

MINI BISON TAMALES

Makes about 50 tamales

Anita Shaver | Direct Design, Inc.

INGREDIENTS

1 bag of corn husks for making tamales

1 5-pound bag of ready-made masa

6 pounds less tender bison-round steak, bottom sirloin, chuck roast

20 cloves garlic, roughly chopped

1/2 cup chile powder-Ancho, Guajillo, Chimayo (mild). New Mexican red chile powder is a mix and comes hot or mild. Mix a tablespoon or so of each.

2 small onions, roughly chopped

water to almost cover meat in slow cooker



DIRECTIONS

Divide the meat, garlic, chile powder mixture, onion and water between two slow cookers (unless you have a very large slow cooker) and cook on low for 8 to 10 hours or until meat shreds easily. When meat is done, remove to a large platter and shred by hand. Keep the liquid from the slow cookers and blend in a food processor until smooth. Add enough liquid to the shredded meat to make it very moist.

Set up your work station and begin making tamales. Wet hands and grab masa a little bigger than a golf ball. Form it into a small cup shape then put about a spoonful of meat into it. Form the masa around the meat, adding more masa if needed to seal. It doesn't need to look pretty, but the meat does need to be sealed inside the masa.

When you have 15 to 20 balls, start wrapping them in the husks. Place the husk on the table and put a ball in the center. Roll the husk around the ball and use the husk "string" to tie up each end tightly. Repeat until ingredients are gone. Fill your steamer no more than three layers deep. Steam for about an hour and a half, adding water occasionally to the pot.

Mini tamales can be eaten as a snack or appetizer or as part of a larger meal with burritos and enchiladas. Red meat tamales are traditionally served with a red chili sauce. Serve with sour cream or Mexican crema.

TIPS FOR MAKING TAMALES

Soak the corn husks in water to soften while you shred the meat | Set up your work area with a small bowl of water for wetting hands, which helps keep the masa from sticking | Wrap husks in a wet dish cloth so they don't dry out while you are working | Keep damp paper towels handy to clean your hands from time to time | Rip strands of husks for tying the tamales before you start wrapping