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TOTALLY HANDS ON: LA COCINA MEXICANA

Chef's Notes

Wild Mushroom Queso Fundido
Taqueria-Style Tortas with Grilled Skirt Steak and Tomatillo Salsa
Pozole Rojo (Braised Pork Soup with Red Chilies and Hominy)
Mexican Flourless Chocolate Cake

WILD MUSHROOM QUESO FUNDIDO

Yield: 4 servings as an appetizer

Active time: 20 minutes

Start to finish: 20 minutes

2 ounces Mexican chorizo
1/4 pound assorted wild mushrooms, rough chopped
1/2 yellow onion, medium dice
1 clove garlic, minced
1/2 pound Chihuahua cheese, grated
1 tablespoon cornstarch
1/2 cup pale lager, such as Corona
1 tablespoon tequila
1 tablespoon cilantro, rough chopped
Tortilla chips

1. Heat a 9-inch cast iron skillet or cazuela over medium heat. Sauté the sausage, breaking it up with the back of your spoon, until cooked through. Add the mushrooms and onions and continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until lightly caramelized, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and cook an additional minute.
2. While the mushrooms and onions are cooking, toss the cheese with the cornstarch in a bowl.
3. Add the beer and tequila to the mushroom-onion mixture and cook until it begins to simmer. Gradually add the cheese and mix until melted and smooth. Stir in the cilantro.
4. Serve hot with tortilla chips. ♦

TAQUERIA-STYLE TORTAS WITH GRILLED SKIRT STEAK AND TOMATILLO SALSA

Yield: 4 tortas

Active time: 35 minutes

Start to finish: 55 minutes

or flank steak (less fat)

2 tablespoons lime juice

2 tablespoons lemon juice

2 tablespoons orange juice

4 cloves garlic crushed

1 small onion, medium dice

1 or 2 chipotle peppers, rough chopped

1/4 cup tequila

1 to 1 1/2 pounds skirt steak (flank steak is a great substitution)

4 bolillo rolls, soft French bread or submarine sandwich rolls

Salt and pepper to taste

cover garlic w/ piece of pepper so it doesn't burn

Garnishes:

1/2 cup canned refried beans

Tomatillo Salsa (recipe follows)

Mexican crema or sour cream

1 cup romaine lettuce, sliced thin

1/2 cup queso fresco, crumbled

1 avocado, cut into slices

Cilantro leaves

1. Mix citrus juices, garlic, onion, tequila and chipotles in a shallow dish or sealable bag. Add meat and marinate for at least 20 minutes but up to 2 hours.
2. Preheat the oven to 325°.
3. Preheat a grill pan over medium heat. Grill the steak on the first side until nicely caramelized, about 4-5 minutes. Flip and repeat. Continue to cook the steak until done to your liking. An internal temperature of 125° is ideal for medium rare. Allow the meat to rest for 5 minutes, and then cut it into very thin slices across the grain.
4. While the meat is grilling, wrap the bread in foil and warm in the oven.
5. To assemble the tortas, cut each roll in half horizontally. Spread a thin layer of the refried beans on the bottom half of bread. Top with slices of the grilled steak followed by the Tomatillo Salsa, crema, lettuce, queso fresco, avocado and cilantro leaves. Place the top halves of the bread on the sandwiches and serve. ♦



TOMATILLO SALSA

Yield: 1-1 1/2 cups

Active time: 15 minutes

Start to finish: 15 minutes

1/2 pound tomatillos, husks removed and rinsed
1/2 onion, quartered
1 small jalapeño, halved
1 clove garlic, peeled
2 tablespoons cilantro, rough chopped
Salt to taste

1. Preheat the broiler to high.
2. Place the tomatillos, onion, jalapeño and garlic on a sheet tray and place it under the broiler, 4-to 6-inches from the burner.
3. Cook, turning the vegetables occasionally, until tender and slightly charred.
4. Place the vegetables in a blender and puree until smooth.
5. Stir in the cilantro and season with salt to taste. ❖

NOTE: You can also char the vegetables on a hot grill.

POZOLE ROJO (BRAISED PORK SOUP WITH RED CHILIES AND HOMINY)

Yield: 4 servings

Active time: 30 minutes

Start to finish: 2 hours

For the pork:

2 tablespoons grapeseed oil

1/2 pound pork shoulder, cut into large dice

Salt and pepper to taste

1 teaspoon cumin

6 cups water

2 bay leaves

1/2 teaspoon dried oregano

1/2 yellow onion, peeled

2 cloves garlic, sliced thin

For the chilies:

4 ancho or guajillo chilies, seeds and stems removed

3 garlic cloves, peeled

Salt and pepper to taste

1 cup canned hominy

Garnish:

Radishes, thinly sliced

Green cabbage, finely shredded

Queso fresco, crumbled

Lime wedges

1. Heat a heavy pot over medium-high heat and add the grapeseed oil. Season the pork with salt and pepper to taste and sear on all sides until golden brown. Sprinkle in the cumin and cook for 1 minute more.
2. Pour the water over the pork, scraping any brown fond from the bottom of the pot. Add the bay leaves, oregano, onion and sliced garlic. Bring the water to a boil, reduce the heat to a simmer and cook, covered, until the pork is very tender, about 1 1/2 hours.
3. While the pork is braising, prepare the chilies. Toast the chilies briefly under a broiler or in a sauté pan. Place them in a bowl and cover with warm water. Allow to soak for 1/2 hour or more to soften. ✨

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4. When the pork is almost done, remove the chilies from the water and place them in the jar of a blender. Remove the onion from the soup pot and add it to the blender, along with the 3 cloves of garlic. Puree, adding as much of the chili soaking liquid as needed to make the puree smooth and pourable.
5. Rinse the hominy under cold water and add it to the pot with the tender pork. Add the chili puree and simmer for 15 minutes to combine the flavors. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
6. Ladle pozole into bowls, and garnish as desired with the radishes, cabbage and queso fresco. Serve with lime wedges on the side. ❁

MEXICAN FLOURLESS CHOCOLATE CAKE

Yield: 6 individual servings

Active time: 20 minutes

Start to finish: 45 minutes

1 stick butter
7 ounces bittersweet chocolate
1 1/2 ounces Mexican chocolate, rough chopped
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
2 teaspoons ancho chili powder
2 tablespoons Kahlua
4 eggs
Pinch salt
3/4 cup Mexican crema, sour cream or crème fraîche
1 tablespoon powdered sugar

1. Preheat the oven to 325°. Butter six ramekins and set aside in a roasting pan.
2. Bring about 1-inch of water to a boil in a saucepan. Reduce the heat so the water is just barely steaming.
3. Place the butter, bittersweet chocolate, chopped Mexican chocolate, cinnamon and ancho chili powder in a medium size bowl. Set the bowl over the steaming water and stir the mixture until the butter and chocolate mixture is smooth. Mix in the Kahlua.
4. While the chocolate and butter are melting, whip the eggs with the salt in a large bowl with a handheld mixer. Beat on high speed until very light and foamy, about 5 minutes.
5. Using a large spatula, gently fold the whipped eggs 1/3 at a time into the chocolate mixture until fully incorporated.
6. Divide the batter between the prepared ramekins. Pour enough hot water into the roasting pan to come halfway up the sides of the ramekins.
7. Bake until the tops of the cakes are set and the edges are just beginning to pull away from the sides, about 22-25 minutes.
8. Remove the ramekins from the water bath, and allow them to cool to room temperature. When ready to serve, mix together the Mexican crema and powdered sugar. Place a dollop on top of each cake and top with a grating of Mexican chocolate. ❀



Did you love these recipes? We recommend that you make them at home within the next two weeks to ensure that you remember everything you learned today!

THESE ITEMS ARE 15% OFF FOR YOU TODAY:

Tools

- Chef's knife
- Cutting board
- Bench scraper
- Slicing knife
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Microplane grater
- Rosle cheese grater
- Citrus squeezer
- Rosle ladle
- Pastry brush
- Kitchen timer
- Tongs
- Emile Henry ramekins
- Sheet tray
- Lodge cast iron skillet or cazuela
- Le Creuset French oven
- Le Creuset grill pan
- Handheld mixer
- Vita-Mix blender

Ingredients

- Grapeseed oil
- Chipotle peppers
- Cinnamon
- Mexican chocolate
- Scharffen Berger bittersweet chocolate

