



STEAMED PORK TAMALES

SERVINGS 18
PREP TIME 1 HR 30 MIN
COOK TIME 3 HR 30 MIN

INGREDIENTS

For the Pork & Chile Sauce

- Dried guajillo chiles, stemmed and seeded
- Hot water, divided (2 cups for steeping chiles, 6 cups for cooking)
- Garlic cloves
- Canned chipotle chiles in adobo
- Whole or ground black pepper
- Ground cinnamon
- Dried oregano
- Pork shoulder (roast or stew meat cut into large pieces)
- Kosher salt, to taste

For the Masa Dough

- Masa harina
- Warm water



- Lard, chilled slightly
- Baking powder
- Fine salt
- Chicken stock

For Assembly & Steaming

- Fresh or frozen banana leaves
- Kitchen twine or string

DIRECTIONS

Step 1: Prepare Chile Paste & Cook Pork: Toast guajillo chiles over an open flame or in a hot skillet for 3–5 seconds per side. Transfer to a blender, add 2 cups hot water, and steep for 15 minutes. Add garlic, chipotles, black pepper, cinnamon, and oregano; blend until smooth. Strain through a fine-mesh sieve into a Dutch oven, pressing out liquid. Add pork and remaining 6 cups water. Bring to a boil, partially cover, and simmer over low heat until tender (about 2 hours).

Step 2: Finish the Filling: Transfer pork to a bowl. Boil cooking liquid uncovered until reduced to 4 cups (about 20 minutes). Shred pork with two forks, return to liquid, and simmer uncovered until sauce thickens and coats meat (about 20 minutes). Season with salt and cool.

Step 3: Mix the Masa Dough: Mix masa harina and warm water; cool to room temperature. Beat lard, baking powder, and salt in a stand mixer on medium speed until fluffy (3 minutes). With mixer running, add masa in golf-ball-sized portions, then stream in chicken stock. Whip on high speed for 3 minutes until smooth and spreadable.

Step 4: Assemble Tamales: Trim tough edges from banana leaves and cut into 18 eight-inch squares (save scraps for steamer). Spread 1/4 cup masa into a 4x6-inch rectangle on a leaf square. Top with 2 tbsp pork. Fold bottom edge up over filling, fold top down, fold sides in, and tie with string. Repeat for all tamales.

Step 5: Steam & Serve: Line a steamer basket with leaf scraps and stack tamales in two loose layers over boiling water. Cover and steam over medium-low heat for 1 hour 20 minutes (refill water as needed).

Rest covered off heat for 30 minutes, then serve with kitchen shears.