (such as Maseca Tamal), as they're treated through nixtamalization for authentic flavor.

**Tomatillos:** Choose firm tomatillos with tight-fitting husks. Remove the sticky coating by rinsing under warm water before roasting for optimal flavor.

**Serrano Chiles:** These provide authentic heat and flavor. Adjust quantity based on your spice preference, or substitute jalapeños for milder tamales.

**Corn Husks:** Soak thoroughly until pliable (at least 3 hours). Dry husks will crack and tear during assembly, making the wrapping process frustrating.

### **Green Chili Tamales**

These green chili tamales bring authentic flavor to your kitchen with tangy tomatillos, savory pork, and light, airy masa that's tender and satisfying!

Cook Time 40 minutes mins

Total Time 40 minutes mins

Servings: [24](#) tamales

**Ingredients** - 1 eight ounce 225 gram package dried corn husks. If you cannot find corn husks, you can use parchment paper.

### **Filling**

- 1 pound tomatillos
- 4 –3 inch anaheim chiles stemmed, seeded and chopped or jalapeno
- 4 large garlic cloves chopped & smashed
- 1 ½ T Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 2 C low sodium chicken broth
- 4 C cooked and shredded pork carnitas or chicken
- ⅔ C roughly chopped fresh cilantro

### **Masa Dough**

- ½ C unsalted butter\*
- ½ C canola oil\*
- ¾ t salt omit if already in masa mixture
- 1 ¼ t baking powder omit if already in masa mixture
- 3 C masa harina corn tamale mix
- 3 C sodium chicken broth

\*Use 1 C lard for light, airy tamales

## Instructions

**Place** the dried corn husks in a large pot and cover with water.

**Place** a heavy plate or a smaller pot full of water on top of husks to keep them in the water. Let soak for 3 hours or up to 1 day, flipping occasionally until husks are softened.

**Place** an oven rack on the top setting. Turn the oven on broil. Peel and rinse the tomatillos.

**Line** a heavy baking sheet with foil. Place tomatillos on baking sheet and place under broiler.

**Broil** (grill) until black spots form on tomatillos, then flip and broil (grill) other side. This takes about 5-10 minutes per side depending on the strength of the broiler.

**Place** roasted tomatillos and juices from the pan into a food processor and allow to cool about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and chopped Serrano chiles and process until smooth.

**Heat** the olive oil in a medium saucepan over medium high heat.

**Add** the tomatillo puree and boil, stirring continuously, for 5 minutes (it should turn thick like a paste).

**Add** in the chicken broth, stir to mix well. Reduce heat to medium low and allow to simmer, stirring occasionally until mixture coats the back of a spoon and is reduced to about a cup.

**Stir** in the shredded pork and cilantro. Salt to taste.

***Prepare the dough.*** In the bowl of an electric mixer, cream together the butter and canola oil (or lard) until it's white and creamy.

**In a separate bowl** mix the masa harina, baking powder and salt. Add masa mixture to whipped butter and canola one cup at a time.

**Reduce** the mixer speed to low, gradually add the chicken broth. Add more or less as necessary until it has the consistence of soft cream cheese.

**Take** 3 large corn husks and tear them into ¼ inch strips. (Put these back in the water until ready to use because they dry out and start breaking when you try to work with them.

**Take** a large pot with a steamer attachment. Pour about 2 inches of water into the bottom of the pot, or enough to touch the bottom of the steamer. Line the bottom of the steamer with corn husks.

**Unfold** 2 corn husks onto a work surface. Take ¼ cup of dough and, starting near the top of the husk, press it out into a 4 inch square, leaving 2-3 inches at the bottom of the husk. Place a heaping tablespoon of the filling in a line down the center of the dough square.

**Fold** the dough into the corn husk. And wrap the husk around the dough. Fold up the skinny bottom part of the husk. And secure it with one of the corn husk ties.

**Stand** them up in the steamer. If there aren't enough tamales to tightly pack the steamer, place crumpled aluminum foil in the excess space.

**Steam** the tamales for about 40 minutes or until the dough deepens in color and easily pulls away from the husk.

## **Notes**

**Protein Options:** Swap pork for shredded chicken, beef, or rotisserie chicken. For vegetarian versions, try cheese with roasted poblanos, black beans with corn, or butternut squash.

**Sauce Alternatives:** Can't find tomatillos? Use canned green salsa or substitute with roasted green chiles (Hatch, Anaheim, or poblano) blended with chicken broth.

**Spice Level Adjustments:** Reduce or omit serrano chiles for mild tamales. For extra heat, add diced jalapeños to the filling or incorporate hot sauce into the tomatillo mixture.

**Sweet Tamales:** Transform this recipe into dessert tamales by adding sugar and cinnamon to the masa, then filling with pineapple, strawberry preserves, or chocolate chips.

**Masa Additions:** Enhance the dough with cumin, garlic powder, or add shredded cheese directly into the masa for extra richness and flavor.

## **Nutrition**

Calories: 254kcal | Carbohydrates: 13g | Protein: 9g | Fat: 19g | Saturated Fat: 6g | Polyunsaturated Fat: 3g | Monounsaturated Fat: 9g | Trans Fat: 0.2g | Cholesterol: 39mg | Sodium: 133mg | Potassium: 252mg | Fiber: 1g | Sugar: 1g | Vitamin A: 212IU | Vitamin C: 3mg | Calcium: 43mg | Iron: 2mg

## **Putting Together Green Chili Tamales**

**Soak corn husks** for 3 hours until softened. Broil tomatillos until charred (5-10 minutes per side), then blend with garlic and serranos. Simmer tomatillo sauce with olive oil for 5 minutes, add broth, then mix in pork and cilantro.

Whip lard or butter and oil until fluffy and white. Mix masa harina with baking powder and salt, then alternate adding masa mixture and chicken broth until consistency resembles soft cream cheese.

**Spread ¼ cup masa** into a 4-inch square on each husk, leaving 2-3 inches at the bottom. Place a heaping tablespoon of filling down the center, fold husk around dough, then fold up the bottom and tie with husk strips.

**Line steamer** with corn husks and stand tamales upright with open ends facing up. Steam for 40 minutes over 2 inches of water until masa pulls away easily from husks and deepens in color.