

Tortillas



Tortillas—plain, buttered, or wrapped around a variety of fillings—are found on Mexican tables at nearly every meal. In the corn-producing regions of the South, tortillas are usually made from corn; however, in the northern areas where wheat is grown, flour tortillas are favored. Tortilla “factories” which sell fresh tortillas are found throughout Mexico and even in some United States cities. Since Mexican food has become so popular north of the border, frozen corn and flour tortillas and canned corn tortillas are available in most supermarkets. Although these are fine products, why not get the real spirit of Mexico by making your own corn or flour tortillas?

Corn Tortillas

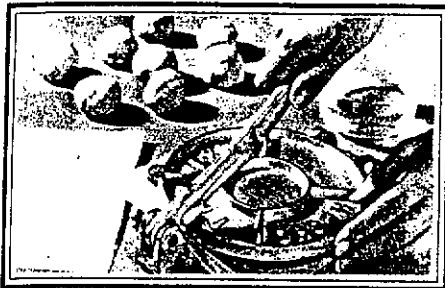
- 2 cups Masa Harina
tortilla flour**
- 1 cup water**

Combine tortilla flour with water; mix with hands till dough is moist but holds its shape (add more water if needed). Let stand 15 minutes. Divide dough into 12 balls. Dampen dough slightly with water. Using a tortilla press or flat baking dish, press a ball of dough between sheets of waxed paper to a 6-inch round. Carefully peel off top sheet of paper. Place tortilla, paper side up, on hot ungreased griddle or skillet. Gently peel off remaining sheet of paper. Cook about 30 seconds or till edges begin to dry. Turn; cook till surface appears puffy. Repeat with remaining dough. Makes 12 tortillas.

Flour Tortillas

- 2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 1 teaspoon baking powder**
- 1 tablespoon lard or shortening**
- 1/2 to 3/4 cup warm water (110°)**

In mixing bowl stir together flour, salt, and baking powder. Cut in lard till mixture resembles cornmeal. Add 1/2 cup warm water and mix till dough can be gathered into a ball (if needed, add more water, 1 tablespoon at a time). Let dough rest 15 minutes. Divide dough into 12 portions; shape into balls. On a lightly floured surface, roll each ball to a 7-inch round. Trim uneven edges to make round tortillas. Cook in ungreased skillet over medium heat about 1 1/2 minutes per side or till lightly browned. Makes 12 tortillas.



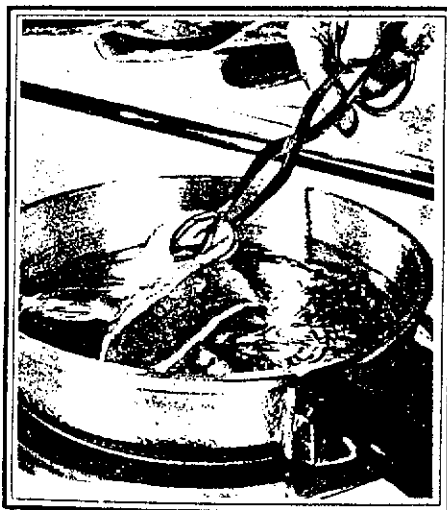
Dough for corn tortillas should be moist, yet hold its shape. Divide dough into balls and dampen slightly with a little water. Place between two sheets of waxed paper or plastic wrap on a tortilla press, then press to a 6-inch circle.



Or, press each dough ball flat between pieces of waxed paper or plastic wrap using a flat-bottomed baking dish or pie plate. (For flour tortillas, roll out each ball of dough with a rolling pin on a lightly floured surface. Waxed paper is not necessary.)



Carefully peel off top sheet of paper. Place tortilla, paper side up, on a hot, ungreased griddle or skillet. Gently peel off remaining sheet of paper as shown. Cook till edges begin to dry and tortilla is lightly browned. Turn; cook till surface appears puffy. Stack hot tortillas in a napkin-lined basket to keep warm.



How to make taco shells: In heavy skillet heat $\frac{1}{4}$ inch cooking oil. Fry each tortilla 10 seconds or till limp. With tongs fold tortilla in half and continue frying, holding edges apart. Cook $1\frac{1}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ minutes longer or till crisp, turning once. Drain on paper toweling.

How to soften tortillas for filling: In small skillet heat 2 tablespoons cooking oil. Holding tortilla with tongs, dip each tortilla in the hot oil for 10 seconds or just till limp. Drain on paper toweling. Repeat with remaining tortillas, adding more oil as needed.



<http://www.foodtv.com>

CORN TORTILLAS

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4 cups finely ground deep yellow masa harina

2 3/4 cups cold water

1 teaspoon salt

In large bowl combine all ingredients and stir until smooth. The dough should be slightly sticky and form a ball when pressed together. To test, flatten a small of dough between your palms. If the edges crack, add water to the dough, a tablespoon at a time, until a test piece does not crack. Divide the dough into 24 golf ball size pieces for tacos and 12 large balls for quesadillas. Place on a platter and cover with a damp towel. Line a tortilla press with 2 sheets of plastic cut from a plastic freezer bag or other heavy duty plastic bag. Heat a dry cast iron skillet, nonstick pan or comal until moderately hot. Flatten each ball of dough in the tortilla press, then remove the plastic from the top and, holding the tortilla with your fingertips, peel off the bottom sheet. Lay the tortillas one by one on the skillet and cook about 30 to 45 seconds per side, pressing the top of each tortilla with your fingertips to make it puff. Place the hot tortillas on a towel. When they are still warm but not hot, stack and wrap in a towel. Serve immediately or let cool, wrap well in plastic or a plastic bag and store in the refrigerator up to a week.

Mexican Wedding Cookies

2 cups sifted flour
¼ cup powdered sugar (sifted)
¼ tsp. salt
1 cup soft margarine (2 cubes)
1 cup finely chopped nuts
3 T. water
1 tsp. vanilla

1. Sift flour and measure. Resift with the salt.
2. Sift the sugar and measure.
3. Resift the flour, salt, and sugar together.
4. Cream the water into the margarine. Add the dry mixture by tablespoonful at a time until all of it has been added. Add the vanilla, then the nuts.
5. Roll dough in small balls and place on cookie sheet.

Second Day

6. Bake at 300° for 30 minutes. While hot, roll cookie in powdered sugar; re-roll when they are well-coated.

TRES LECHES (Three Milk Cake) (10 servings)

The Washington Post, February 6, 1991

Tres leches is the most famous Nicaraguan dessert. Three different kinds of milk are used in its preparation, hence the name. Universally appealing, this Nicaraguan dessert has been adopted by many Cuban and other Hispanic restaurants in Miami. The recipe comes from Los Ranchos.

FOR THE CAKE:

1 cup sugar
5 eggs, separated
1/3 cup milk
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar
Butter for greasing baking dish

FOR THE MILK SYRUP:

1 3/4 cups (12-ounce can) evaporated milk
1 cup sweetened condensed milk
1 cup heavy cream
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 tablespoon rum extract

Prepare the cake. Beat 3/4 cup sugar and the egg yolks until light and fluffy. Stir in the milk, vanilla extract, flour and baking powder.

Beat the egg whites to soft peaks, adding the cream of tartar after 20 seconds. Gradually add the remaining 1/4 cup sugar and continue beating until the whites are glossy and firm. Gently fold the whites into the yolk mixture. Spoon this batter into a 9-by-13-inch greased baking dish.

Bake the cake for 20 to 25 minutes at 350 degrees or until it feels firm and an inserted toothpick comes out clean. Let the cake cool completely and unmold onto a large, deep platter. Let cool for 2 hours. Pierce the cake all over with a fork.

Prepare the milk syrup. Combine the evaporated milk, sweetened condensed milk, cream and flavorings and whisk until mixed. Pour the syrup over the cake, spooning the overflow back on top until all is absorbed.

Refrigerate the cake for at least 2 hours before serving.

CEVICHE

(Se-Ve-Che)

1 lb. Fish or Shrimp (cooked)
Juice of 4 lemons
1 large cucumber
3 large tomatoes
1 medium onion
1 8oz can of tomato sauce

3 large carrots (Optional)
1 Serrano Chile (Optional)
Chile sauce to taste (Optional)
Cilantro - to taste
Salt to taste

Day 1

- 1) Cut fish or shrimp into small pieces and place in a bowl with the lemon juice. Let sit for 12 hours.

Day 2

- 2) Dice cucumber, tomatoes, onion, carrots and Chile. Add them to the lemon mixture. Let sit for 1 hour.
- 3) Chop cilantro and add to mixture, then add tomato sauce and salt. Mix well.

This can be used as a topping on tostados or as a dip for chips

SOPA SECA DE ARROZ
RICE "DRY SOUP"

YIELD: 4 servings

1 cup uncooked rice
3 tbs. lard or shortening
1 small onion, finely chopped
1 clove garlic, minced or mashed
2 medium sized tomatoes, chopped
2 to 3 cups beef or chicken broth
1 canned green chili, chopped
1 tbs. cilantro, chopped

1. Brown rice lightly in shortening.
2. Add onion, garlic, and tomato, cook for 2 to 3 minutes.
3. Add 3 cups of broth and the chilies.
4. Cover and simmer on top of range over medium heat for 25 to 35 minutes.
5. Adjust seasoning; add cilantro toward the end of cooking.

SOPAIPILLAS
(soh-py-pee-yahs)
MEXICAN HONEY PUFFS

The puffs are named for the little pillows they resemble. Serve them warm, with Honey Butter or Cinnamon Sugar, as a sweet treat.

YIELD: About 10 puffs

2 tsp. shortening
1 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 tsp. baking powder
1/4 tsp. salt
1/3 to 1/2 cup cold water
vegetable oil
Honey Butter or Cinnamon Sugar

1. Combine flour, baking powder, and salt.
2. Cut shortening into flour mixture until it resembles fine crumbs.
3. GRADUALLY, add enough water to make a stiff dough, tossing with a fork until all flour is moistened and dough almost cleans side of bowl.
4. Gather dough into a ball; divide into halves and shape into 2 flattened rounds.
5. Cover half to prevent drying.
6. Heat oil (1 1/2 to 2 inches) to 360 degrees.
7. Roll 1 half of dough 1/8 to 1/4 inch thick. Cut into rectangles, 3 inches x 2 inches.
8. Fry 3 to 4 rectangles at a time, turning once, until puffed and golden brown, 1 to 2 minutes on each side; drain. Repeat with remaining dough.
9. Dip puffs into Honey Butter or sprinkle with Cinnamon Sugar.
(Puffs can be reheated uncovered in 350 degree oven about 8 minutes.)

HONEY BUTTER

1/4 cup honey
1 tbs. margarine or butter

1. Heat honey and margarine until hot.

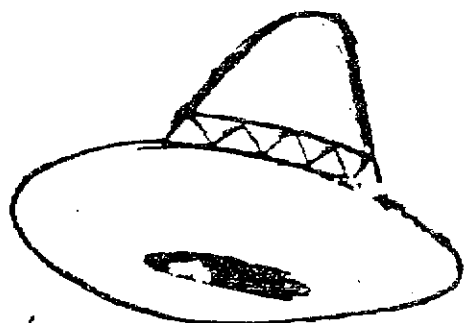
CINNAMON SUGAR

5 tsp. sugar
1/8 tsp. cinnamon

1. Mix sugar and cinnamon.

JAN 4

SOPA SECA de TORTILLAS



ole! ole!

- 6-8 corn tortillas
- shortening
- 1/2 cup minced onion
- 1 4oz. can diced green chiles
- 1 cup whipping cream
- 1 cup tomato puree
- salt
- Jack cheese
- 1 tablespoon margarine

1. Cut tortillas into 1/2 inch strips. Melt 1/3 c. shortening in skillet and fry tortillas until crisp, but not brown. Drain on paper towels.
2. Saute onion in 1 tablespoon shortening until tender. Add chiles, cream, tomato puree and simmer 10 minutes. Salt to taste.
3. Grease an 8x8" baking dish and cover bottom with half of the tortilla strips. Pour on half the sauce and sprinkle half the cheese over sauce.
4. Repeat layers ending with cheese. Dot with butter and bake for 30 minutes at 350°.

CHICKEN ENCHILADAS

YIELD: 4 servings

chicken meat, cooked and shredded, approximately 2 cups
1 medium onion, chopped
1 cup grated cheese
1 large can enchilada sauce
10 to 12 corn tortillas

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Prepare 8x8 inch pan by spreading approximately 1/2 cup sauce on pan bottom.
3. Mix chicken, onion and cheese in bowl.
4. Heat approximately 1/2 can of enchilada sauce in skillet.
5. Dip one tortilla at a time in the sauce. Hold in hand and fill with approximately 1/3 cup of the chicken mixture.
6. Roll tortilla around filling and place seam side down in baking dish.
7. Repeat with all tortillas.
8. Top with remaining sauce and cheese.
9. Cover pan with foil. Bake at 350 degrees of 20 to 25 minutes. Remove foil and bake 5 minutes more.

CHILES RELLENOS

Makes 5 chilies

5 Pasilla Chilies

1 Cup of Mozzarella Cheese

3 Eggs

Oil For Frying

Roast chilies until blistered and dark brown, immediately put chilies into a plastic bag. (to steam and loosen skin) about 10 minutes. Cut top of chilies and clean out the insides. Put oil in pan and heat it to about 350 degrees. Separate eggs. Whip eggs whites (in grease free bowl). With a wooden spoon, fold in egg whites. Fill chilies with cheese, dip in egg, and fry until golden brown.

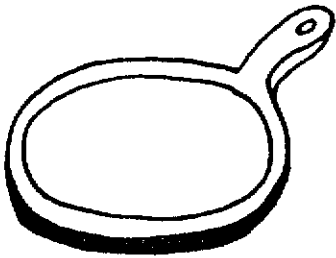
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OLD AND NEW MEXICAN COOKING EQUIPMENT

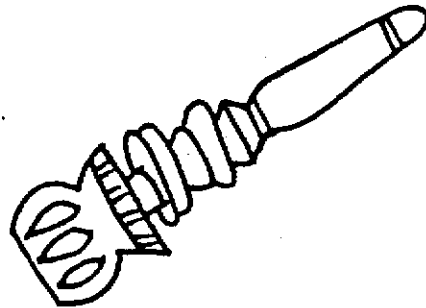
Identify the Mexican cooking equipment pictured below by writing the correct name and use under each picture. Names and uses are listed below.

**NAMES: TORTILLA PRESS TACO SERVING RACK MUDDLER COMALE
STONE SLAB AND ROLLER TACO COOKER**

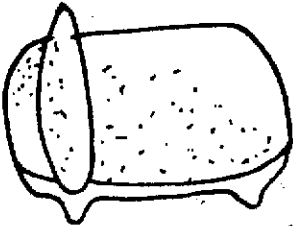
**USES: To flatten tortillas; to grind wet corn into dough; to whip Mexican chocolate; to fry tortillas;
to serve tacos in upright position; to deep-fat fry tortillas into popular U or taco shape.**



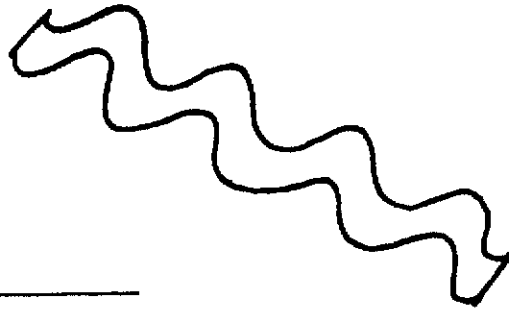
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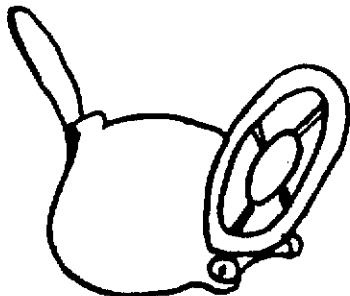
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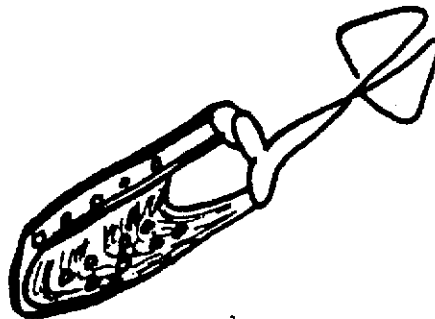
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International Foods
Mexico Spelling Test
Spell words and write definition

Mexican Foods

- 1) **Tortilla:** The bread of Mexico. A thin, flat pancake usually made from cornmeal.
- 2) **Tostada:** A crisp, fried tortilla served flat; It is usually topped with beans, cheese or vegetables.
- 3) **Chorizo:** Spicy, Seasoned sausages, usually sold in link form.
- 4) **Coriander:** (Cilantro) Fresh coriander looks like large, lacy parsley. It is spicy and has a pungent aroma and flavor.
- 5) **Jicama:** A brown skinned root vegetable that is shaped something like a turnip. The inside is crisp and white, like a potato. Use it raw or cooked.
- 6) **Chilies:** Peppers ranging in color from green to red and varying in taste from mild to hot.
- 7) **Frijoles:** The Spanish word for beans, Red, Pink, pinto and kidney beans are all used in Mexican Cooking.
- 8) **Huevos Rancheros:** Fried eggs served on a bed of tortillas and covered with a spicy sauce.

Ancient Cultures

- 9) **Maya:** A Native American civilization that flourished in Guatemala and the Mexican Yucatan area. The Maya reached amazing heights of wealth and scientific knowledge as well as a richness of culture, but has declines before the Spanish conquistadors ever arrived in Mexico. Descendents of the Maya still live in Mexico and Guatemala today.
- 10) **Aztec:** An ancient Native American Culture of Mexico known for its advanced technology that was at its height when Spain invaded Mexico in 1519.

Bits of Mexican Culture

- 11) **Mariachis:** Street musicians who perform in small bands. A mariachi band usually features several musicians playing guitars or bass instruments of various sizes.
- 12) **Siesta:** A short nap during the middle of the day, usually enjoyed after a substantial lunch.
- 13) **Peso:** The basic unit of Mexican currency. It was originally a Spanish silver coin known as a piece of eight.
- 14) **Sombrero:** A wide-rimmed hat of felt or straw. Designed to protect the wearer from the sun. This hat was introduced by the Spanish settlers to Mexico.
- 15) **Serape:** A blanket worn as an outer garment in Mexico.