

# Pork Tamales

(#GarciaStrong)

## PORK

- 2.5 lb. pork butt (shoulder)
- 1 tablespoon granulated garlic
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 3 tablespoons canola oil

## CORN HUSK

- 6 dozen dried corn husks
- ½ lb. dried chile ancho
- 1 teaspoon granulated garlic
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- 2 cups stock (saved from boiling the chiles)
- 2 tablespoons manteca
- 2 tablespoons salt

## MASA

- 4 cups manteca (lard)
- 3 tablespoons baking powder
- 10 lbs. masa harina
- ¼ cup pork broth
- 2 oz. chile ancho (to color and flavor masa)
- Salt to taste (optional)



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## **Preparation**

Preheat oven to 275 degrees.

To prepare the pork, trim excess fat from pork and reserve. Cut the pork butt into manageable sized pieces and season with garlic, salt and pepper. Heat a large cast iron skillet until just smoking, carefully add the canola oil. When the oil is hot, add the pork, IN BATCHES, and sear until all the pork is browned on all sides.

In the bottom of a large Dutch oven or roasting pan, lay out the larger excess pieces of fat removed from the pork butt. Layer the seared pork meat over the top of the fat.

Roast in preheated oven for 8 hours or until falling apart tender. Strain the \*broth from the pan and reserve for masa.

Shred meat and set aside.

To prepare the corn husk, place in a large bowl or pot. Pour enough boiling water over the husks to cover. Place a metal lid or heatproof dish on top of the husks to keep them submerged. Soak for about 45 minutes. Remove, drain and set aside. Keep them pliable in a damp kitchen towel.

Using kitchen shears, remove the stems from the dried chile ancho. In a large dry sauce pot, toast the chiles until fragrant and they start to darken in color. Add enough water (or chicken broth) to completely cover the chiles. Seal with a lid and bring to a hard to boil. Turn heat to medium and simmer for 15-20 minutes or until the chiles are super soft.

Carefully transfer the chiles and cooking liquid to a blender (to avoid catastrophe, only fill your blender  $\frac{3}{4}$  full, you may need to do this batches), remove the insert from the lid and use a folded kitchen towel to cover the hole. Blend until smooth. Strain through a fine sieve.

In a large, deep sided skillet or Dutch oven, melt manteca over medium heat and slowly add the strained chile sauce – it will splatter so watch out! Season with granulated garlic and cumin. Add the 2 tablespoons s, taste, and adjust seasoning as needed. Add the shredded pork and simmer for 15-20 minutes over low heat.

Meanwhile, make the masa: In a large bowl, beat the lard by hand or with an electric mixer until it is light. Add baking powder and the masa-harina and gradually add the strained pork broth and work it together until dough is very light and “squishy”. Work in the chile ancho puree with your hands until combined. If your dough looks dry add more broth or water. Taste and add salt if needed. Continue to beat the dough until light and fluffy. (If you pinch off a small piece of dough and toss it in a glass of water, it should float at this point.)

To assemble the tamales: Place a small amount of the dough in the center of a softened corn husk. Using the back of a spoon spread the dough out and top it with 1 1/2 tablespoon of the pork filling. Fold in one side of the husk over the other and then fold the bottom toward the center. Place the pork tamales standing upright in your already prepared tamale steamer, cover tightly with a lid or with a layer of corn husks and a dish towel. Cook for 1 hour and 15 minutes. (Add more water to the steamer, as needed)

To check for doneness: remove one of the tamales, if the husk can be easily peeled away from the masa they are ready, if the masa sticks to the husk, place back into the steamer and cook for 15 more minutes.