

¡Recetas para las Fiestas!

[Drinks](#)

[Soup](#)

[Appetizers](#)

[Main Courses](#)

[Desserts](#)

Salads

Black Bean Salad

2 cups dried black beans

1/2 celery stalk

1/2 carrot

A few sprigs fresh thyme

A few sprigs fresh parsley

1 bay leaf

1/2 onion

2 teaspoons kosher salt

1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil

1/3 cup lime juice

1 red onion, minced

A handful fresh cilantro, chopped

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1 teaspoon chili powder

Kosher salt and pepper

Tie the celery, carrot, thyme, parsley, and bay leaf into a bundle using cotton butcher's twine. Place the beans, bundle, and onion into a pot. Add just enough water to barely cover the beans. Bring to a simmer, partially cover, and cook for 1 to 2 hours until beans are barely tender.

After 30 minutes, add the salt to the beans. Occasionally check on the beans and add water to cover the beans, if needed.

When beans are just barely tender, drain them and remove the carrot bundle. Toss the beans while hot with the olive oil, lime juice, onion, cilantro, cumin, and chili powder. Chill thoroughly and season with salt and pepper.

Papaya Mango Salad

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 2 hours 30 minutes

Yield: 2 1/2 cups

1/2 firm ripe papaya

1 medium firm ripe mango

1/2 medium red onion, chopped fine

3 tablespoons fresh lime juice

1/2 small jalapeno chili, seeded and minced

1 tablespoon chopped fresh coriander

Seed and peel papaya. Peel mango and cut flesh from pit. Cut papaya and mango into 1/4-inch dice and in a small bowl toss with onion and lime juice. Stir diced jalapeno into salsa with coriander and salt and pepper to taste. Chill salsa, covered, at least 2 hours and up to 24

Cherry Tomato and Grilled Corn Salad

Prep Time: 25 minutes

Cook Time: 10 minutes

Yield: 2 quarts

1/2 cup champagne vinegar

1 cup extra-virgin olive oil

Kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper

6 ears corn, grilled in their husks

4 cups halved vine-ripened cherry tomatoes

1/2 cup small dice Vidalia onions

1 poblano pepper, diced small

1/2 cup parsley, chopped

Whisk vinegar and oil, season with salt and pepper, to taste.

Cut kernels off the corn cob. Put corn, tomatoes, onions, peppers, and parsley into a bowl to combine. Pour vinaigrette over salad, mix well, and adjust seasonings.

Fresh Cabbage Salad

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 30 minutes

Yield: 4 to 6 servings

1/4 cup white wine vinegar

1/2 cup olive oil

1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

1 teaspoon sugar

Kosher salt

Fresh ground pepper

1 cup finely shredded green cabbage

1 cup finely shredded red cabbage

1/2 cup julienned carrot

1/2 cup julienned red pepper

1/4 cup finely slivered red onion

1 small bunch chives, cut into 2-inch lengths

In a bowl whisk together the vinegar, oil, Dijon, sugar, and season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

In another bowl, toss the cabbage, carrot, red pepper, red onion, and chives together lightly.

Drizzle the salad with the vinaigrette, and toss to coat.

Avocado Salad

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 2 minutes

Yield: 4 servings

1 avocado, diced

1 red pepper, diced

1 yellow bell pepper, diced

1/2 red onion, diced

2 ounces fresh cilantro, chopped

1 lime, juiced

1/4-ounce olive oil

Pinch ground cumin

Kosher salt, to taste

Pepper, to taste

Mix all ingredients thoroughly and season with salt and pepper.

Jicama and Fruit Antojito

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Yield: 4 to 6 appetizer servings

1 melon, such as cantaloupe or honeydew, halved, seeded, and rind removed

1 jicama, peeled, halved and sliced into half moons

1 lime, halved

Kosher salt

Ground chile powder, such as ancho (Profe has some if you don't have it at home)

Cut melon into slices about the same size as the jicama slices.

Arrange jicama and melon on a platter, squeeze lime over fruit, then dust with salt and chile powder, to taste.
Eat!

Cactus Salad

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 3 hours

Cook Time: 10 minutes

1 1/2 pounds fresh or prepared cactus paddles or nopales (found canned in the Mexican section of all grocery stores), needles removed

3/4 cup olive oil

1 1/2 teaspoons salt

4 Italian Roma tomatoes, cored, seeded and cut into 1/4-inch dice

1/2 small red onion, cut into 1/4-inch dice

1 to 2 medium serrano chiles, stemmed, seeded and finely diced

2 bunches cilantro, leaves only, chopped

1/2 cup finely grated Cotija or Anejo cheese

1/2 cup red wine vinegar

1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

4 to 6 lettuce leaves

1 avocado, peeled, seeded and sliced for garnish

1/4 cup cracked black pepper garnish, recipe follows

Preheat grill or broiler. Place cactus paddles in a bowl and toss with 1/4 cup of the olive oil and 1/2 teaspoon of the salt. Grill or broil the paddles until grill marks appear on each side, or they turn dark green with black patches, about 3 to 5 minutes. Set aside to cool to room temperature. Cover and chill 2 to 4 hours or overnight. Cut cactus into 1/2-inch pieces. In a large bowl, combine the cactus, tomatoes, onions, chiles, cilantro and cheese with the remaining 1/2 cup oil, the vinegar, the remaining 1 teaspoon salt and pepper. Toss well. Serve on plates lined with lettuce leaves, and garnish with avocado slices sprinkled with cracked pepper garnish.

CRACKED BLACK PEPPER GARNISH

2 tablespoons cracked black pepper
1/2 cup olive oil
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
1 teaspoon salt

In a small bowl, stir all the ingredients together. Spoon over vegetables or drizzle lightly over dressed salads as a garnish.

Jicama Slaw

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Inactive Prep Time: 15 minutes

Yield: 4 servings

1 large jicama, peeled and finely shredded
1/2 Napa cabbage, finely shredded
2 carrots, shredded
1/2 cup freshly squeezed lime juice
2 tablespoons rice vinegar
2 tablespoons ancho chili powder
2 tablespoons honey
1/2 cup canola oil
Salt and freshly ground pepper
1/4 cup finely chopped cilantro leaves

Place jicama, cabbage, and carrots in a large bowl. Whisk together the lime juice, vinegar, ancho powder, honey, and oil in a medium bowl and season with salt and pepper. Pour the lime mixture over the jicama mixture and toss to coat well. Fold in the cilantro. Let sit at room temperature for 15 minutes before serving.

Mexican-Style Chick-Pea Salad

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Inactive Prep Time: 2 minutes

Yield: 6 as side dish

2 canned chipotle chiles in adobo
3 fresh jalapeno chiles
1 medium onion
2 garlic cloves
3 medium vine-ripened tomatoes
4 cups drained canned chick-peas (2 19-ounce cans)
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1/4 cup fresh lime juice plus additional to taste

3 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro leaves

Freshly ground black pepper

Rinse chipotles. Wearing rubber gloves, separately seed and mince chipotles and jalapenos. Mince onion and garlic. Peel, seed, and chop tomatoes. Rinse and drain chick-peas, and in a large bowl stir together all ingredients except additional lime juice.

Chill the salad, covered, at least 2 hours and up to 1 day. Season salad with salt and add additional lime juice. Serve salad at cool room temperature.

Drinks

Guava and Mango Shake

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Yield: 2 servings

1 cup peeled, chopped Florida guava

1 mango, peeled, chopped

1/4 cup sugar

1 tablespoon coconut cream

1 lemon, juice only

2 cups low-fat milk

1/2 cup crushed ice

Mint sprigs, for garnish

Put all ingredients, except mint, into blender. Puree until well blended.

Serve with sprig of mint.

Fresh Fruit Batidos

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Yield: 1 serving (multiply recipe ingredients to make more)

6 ounces mango sorbet

3 ounces vanilla ice cream

1/2 cup chopped fresh mango, plus mango slices, for garnish

5/8 cup cold milk

1 to 2 tablespoons honey, or more to taste

Mint sprigs, for garnish

Papaya and Mango Batidos

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Yield: 1 serving (Multiply for more people)

1 cup diced papaya (about 1 small papaya), plus some sliced, for garnish

1 cup diced mango (about 1 mango), plus some sliced, for garnish

1 1/2 cups milk

1 cup crushed ice

Combine the papaya, mango, milk, and ice in a blender process just until smooth. Pour into glasses and garnish with mango and papaya slices.

Mexican Hot Chocolate

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 5 minutes

Yield: 2 servings

1 (3-ounce) tablet Mexican chocolate

2 1/2 cups milk

1/4 cup heavy cream

1 teaspoon molasses or cane syrup

Finely chop chocolate. In a saucepan bring milk and heavy cream to a simmer and add chocolate and cane syrup. Whisk continuously until chocolate is dissolved, and serve immediately.

Soup

Spicy Corn Soup

Difficulty: Medium

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour

Yield: 6 servings

3 cups corn kernels (fresh, frozen, or canned)

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 yellow onion, diced

1 tablespoon finely chopped garlic

1 tablespoon dried chipotle chili powder

1 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon black pepper

6 cups chicken stock

1 red bell pepper, roasted, peeled, seeded and diced

1 1/2 cups heavy cream

Prepare the corn by cutting the kernels from the cob. You should have approximately 3 cups of corn kernels from 4 cobs of corn. Save the corn cobs and set aside. The cobs will add additional corn flavor to the soup. In a medium-sized saucepan over medium-high heat, add the olive oil, then the onions. Saute for 3 to 4 minutes until they are translucent, stirring occasionally. Add the garlic and chipotle chili powder and saute for 1 more minute. Add the corn kernels and saute for another 3 minutes, stirring constantly. Add the salt, black pepper, and chicken stock and bring to a boil. (If you have cut your corn fresh from the cob, place the reserved cobs into the saucepan at this time). Once the mixture has boiled, reduce the heat and simmer for 30 minutes. Stir occasionally to prevent the corn kernels from burning or sticking to the bottom of the pan. While the corn soup is simmering, roast the red bell pepper. Char the skin of the pepper until it is black over an open flame or on a grill. When the skin is blistered and blackened, remove the pepper from the flame and place in a paper or plastic bag and seal. Let steam for 15 minutes. When the pepper is cool enough to handle, peel, seed, and dice it.

Place the diced bell pepper into a blender with 1/2 cup of the heavy cream and blend thoroughly for 1 minute. Pour through a fine sieve and discard the contents of the sieve. Pour the red bell pepper sauce into a plastic squirt bottle and set aside. Remove the corn soup mixture from the heat, discard the corn cobs and set aside. Place the corn soup mixture in a blender and puree for 3 minutes. Pour the mixture through a sieve and discard the contents of the sieve. Return the mixture to a saucepan, add the remaining 1 cup of heavy cream, and heat, over medium heat for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally to prevent burning. Pour into bowls, garnish with some of the red pepper sauce and serve immediately.

Mexican Tortilla Meatball Soup

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 30 minutes

Cook Time: 45 minutes

Yield: 8 servings

1 1/2 pounds lean ground beef

3 tablespoons chopped cilantro

1 tablespoon minced garlic

2 teaspoons fresh lime juice

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1 teaspoon hot sauce

Salt and pepper to taste

2 medium onions, chopped (about 2 cups)

4 garlic cloves, minced

4 tablespoons vegetable oil

2 (4-ounce) can green chilies, chopped

2 (15-ounce) cans Italian-style stewed tomatoes, chopped, reserving the juice

8 cups chicken stock

1 tablespoon chili powder

2 teaspoons ground cumin

1 teaspoon hot sauce or to taste

1/2 cup all-purpose flour

1 cup chicken stock

Salt and pepper to taste

Garnish:

Chopped cilantro

Fried tortilla strips

Avocado cubes

Sour cream

Pickled Jalapeno

Monterey Jack cheese

Meatballs:

Combine the ground beef with the cilantro, garlic, lime juice, cumin, hot sauce and salt and pepper. Form into 1-ounce balls. Heat oil in skillet over moderate heat. Cook until brown on all sides, about 5 minutes.

Soup:

In a large soup pot, heat 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil. Add onions and garlic and cook for 5 minutes over low heat until translucent. Add chiles and cook 2 minutes. Add tomatoes and their juice, chicken stock, chili powder, cumin, and hot sauce. Simmer for 15 to 20 minutes.

In a small bowl, combine flour and chicken stock. Whisk into soup. Bring back to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Add meatballs and simmer an additional 5 minutes.

Serve soup with garnishes

Why-the-Chicken-Crossed-the-Road Santa Fe-Tastic Tortilla Soup

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 25 minutes

Yield: 4 servings

Vegetable or corn oil, for drizzling, plus 2 tablespoons -- 2 turns of the pot in a slow stream

3 ears corn on the cob or 2 ears fresh-frozen cobs, defrosted

1 red bell pepper, split and seeded

1 pound chicken breast tenders

1 teaspoon poultry seasoning, 1/3 palm full

1 teaspoon cumin, 1/3 palm full

Salt and pepper

1 small to medium zucchini, small dice

1 medium yellow skinned onion, chopped

3 cloves garlic, chopped

1 to 2 chipotle in adobo peppers (medium to hot heat level), chopped -- available in small cans in Mexican and Spanish food section of market

1 can stewed tomatoes, 28 ounces

1 can tomato sauce, 8 ounces

3 cups chicken stock, available in re-sealable paper containers on soup aisle

4 cups blue corn tortilla chips, broken up into large pieces

1 cup shredded cheddar or pepper Jack cheese

1/2 cup sour cream

Optional garnishes:

1/4 red raw onion, chopped

2 to 3 tablespoons chopped cilantro or parsley leaves

1 ripe avocado, diced and dressed with the juice of 1/2 lemon

Heat a grill pan to high and a soup pot to medium high. Drizzle oil on corn and place on grill. Add red pepper to grill with corn. Char vegetables 10 minutes, total, turning occasionally. Remove to cool, 5 minutes.

Remove charred skin from the pepper.

While vegetables cook, dice chicken. Add 2 tablespoons oil to hot soup pot. Add chicken to pot. Season with poultry seasoning, cumin, salt and pepper. Lightly brown chicken on each side. Add zucchini, onions and garlic and chipotle peppers. Cook vegetables with chicken 5 to 7 minutes to soften. Add tomatoes, tomato sauce and stock. Bring soup to a bubble, reduce heat to medium low.

Scrape corn off cob and add to soup. Chop grilled red pepper and stir into soup. Add chips to soup in handfuls and fold in. Serve soup immediately with scatter of shredded cheese and a dollop of sour cream. Top with any or all of the suggested garnishes.

Turkey Chili

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Yield: 4 servings

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

1 medium yellow onion, chopped

5 cloves garlic, chopped

1 tablespoon kosher salt

2 teaspoons chili powder

1 teaspoon dried oregano

1 tablespoon tomato paste

1 chipotle chile en adobo, coarsely chopped, with 1 tablespoon sauce

1 pound ground turkey

1 (12-ounce) Mexican lager-style beer

1 (14 1/2-ounce) can whole peeled tomatoes, with their juice

1 (15 1/2-ounce) can kidney beans, rinsed and drained

Sliced scallions, cilantro sprigs, avocado, sour cream, grated Monterey jack cheese, and/or tortilla chips, for garnish, optional

Heat the olive oil in a large, heavy skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion, garlic, salt, chili powder, and oregano and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 3 minutes. Stir in the tomato paste and the chipotle chile and sauce; cook 1 minute more. Add the turkey, breaking it up with a wooden spoon, and cook until the meat loses its raw color, about 3 minutes. Add the beer and simmer until reduced by about half, about 8 minutes. Add the tomatoes—crushing them through your fingers into the skillet—along with their juices and the beans; bring to a boil. Cook, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until thick, about 10 minutes.

Ladle the chili into bowls and serve with the garnishes of your choice.

Cook's Note: A skillet's larger surface area reduces sauces faster than simmering in a saucepan.

Corn Tortilla Soup

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Yield: 6 to 8 servings

3 tablespoons olive oil

1 tablespoon minced garlic

2 tablespoons minced fresh jalapenos

1 1/2 cups chopped red onion

1 teaspoon ground cumin

9 cups chicken stock

16 (6 to 8inch) corn tortillas

1/2 cup chopped scallions

1 lime, juiced

1/4 cup chopped cilantro

Garnish: sour cream, fried leeks, diced tomatoes

Heat olive oil in soup pot. Add garlic, jalapenos, red onion, and cumin. Add chicken stock, corn tortillas, and scallions. Simmer 20 minutes. Add lime and cilantro.

To serve, ladle into bowls and top with sour cream, fried leeks, and diced tomatoes

Appetizers

Guacamole

Recipe courtesy Edison Mays

Recipe Summary

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Inactive Prep Time: 30 minutes

Yield: 4 to 6 servings

User Rating: ★★★★★

3 large ripe avocados

Juice of 1 lime

1/2 cup fresh cilantro leaves, chopped

1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper

1/2 cup minced red onion

1/2 serrano chile, minced

1 cup diced tomato

Cut the avocados in half and remove the pit. Scoop the flesh into a large bowl and mash. Add lime juice so the avocados do not turn brown. Add the cilantro, cayenne, red onion, chile and tomato. Gently fold the ingredients together until well mixed. Place in the refrigerator for 30 minutes, or until ready to serve. (Omit the cayenne and chile for a less spicy version.)

Fried Ripe Plantains

Difficulty: Easy

Yield: 6 to 8 servings

4 yellow plantains

Vegetable oil, for frying

Kosher salt

Cut the ends off the plantains and cut them into 2 pieces. Peel them and slice them in half lengthwise. In a large skillet over medium-high heat add 1/4 cup oil and fry the plantains slowly until they are browned and caramelized, about 15 minutes. Drain on paper towels. Season with salt and serve.

Cheese Quesadillas

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Yield: 4 to 6 servings (1 1/3 cup salsa)

Quesadillas:

12 (5-inch) corn tortillas

1/2 pound Cheddar, Monterey Jack or Colby cheese, thinly sliced

4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) unsalted butter

Topping and Salsa:

1 pound vine-ripened tomatoes (about 2 tomatoes)

1/4 small red onion

2 to 3 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro

Hot sauce such as chipotle or Mexican green chili sauce to taste (about 1/2 teaspoon)

Kosher salt

1 Hass avocado, halved, seeded, and sliced

Lay 6 tortillas on a work surface. Divide the cheese among the tortillas. (Its best to leave about an inch border on the edge of the tortilla uncovered to allow for the spread of the melting cheese.) Top with remaining tortillas and press gently to seal. Melt 1 tablespoon butter in a small skillet. Carefully place a quesadilla in the skillet and fry, turning once, until golden and little bubbles appear on both sides, about 4 to 5 minutes total. Repeat with the remaining quesadillas, wiping out the pan between batches if the butter burns, and adding more butter, as needed.

While the quesadillas cook make the salsa: Halve the tomatoes and grate them on the largest holes of a box grater into a bowl, discarding the skins. Grate the onion into the tomato, and stir in the cilantro, hot sauce, and salt, to taste.

Cut each quesadilla into 4 wedges with a pizza wheel or knife and serve with the salsa and avocado.

Sugarcane Chicken Skewers with Sango Sauce

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Inactive Prep Time: 2 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

Yield: 8 hors d'oeuvres portions

1 (12-inch) piece fresh sugarcane stick

1 pound chicken fillets, or the breast cut into 1/2-inch thick strips

1 teaspoon chopped garlic

2 tablespoons olive oil

Sango sauce:

Olive oil, for cooking

1 white onion, chopped

1 red bell pepper, chopped

1 yellow bell pepper, chopped

1 cubanella pepper, chopped

2 cloves garlic

4 cups chicken stock

1 green plantain, peeled and chopped

1 cup shelled and toasted peanuts

Cut the sugarcane half, forming 2 (6-inch) canes. Then, cut the sugarcane lengthwise, into quarters, forming 8 skewers, about 1/8 of an inch thick.

Thread each piece of chicken onto a single sugarcane skewer. Repeat the process with rest of skewers and chicken. Place the skewers in a shallow bowl.

In a small bowl, combine the oil and garlic, mix well, and then pour the mixture over the chicken skewers let to marinate, covered and refrigerated, for at least 2 hours.

Meanwhile, make the sauce. In a saucepot, over medium heat, pour a little oil. Saute the onion, peppers, and garlic slowly, cooking for about 10 minutes. Then, add the chicken stock, green plantains, and peanuts. Cook this mixture until the plantains have become tender, about 20 minutes. Remove the pot from the heat, and then, using an immersion blender or a food processor, puree the sauce.

Preheat a grill or the broiler.

Grill the chicken skewers until they are firm to the touch and cooked through, about 3 minutes per side. Serve with a side dish of the Sango Sauce, for dipping.

Empanadas

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Inactive Prep Time: 25 minutes

Cook Time: 10 minutes

Yield: 15 to 20 empanadas

1 tablespoon olive oil, for sauteing

1 pound ground beef

1 pound ground pork

1 large white onion, finely chopped

1 tablespoon curry powder

1 bunch cilantro, washed and leaves chopped

1 cup chopped spinach

1/2 cup goat cheese

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Frozen puff pastry dough, cut into 5-inch rounds, and kept cold in refrigerator

In a large saute pan, heat the olive oil. Saute beef and pork until cooked. Strain the meat from the fat and reserve. In the same pan, saute the onions until soft, about 5 to 8 minutes. Add the cooked meat to the onions, and saute 5 minutes. Add the curry powder, cilantro, and spinach and saute for 5 minutes. Remove the mixture from the stove and mix in the goat cheese until completely incorporated. Season with salt and pepper and cool to room temperature.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Lay out the chilled cut dough on a cutting board. Spoon a small amount of the stuffing into the center of the dough. Fold the top over the bottom and crimp all the way around with a fork. Lay the empanadas on a sheet pan. See Chef's Note. Bake for 15 minutes or until dough appears crispy.

Chef's Note: At this point the empanadas can be refrozen for future use.

Pico de Gallo with Homemade Tortilla Chips

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Inactive Prep Time: 1 hour

Cook Time: 5 minutes

Yield: about 3 cups

1 1/2 pounds plum tomatoes, cored, halved, and seeded (about 2 1/2 cups)

3/4 cup finely chopped white onions

1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro leaves

2 tablespoons fresh lime juice

2 tablespoons minced, seeded jalapeno or serrano chiles (about 2 medium)

1 teaspoon minced garlic

1/2 teaspoon salt

Homemade Tortilla Chips, recipe follows

Cut the tomatoes into 1/4-inch dice and place in a bowl. Add the remaining ingredients and stir well to combine. Cover and allow to rest at room temperature for 1 hour for the flavors to blend.

Serve with Homemade Chips.

Homemade Tortilla Chips:

9 corn tortillas, cut into quarters

4 cups corn or vegetable oil

Salt

In a large, heavy saucepan, heat the oil to 360 degrees F.

In batches, add the tortillas to the oil, being careful not to overcrowd, and cook until golden brown, turning once, 1 to 2 minutes. Remove and drain on paper towels. Season lightly with Essence. Serve warm or use to make nachos.

Yield: 3 dozen chips

Chipaguazu

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Yield: 8 servings

8 ears corn

5 eggs, separated

Pinch salt

1/2 cup heavy cream

1/4 cup mozzarella, shredded

1/2 teaspoon baking powder

1/4 cup cabrales or queso blanco, for garnish

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Remove corn kernels from husk and mix in a blender with the egg yolks, salt, and cream. Beat egg whites to soft peaks. Fold corn mixture into egg whites and gently add mozzarella and baking powder. Pour into 8 buttered and floured 4-ounce ramekins and bake for 30 minutes in a water bath. Unmold onto plates and garnish with cabrales or queso blanco.

Chorizo and Cheese Bread

Difficulty: Easy

Yield: 4 to 6 servings

1/2 pound chorizo (Mexican sausage)

46 green onions, chopped

1 tablespoon tomato paste

1 tomato, seeded and diced

1 teaspoon dried Mexican oregano

2 Chipotle chiles pickled, chopped

Coarse salt and freshly ground pepper

1 small loaf of French bread

Grated Cotija and Manchego cheese, about 1/2 pound

In a dry heavy skillet, fry the chorizo until browned. Drain off any fat and add the tomato paste and fry with chorizo briefly. Add the green onions, oregano, tomato, chile, and salt and pepper. Cook 2 to 3 minutes longer.

Spread the chorizo mixture on a split loaf of French bread. Sprinkle generously with Cotija and Manchego cheeses.

Place under a broiler and broil until the cheese is melted and bubbly and serve with tomatillo salsa.

Chunky Guacamole

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Inactive Prep Time: 1 hour

Yield: 4 servings

4 ripe avocados

3 limes, juiced

1/2 red onion, chopped

1 garlic clove, minced

2 Serrano chiles, sliced thinly

1 big handful fresh cilantro, finely chopped

Extra-virgin olive oil

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Halve and pit the avocados. Scoop out the flesh with a tablespoon into a mixing bowl. Mash the avocados with a fork, leaving them somewhat chunky. Add the remaining ingredients, and fold everything together to gently mix. Lay a piece of plastic wrap right on the surface of the guacamole so it doesn't brown and refrigerate 1 hour before serving.

Chicken Enchiladas

Difficulty: Easy

Yield: 4 to 6 servings

3 tablespoons plus 1/2 cup oil, divided

1 tablespoon flour

1/4 cup New Mexican chili powder

16 ounces chicken stock

10 ounces tomato puree

1 teaspoon dried oregano

1/2 teaspoon ground cumin

Salt

3 cups grated cheddar cheese

2 cups cooked and shredded chicken

1 onion, chopped

10 corn tortillas

1 cup sour cream, for garnish

1/2 cup chopped scallions, for garnish

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Make sauce: In a saucepan heat 3 tablespoons oil, add flour and cook, whisking, 1 minute. Add chili powder and cook 30 seconds. Stir in stock, tomato puree, oregano and cumin and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer 15 minutes until flavors are well-blended. Season to taste with salt.

Combine cheese, chicken and onion for filling. Heat remaining 1/2 cup oil in a skillet until hot. Using tongs dip in tortillas, one at a time, to soften, and drain on paper towels. Dip each tortilla in sauce. On a plate fill with a generous spoonful of filling and roll up; place enchilada seam-side down in a baking dish and repeat until all ingredients are used up. Top with remaining sauce. Bake 30 minutes. To serve, top with sour cream and scallions.

Peruvian Ceviche

(Soaking fish in citrus juices cooks the fish completely)

1 pound medium shrimp (16/20 per pound), peeled and cleaned

2 pounds meaty white fish, boned, and cut into large dice

1 red onion, minced

1 piece ginger, peeled, minced

1 clove garlic, minced

1/4 habanero or Scotch bonnet pepper, minced (no seeds or ribs)

1 celery rib, minced

Salt and black pepper

5 lemons, juiced

5 limes, juiced

1 bunch cilantro, chopped

1/2 cup white corn (frozen and thawed)

Boil salted water. Have ice water ready on the side. Poach shrimp for just 30 seconds and cool in ice water and drain. Combine with fish and toss with onion, ginger, garlic, hot pepper, celery, salt, and black pepper. Allow to cool in the refrigerator at least 30 minutes up to 2 hours.

Add juices and refrigerate 1 hour. Finish with cilantro and corn, check seasoning and serve.

Tomatillo Salsa and Chips

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Yield: 1 cup

8 tomatillos, husks discarded

2 fresh jalapeno chiles with seeds, chopped

1 small handful fresh coriander leaves, washed well and spun dry

1/4 cup water

1/2 small white onion, chopped fine

1/4 teaspoon coarse salt, or to taste

1 bag tortilla chips

Rinse tomatillos under warm water to remove stickiness and dry them. Quarter tomatillos and in a blender puree with jalapenos, coriander, and water until very smooth. In a bowl, stir together tomatillo mixture, onion, and salt. Salsa may be made 10 hours ahead and chilled, covered. Bring salsa to room temperature before serving. Serve with tortilla chips.

Main Courses

Crispy Fish Tacos

Recipe courtesy Tyler Florence

Recipe Summary

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Inactive Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

Yield: 8 servings

User Rating: ★★★★★

Peanut oil, for frying

2 cups panko bread crumbs (found in the asian section of the grocery store, Profe has some if you need them and can't find them)*

3 eggs

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 pounds halibut, snapper, or other firm flesh white fish

8 corn tortillas

1/2 head napa cabbage, shredded

Pink Chili Mayo, recipe follows

Lime wedges, for garnish

*Available in the Asian section of your market.

To fry the fish: Fill a large heavy bottomed pot about 1/3 full of peanut oil. Heat to 375 degrees F. While the oil is heating, put the breadcrumbs into a shallow dish. Break the eggs into another shallow dish, season with salt and pepper, and beat them with 2 tablespoons of water. Cut the fish into 1-inch wide strips. Dip them into the egg, then coat them well with the breadcrumbs. Set aside and let them rest for 10 minutes. Cook the fish a few pieces at a time until golden brown and cooked through, about 3 to 5 minutes. Drain on paper towels.

To make the tacos: Heat a dry cast iron skillet over medium heat. Warm a corn tortilla in the pan until it softens, about 30 seconds. Place a fish strip on it, top with some of the shredded cabbage, and a big dollop of Pink Chili Mayo. Squeeze on some lime juice, roll up, and eat!

Pink Chili Mayo:

1 1/2 cups mayonnaise

1 1/2 cups sour cream

2 canned chipotle peppers in adobo sauce

Juice 1/2 lime

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Put the mayonnaise, sour cream, peppers, and lime juice in a blender and process to a puree. Refrigerate the mayo for 1/2 hour to let the flavors to blend; taste and adjust seasoning with salt and pepper.

Yield: 8 servings

Chicken Burritos with Mojo

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 5 minutes

Yield: 8 servings

Mojo Sauce:

4 garlic cloves

2 serrano chilies, seeds removed

1 large handful fresh cilantro leaves

Juice 2 limes

Juice 1 orange

1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

8 large flour tortillas

1 (3 to 4 pound) whole roasted chicken, shredded

Yellow Rice, recipe follows

Spicy Black Beans, recipe follows

2 avocados chopped

1 cup grated queso blanco or Monterey jack cheese

Sour cream, for garnish

Cilantro leaves, for garnish

Lime wedges, for garnish

Make the Mojo Sauce: Put the garlic, chilies, cilantro, lime juice, orange juice, and olive oil into a blender and process until smooth. Taste and adjust seasoning with salt and pepper.

To make the burritos: Warm the tortillas for 30 seconds in a dry skillet or on the grill until pliable. Place some chicken down the center of a tortilla and top with rice and beans, avocado, grated cheese, and Mojo Sauce. Roll up the burrito and serve topped with a generous drizzle of sour cream; garnish with cilantro leaves and a squeeze of lime juice.

Yellow Rice:

2 cups long-grain rice

4 cups water

2 cloves garlic, smashed

1 teaspoon turmeric

1 teaspoon kosher salt

1 bay leaf

Put all the ingredients into a heavy bottomed pot, stir well, and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce the heat to a simmer, cover, and cook over low heat until the rice has absorbed the water, about 15 to 20 minutes. Remove from the heat and let sit, covered, for 5 minutes. Discard the garlic and bay leaf, fluff with a fork, and serve.

Yield: 8 servings

Spicy Black Beans:

2 cups (about 1 pound) dried black beans, picked over and rinsed

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

1 medium onion, chopped

1 jalapeno pepper, chopped

2 cloves garlic, chopped

1 bay leaf

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Quick soak the beans: Put beans in a pot and cover with water by 2 inches. Bring to a boil and cook for 2 minutes. Remove from heat, cover, and let soak for 1 hour. Drain the beans.

In the same pot, heat the olive oil. Add the onion, jalapeno pepper, garlic, and bay leaf and cook until the vegetables begin to soften, about 5 minutes. Add the beans and cover with water by about 1 inch. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat, cover, and simmer for 1 to 1 1/2 hours, or until the beans are tender. Remove the bay leaf and discard. Taste the beans and season them with salt and pepper.

Yield: 8 servings

Pumpkin Seed-Crusted Chicken

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

Yield: 4 servings

1 cup pumpkinseeds

1 teaspoon ancho powder

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 teaspoon thyme (fresh, chopped)

1 cup goat cheese

4 (12-ounce) chicken breasts, skin and wing bone attached

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

Serving suggestion: a green salad or favorite vegetables

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F.

Toast the pumpkinseeds and ancho powder in a saute pan on medium high heat. Remove, crush in a mortar and pestle, and place in a large bowl. Add salt, pepper, and fresh thyme.

Stuff the goat cheese underneath the chicken skin of the breast, then dredge the chicken on both sides in the mixture and remove. Heat a saute pan on medium heat, add olive oil. Place the chicken, skin side down into the pan.

When it becomes golden, flip the chicken and place into the oven for 12 to 15 minutes. Serve with a green salad or favorite vegetables.

Green Chicken Chilaquiles Casserole

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 1 hour

Cook Time: 1 hour

Yield: 6 to 8 servings

2 whole chicken breasts, split

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 cups chicken stock

3 1/2 cups Bottled Tomatillo Salsa (Herez bottled brand)

1/2 cup heavy cream

1 onion, sliced paper-thin

1/2 cup vegetable oil

18 Corn Tortillas

1 cup grated Manchego cheese

1 cup grated Monterey Jack cheese

1/2 cup grated Anejo cheese

Season the chicken all over with salt and pepper. Bring the chicken stock to a boil in a large saucepan. Place the breasts in the stock, reduce the heat to moderate, cover and cook until the meat is tender, about 15 minutes. Set aside to cool in the stock. When cool, remove the skin and bones and shred the meat into bite-sized pieces. Strain and reserve the stock for another use.

In a large mixing bowl, combine the fresh tomatillo salsa, heavy cream, 1 teaspoon salt, 1/2 teaspoon pepper, the onion and shredded chicken pieces.

Heat the vegetable oil in a medium skillet over medium-low heat. Cook the tortillas just about 5 seconds per side to soften, and then transfer to a large colander to drain.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Butter a 4 quart casserole or 6 to 8 individual casseroles (at the restaurant, we use small soup bowls).

Combine the cheeses in a mixing bowl.

To assemble the chilaquiles, spread a thin layer of the cheese mixture over the bottom of the baking dish. Push the solids in the bowl of chicken and tomatillo sauce to the side so the liquids form a pool in the bottom. Dip all the softened tortillas in the pool to moisten. Layer one third of the moist tortillas over the cheese and top with half of the chicken mixture with its sauce. Sprinkle half of the remaining cheese over the chicken. Repeat the layers, ending with a layer of tortillas on top. Cover tightly with aluminum foil.

Bake 30 minutes or until the edges are slightly brown. Let sit for 10 minutes before slicing and serving or unmolding.

Red Beans and Rice Moros y Cristianos (Moors and Christians):

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 30 minutes

Cook Time: 2 hours

Yield: 6 servings

1/2 pound dry red kidney beans

1 Italian frying pepper, cut in half

1 bay leaf

4 ounces bacon, diced

1/4 pound ham, small dice

1/4 cup olive oil

1 white onion, small dice

1 green pepper, small dice

2 garlic cloves, chopped

1 tablespoon tomato paste

1 teaspoon dry oregano

1 teaspoon cumin

2 cups long grain rice

Salt

In a large stockpot, combine the beans with the Italian pepper and a bay leaf. Cover with water, passing the beans by 2 inches. Boil covered until tender, about 1 1/2 hours. Drain, reserving 3 cups of the cooking liquid.

In a large casserole, render the fat from the bacon and ham. Add olive oil and saute the onions, pepper, and garlic until translucent. Add tomato paste and caramelize. Add the beans, the cooking liquid, oregano, cumin, and rice. Season with salt. Bring to a boil, cover, and cook at very low heat for about 20 minutes. Fluff with a fork.

Yucca con Mojo: Yuca with Garlic Sauce

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 30 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Yield: 4 servings

1 pound yucca (cassava root)

1 white onion sliced

1/4 cup white vinegar

2 cloves garlic

1/2 cup olive oil

Salt

Cover the yucca with cold salted water, bring to a boil, and cook the yucca until very tender, about 30 minutes.

Soak the onions in the vinegar for 30 minutes.

Crush the garlic and place in the oil. Heat the oil until almost smoking. Place the onions on top of the yucca. Pour the very hot oil over the yucca.

Gorditas con Carne Asada

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 4 hours 30 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour

Yield: 6 servings

1 recipe masa (recipe follows)

Vegetable oil for frying

Carne Asada Filling or Grilled Fish and White Bean Filling (recipes follow)

Divide the masa into 6 balls. Press each one between 2 sheets of plastic wrap to form 6inch rounds about 1/8inch thick. Heat a dry non-stick pan or wellseasoned griddle pan over medium heat. Toast the gorditas, turning frequently, for 3 to 4 minutes per side or until speckled and golden on the outside and puffy. Set aside for up to 6 hours before finishing the dish.

In a large, heavy saucepan or deepfat fryer, heat 2 inches of vegetable oil to 350 degrees. Deep fry the gorditas, in batches, until golden brown. When cool enough to handle, split open like pita bread and fill the pockets with either Carne Asada or Grilled Fish and White Bean fillings.

Chayotes Rellenos (stuffed)

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 40 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour

Yield: 8 servings

4 chayote squash, (green and found in the fruits and veggies section near the tomatoes at most grocery stores) halved, seeded

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

1 onion, finely chopped

1 1/2 teaspoons salt

1/2 pound chopped mushrooms
2 garlic cloves, minced
2 jalapeno chilies, minced
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
2 tomatoes, peeled, seeded chopped
1 to 2 tablespoons chopped epazote leaves or fresh oregano
1 cup dry bread crumbs
1/2 cup toasted almonds, chopped
1/2 cup grated Cotija or Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Cook unpeeled squash in lightly salted water until crisp tender, about 15 minutes. Drain well. Scoop out most of flesh, leaving 1/4-inch-thick shell. Season shell with salt and pepper. Coarsely chop chayote flesh. Set aside.

Heat oil in heavy large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion and salt and saute until tender, about 5 minutes. Add mushrooms and cook until most of liquid evaporates. Add garlic, jalapeno and cumin and saute until fragrant. Add tomatoes and reserved chayote flesh. Stir until most of liquid evaporates. Stir in epazote, bread crumbs and almonds. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Spoon mixture into shells. Sprinkle with cheese. Arrange shells in large baking pan. Pour enough hot water around shells to reach 1/4-inch. Bake until heated through, about 15 minutes.

Chilaquiles

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 35 minutes

Yield: 6 servings

The sauce:

1 cup salsa (preferably medium hot)
2 cups tomato sauce
1/2 cup water
1 (4-ounce) can chopped green chiles, undrained
1 (14-ounce) can pinto or kidney beans, rinsed well in a strainer
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano

The fixings:

1 (11-ounce) bag corn chips (about 8 cups)
1 cup sour cream
2 cups grated Monterey Jack
2 tablespoons minced cilantro, optional

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Combine all the sauce ingredients in a large bowl. Pour half the sauce into a shallow 2 1/2-quart (12 by 7 by 2-inch) baking dish, and top with half the corn chips. You can crumble the chips slightly to make an even layer. Drop little spoonfuls of half the sour cream all over the chips, then sprinkle on half the cheese. Top with the remaining chips, sauce, sour cream, and cheese.

Bake 35 minutes, or until hot and bubbly around the edges. Sprinkle the top of the casserole with the cilantro and serve. You can cut it into squares and serve using a spatula, or use a large spoon to scoop out the chilaquiles.

Cook's Note: Some packaged corn chips are very salty. Look on the back of the bag for the sodium content and choose a brand that has no more than 110 milligrams of sodium per serving. These will be the most flavorful corn chips and won't be overly salty to eat or use in the casserole.

For advance preparation: Make the sauce up to a few hours ahead and lay out all the other ingredients. Don't assemble chilaquiles, however, until the last minute so the corn chips retain a tiny bit of texture when baked.

Chimichanga

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 30 minutes

Cook Time: 3 hours

Yield: 4 servings

Another regional favorite with a Hispanic heritage, the chimichanga is the pride of southern Arizona, in the heart of the southwestern cattle country that has produced some of our most distinctive beef dishes. Deep-fried and decked out with toppings, it's a souped-up burrito chock-full of chuck, vegetables and mild chile. For a colorful fiesta spread, serve chimichangas with Mexican Rice (page 325), Watermelon Ice (page 393), and Orange Sangaree (page 429).

Filling:

3-pound boneless shoulder chuck roast

Salt and freshly milled black pepper

1/4 cup bacon drippings or vegetable oil

1 medium onion, chopped

2 garlic cloves, minced

1 cup beef stock

2 small tomatoes, preferably Italian plum, chopped

1/2 cup chopped roasted mild green chiles, such as New Mexican, preferably fresh or frozen, seeded

4 thin 10- to 12-inch flour tortillas, warmed

Vegetable oil for deep-frying

Grated Monterey Jack, asadero, or mild Cheddar cheese, or a combination

Sour cream, chopped tomato, and sliced scallions

Pico de Gallo (page 77) or other favorite salsa

Rub the roast with salt and pepper.

Warm 2 tablespoons of the bacon drippings in a Dutch oven or other large heavy pot over medium-high heat. Brown the roast on all sides. Reduce the heat to low, scatter half of the onion and half of the garlic over and around the meat. Pour the beef stock over it. Cover and simmer for 1 1/4 to 1 1/2 hours, until the roast is very tender. Let the meat sit in the cooking liquid until cool enough to handle. Drain the meat, reserving the cooking liquid. Shred the meat into bite-size pieces with your fingers or in several small batches in a food processor.

Warm the remaining 2 tablespoons bacon drippings in a heavy skillet over medium heat. Saute the remaining onion and garlic in the fat until the onion softens. Add the meat and saute until well-browned, about 10 minutes. Scrape the meat up from the bottom every few minutes, getting it crusty in some spots. Pour the reserved cooking liquid into the pan and add the tomatoes and chiles. Cook for about 15 minutes, until most of the liquid has evaporated. The meat should remain moist but not juicy. Adjust the seasoning if you wish. (The meat can be made ahead to this point and refrigerated, covered, for up to several days. Warm the meat before proceeding.)

You'll need about 5 cups of the shredded meat mixture for the chimichangas. Spoon it evenly over the tortillas. Roll up each tortilla, tucking in the ends to make a secure fat tube that resembles an overgrown Chinese egg roll. Secure the rolls with toothpicks.

Shortly before you plan to eat the chimichangas, warm at least 4 inches of oil in a Dutch oven or other large heavy pan to 375 degrees F. Fry the chimichangas one or two at a time until golden brown, about 3 minutes. Turn the chimis to fry them evenly. Drain them and arrange on serving plates. Top with cheese, sour cream, tomato, scallions and salsa. Serve immediately.

Adobo Rice and Black Beans

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 10 minutes

Yield: 4 servings

1 1/2 cups water

1 cup instant brown rice

1 (15-ounce) can black beans, rinsed and drained

1 teaspoon adobo seasoning with cumin

Bring the water to a boil in a medium saucepan. Add rice, black beans and adobo seasoning and bring to a simmer. Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer 10 minutes. Remove from heat and let stand 5 minutes. Fluff with a fork.

Chiles Rellenos

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 10 minutes

Yield: 4 servings

4 poblano chiles (large)

1 tablespoon canola oil

1/2 small red onion, diced

2 medium zucchini, coarsely chopped

1/4 teaspoon ground cumin

1/4 teaspoon ground oregano

1/4 teaspoon garlic powder

1 (4-ounce) can fire-roasted tomatoes

1 (4-ounce) can green chiles

1 cup frozen corn

1 (2 second) spray nonstick cooking spray

1 cup low-fat Cheddar, shredded

1 cup tomato salsa

Place a wire rack over a burner on the stove. Roast the poblanos on the rack and turn with tongs until blackened evenly. Remove from heat and set aside.

Heat canola oil in a medium heavy nonstick saute pan over medium heat. Add the onion and zucchini and saute until golden, about 5 minutes. Add the cumin, oregano, garlic powder, tomatoes, green chiles and corn. Continue to cook until the mixture is almost dry.

Meanwhile, use a paper towel to rub off the skins from the poblanos. Make an incision on 1 side, and remove seeds and membranes from inside, while making sure to keep the poblano intact.

Heat a medium heavy nonstick saute pan over medium heat. Lightly spray with canola cooking spray for 2 seconds. Evenly stuff the 4 poblanos with the zucchini mixture and the shredded cheese.

Carefully place the stuffed poblanos in the heated saute pan and sear on each side for approximately 2 minutes, or until golden brown. Serve warm with tomato salsa.

Mexican Stuffed Tomatoes

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Yield: 4 servings

5 yellow vine-ripe tomatoes

Salt and pepper

2 jarred pimentos, drained and chopped

1/4 red onion, chopped

1/2 small zucchini, 1/4-inch dice

1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and finely chopped

1/2 lemon, juiced

1/2 teaspoon dried oregano, crushed in palm of your hand

2 tablespoons, a handful, fresh cilantro or flat-leaf parsley leaves, your choice, chopped

2 tablespoons dried bread crumbs

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, 2 turns of the bowl

Cut the tops off 4 tomatoes and trim a thin slice off the bottoms so that they will sit upright easily. Hollow out the tomatoes with a spoon over garbage bowl or sink. Season tomatoes with salt and pepper. Remove stem of remaining tomato. Seed and chop tomato.

In a bowl, combine chopped tomato, pimentos, onions, zucchini, jalapeno, lemon juice, oregano and cilantro or parsley. Sprinkle bread crumbs evenly over the bowl. Add extra-virgin olive oil, 2 turns of the bowl in a slow stream or about 2 tablespoons. Toss mixture to combine and season, to taste, with salt and pepper. Fill the empty tomatoes with stuffing and serve.

Tacos Carne Asada

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 45 minutes

Inactive Prep Time: 1 hour 5 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

Yield: 4 servings (2 tacos per person)

2 pounds flank or skirt steak, trimmed of excess fat

1 recipe Mojo, recipe follows

Olive oil, for coating the grill

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

16 (7-inch) corn tortillas

Shredded romaine or iceberg lettuce, for serving

Chopped white onion, for serving

Shredded Jack cheese, for serving

1/2 cup Pico de Gallo, recipe follows

2 limes, cut in wedges for serving

Lay the flank steak in a large baking dish and pour the mojo over it. Wrap tightly in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour or up to 8 hours, so the flavors can sink into the meat. Don't marinate the steak for more than 8 hours though, or the fibers break down too much and the meat gets mushy.

Preheat an outdoor grill or a ridged grill pan over medium-high flame (you can also use a broiler). Brush the grates with a little oil to prevent the meat from sticking. Pull the steak out of the mojo marinade and season the steak on both sides with salt and pepper. Grill (or broil) the steak for 7 to 10 minutes per side, turning once, until medium-rare. Remove the steak to a cutting board and let it rest for 5 minutes to allow the juices to settle. Thinly slice the steak across the grain on a diagonal.

Warm the tortillas for 30 seconds on each side in a dry skillet or on the grill, until toasty and pliable.

To make the tacos, stack up 2 of the warm tortillas, lay about 4 ounces of beef down the center, and sprinkle with some lettuce, onion, and cheese. Top each taco with a spoonful of the Pico de Gallo salsa and garnish with lime wedges. Repeat with the remaining tortillas.

Mojo:

4 garlic cloves, minced

1 jalapeno, minced

1 large handful fresh cilantro leaves, finely chopped

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 limes, juiced

1 orange, juiced

2 tablespoons white vinegar

1/2 cup olive oil

In a mortar and pestle or bowl, mash together the garlic, jalapeno, cilantro, salt, and pepper to make a paste. Put the paste in a glass jar or plastic container. Add the lime juice, orange juice, vinegar, and oil. Shake it up really well to combine. Use as a marinade for chicken or beef or as a table condiment.

Yield: approximately 1 1/4 cups

Pico De Gallo:

4 vine-ripe tomatoes, chopped

1/2 medium red onion, chopped

2 green onions, white and green parts, sliced

1 Serrano chile, minced

1 handful fresh cilantro leaves, chopped

3 garlic cloves, minced

1 lime, juiced

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

1 teaspoon kosher salt

In a mixing bowl, combine all ingredients together. Toss thoroughly. Let it sit for 15 minutes hour to allow the flavors to marry.

Yield: 2 cups

Sopa Seca: Mexican Noodle Casserole

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 35 minutes

Yield: 4 servings

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra for pan

12 ounces fideos (bundled vermicelli)

1 medium onion, chopped

3 cloves garlic, minced

1 teaspoon ground coriander

1 teaspoon dried oregano, preferably Mexican
1 teaspoon New Mexican chili powder
1 bay leaf
1 1/2 cups canned whole tomatoes
1 to 2 chipotles en adobo sauce, minced
1 1/2 cups chicken broth, homemade, or low-sodium canned
1 teaspoon kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper
2 cups shredded smoked turkey
1 cup coarsely grated cheddar cheese (4 ounces)
Mexican crema, or sour cream thinned with a bit of milk, optional
Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.

Brush a 9-inch square baking dish with oil. Heat the extra-virgin olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the fideos and cook, turning them with tongs, until golden brown on both sides, about 5 minutes. Transfer the bundles and any broken pieces to a plate.

Add the onion to the skillet and cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until golden brown, about 8 minutes. Stir in the garlic, coriander, oregano, chili powder, and bay leaf, and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Crush the tomatoes over the pot with your hand and add them to the pot along with their juices. Add the chipotles, increase the heat to high, and cook until thickened, about 2 minutes. Stir in the broth, the toasted fideos, salt, and pepper, to taste. Bring mixture to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer gently, uncovered, breaking up the fideos with a spoon, for about 5 minutes. Stir in the turkey.

Remove the bay leaf. Transfer the mixture to the prepared baking dish, sprinkle the grated cheese over the top, and cover loosely with foil. Bake until the cheese melts and the casserole is hot through and through, about 20 minutes. If desired, serve with some crema drizzled over the top.

Mexican Telera Sandwich

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 25 minutes

Yield: 4 servings

1 cup mayonnaise

2 canned chipotle chiles in adobo sauce

4 soft rolls split in half (see note)

Grilled Chicken, recipe follows

4 plum tomatoes, cut into 20 thin slices

1 Hass avocado, peeled, seeded, and cut into 16 thin slices

8 thin slices pepper Jack cheese (about 8 ounces)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

Place the mayonnaise and chipotle chiles in a food processor and blend until smooth. Generously spread the cut sides of the rolls with the chipotle mayonnaise. Cover the bottom half of each roll with 1 thinly sliced chicken breast, overlapping the slices. Top each portion of chicken with 5 slices of tomato and 4 slices of avocado. Cover with 2 slices of cheese.

Place assembled sandwiches open faced on a sheet pan and bake until cheese is melted, about 8 minutes. Cover the sandwiches, slice in half and serve immediately.

Grilled Chicken:

1/4 cup lemon juice

1 clove garlic, crushed
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon paprika
1/2 cup olive oil
4 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves (about 4 ounces each)

In a large bowl, whisk together the lemon juice, garlic, salt, and paprika. While whisking, drizzle in the oil until incorporated. Add the chicken, cover, and marinate in the refrigerator for at least 8 hours and up to overnight.

Preheat a stovetop grill pan until hot. Grill the chicken, turning once, until well marked and cooked through, about 15 to 20 minutes. When cool enough to handle, slice very thin and make the sandwiches.

Note: Telera refers to a Mexican bread similar to a French roll with a scored and flour-dusted crust. It can be found in Mexican markets, where they're used to make sandwiches called tortas. Just use soft rolls if you don't have taleras.

Place all ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth. Pour into a 10-ounce glass and serve immediately. Garnish with a mango slice and mint sprig, if desired.

Tortilla Española (Spanish Omelet)

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Yield: 4 servings

1/2 cup vegetable oil

4 potatoes, thinly sliced

1 white onion, chopped

4 eggs, scrambled in a large bowl

1/4 teaspoon salt

2 to 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

In a large skillet over medium-high heat, add the vegetable oil until the pan is filled halfway. Once the oil is hot, add the potato slices and onion, making sure they are well-covered by the oil; add more oil if necessary. Cook for 20 minutes until the potatoes and onions are soft. Drain the oil and combine the potato mixture with the eggs. Add the salt and mix well.

In a 10-inch by 2 1/2 inch deep nonstick skillet, add the olive oil and heat over medium-high heat. Pour in the potato, egg, and onion mixture. Lower the heat to medium-low and cook for 4 to 5 minutes, until the bottom of the omelet is very light brown. Using a flat ceramic plate, cover the frying pan and flip the omelet over onto the plate. Immediately slip the uncooked side back into the pan. Cook for another 4 to 5 minutes, until the other side is a very light brown.

Remove the omelet from the pan to a plate and cut into 4 wedges.

Tortilla Española

Active time: 1 hr **Start to finish:** 1 3/4 hr

1 1/2 cups oil
2 1/2 lb boiling potatoes, peeled and cut
into 1/3-inch dice
2 1/2 cups chopped onion
1 tablespoon coarse salt
10 large eggs

Heat oil in a 12-inch nonstick skillet over moderate heat until hot but not smoking and add potatoes, onion, and half of salt. Cook over moderately low heat, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are very tender but not colored, about 45 minutes. Drain vegetables in a large colander set over a bowl and cool 5 minutes. Lightly beat eggs in a large bowl. Gently stir in vegetables with 1 tablespoon oil, salt, and pepper to taste.

Return 1 tablespoon oil to skillet and add mixture, pressing potatoes flush with eggs. Cook over low heat, covered, 12 to 15 minutes, or until almost set. Turn off heat and let stand, covered, 15 minutes. Shake skillet gently to make sure tortilla is set on bottom and not sticking to skillet. Invert tortilla onto a large flat plate and slide back into skillet, bottom side up. (Alternatively, especially if top is still loose at this point, slide tortilla onto plate first. Cover it with skillet and invert tortilla back into skillet.) Round edge with a rubber spatula and cook over low heat, covered, 15 minutes more, or until set. Slide tortilla onto a serving plate and serve warm or at room temperature.

Cooks' note:

- Tortilla keeps, covered and chilled, 2 days.

Fish Matecumbe

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 30 minutes

Inactive Prep Time: 1 hour

Cook Time: 10 minutes

Yield: 8 servings

1/2 Spanish onion, chopped
1 (8-ounce) jar capers
5 shallots, peeled and chopped
5 tomatoes, chopped
1/4 cup chopped basil leaves
1/2 tablespoon salt
1/2 tablespoon ground black pepper
2 lemons, juiced
1 cup olive oil
8 individual fish fillets of your choice
Salt and pepper

Serving suggestion: rice

To a medium bowl, add all ingredients except fish and stir to thoroughly combine. Refrigerate until ready to use; it is best to let flavors blend for at least 1 hour in the refrigerator.

Preheat the broiler and position the oven rack so that it is at least 4 inches from the broiler, but no more than 6 inches.

Place fish fillets on a baking sheet and then season fish with salt and pepper. Place under the broiler and cook until done on 1 side. Watch carefully, as it may only take a couple minutes, depending on the thickness of your fish fillets and the proximity to the broiler. Remove from broiler and turn each fish over. Top each fillet with about 1/2 cup sauce. Return to the broiler and cook until fish is done on the other side and fully cooked through in the middle. If you are unsure about doneness, cut into the center of 1 fillet; it should be opaque. (You can cover up the cut with the sauce.) Serve with rice, if desired.

Desserts

Churros and Chocolate Sauce:

Churros:

8 cups vegetable or olive oil
1 cup water
1/2 cup margarine or butter
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 cup all-purpose flour
3 eggs
1/4 cup sugar
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon, optional

Hot Chocolate:

4 ounces dark chocolate
2 cups milk
1 tablespoon cornstarch
4 tablespoons sugar

Churros: 8 cups vegetable or olive oil 1 cup water 1/2 cup margarine or butter 1/4 teaspoon salt 1 cup all-purpose flour 3 eggs 1/4 cup sugar 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon, optional

Hot Chocolate: 4 ounces dark chocolate 2 cups milk 1 tablespoon cornstarch 4 tablespoons sugar

Heat the oil in a deep frying pan to 360 degrees F.

To make the churro dough, heat the water, margarine, and salt to a rolling boil in a 3-quart saucepan. Add the flour and stir vigorously over low heat until mixture forms a ball, approximately 1 minute and remove from heat. Beat eggs until smooth and add to the saucepan while stirring the mixture.

Spoon the mixture into a piping bag with a star tip. Squeeze 4-inch strips of dough into the hot oil. Fry 3 or 4 strips at a time until golden brown, turning once, about 2 minutes on each side. Drain on paper towels. Mix the sugar and cinnamon in a bowl and roll the churros in the sugar mixture. Set aside until ready to serve.

To prepare the hot chocolate for dipping, place the chocolate and half the milk in a saucepan over very low heat and cook, stirring, until the chocolate has melted. Dissolve the cornstarch in the remaining milk and whisk into the chocolate with the sugar. Cook on low heat, whisking constantly until the chocolate thickens, approximately 5 minutes. Remove and whisk until smooth. Pour chocolate into cups and serve with churros.

This recipe was provided by professional chefs and has been scaled down from a bulk recipe provided by a restaurant. The FN chefs have not tested this recipe, in the proportions indicated, and therefore, we cannot make any representation as to the results.

Flan con Caramelo

Difficulty: Medium

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Inactive Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour 25 minutes

Yield: 8 servings

Custard :

2 (12-ounce) cans evaporated milk

1 (14-ounce) cans condensed milk

1/4 cup white shredded Colombian cheese, queso blanco

7 eggs

Syrup:

1 cup sugar

1/2 cup water

1 cinnamon stick

Mix all custard ingredients in the blender.

Mix sugar and water in pan until dissolved. Add cinnamon stick and cook over medium heat until light caramel color, about 10 minutes. Pour about 4 Tbs. of syrup into an 8 by 8 inch pan to coat the bottom evenly.

Cool for a few minutes till hardened. Add custard mixture from blender. Put the pan in a larger pan that contains water so as to cook bain marie or double boiler style.

Bake in a preheated 350 degree oven for 1 hour and 15 minutes, or when middle of custard moves slightly when jiggled. Let cool for 15 minutes, or re-feridgeate if desired. When ready to serve, loosen the sides with a knife and invert pan onto platter. Slice and serve with reserved, re-warmed syrup and whipped cream if desired.

Bunuelos

Difficulty: Easy

Yield: 6 servings

Syrup:

3 cups water

1 1/2 cups dark brown sugar, packed

1 1/2 teaspoon anise seeds

Dough:

1 cup water

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon anise seeds

3 tablespoons lard or vegetable shortening

3/4 cup all-purpose flour, sifted

2 large eggs

Pinch of baking powder

Peanut oil (fortifying)

In a medium saucepan, combine the water, brown sugar, and anise seeds. Over medium heat, stir the mixture until the sugar has dissolved, then increase the heat and bring the liquid to a boil. Regulate the heat so that the

mixture is simmering, then cook for about 20 minutes, until it has reduced to about 1 1/4 cups. Set the syrup aside to cool.

In a medium saucepan over medium-high heat, combine the water, salt, anise seeds, and lard and bring to a boil. When the lard has melted and the liquid is boiling, remove from the heat and stir in the flour all at once. Return to the heat and continue stirring for a minute or 2 until the mixture pulls away from the sides of the pan. Again remove from the heat and add the eggs, beating well after each addition. The dough should be very soft and only just hold its shape. Lastly, mix the baking powder into the dough. In a large heavy skillet, heat about 1/2 inch of oil until it is smoking. Flour your hands well and break off a piece of dough. Roll it into a ball about 1 1/2-inches in diameter. Place the ball on your fingers and flatten to a cake about 3/4-inch thick. With your finger, push a large hole into the center of the dough. Make 3 more bunuelos and cook them for 2 to 3 minutes, turning over when one side is golden. While the first batch of bunuelos is frying, make 4 more and repeat until they are all cooked. You should have about 12 small bunuelos. Drain on paper towels until you have finished cooking them, then place 2 bunuelos in each of 6 warm bowls and drizzle the syrup over them.

Flan Especial

Difficulty: Easy

Yield: 16 to 20 servings

1 1/2 cups sugar

2 cans condensed milk

Equal amount fresh milk (pour into empty condensed milk can to measure)

8 eggs

1 teaspoon vanilla

2 teaspoons almond extract

1/4 teaspoon salt

6 to 8 oranges, peeled and cut into sections

3 to 4 pints strawberries, stems left on, if desired

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees.

To make the caramel, heat the sugar in a medium sized skillet over medium heat. When the sugar begins to melt, reduce the heat to low and continue cooking until the sugar has melted and browned. Spoon or pour the caramel over the bottom of a 3 quart oval baking dish and tilt the dish so that caramel spreads evenly around the sides. The caramel hardens as it cools, so work quickly. In a bowl whip the eggs gently until smooth and then add the condensed milk, fresh milk, vanilla, almond extract, salt and Amaretto, and whisk until smooth. Strain the mixture through a sieve in the caramel-coated baking dish. Set the mold in a larger pan of warm water. The water must reach half the depth of the mold. Cover the flan loosely with foil to prevent it from overbrowning.

Bake for 1 1/2 hours until the center feels just firm when pressed. Remove from the water bath and allow to cool. Chill in the refrigerator until serving.

Unmold by placing a large decorative platter over the mold, and using both hands, flip the mold over onto the platter. Remove the mold and decorate the flan with orange sections and strawberries.

Cream Cheese Flan

Difficulty: **Medium**

Prep Time: **20 minutes**

Inactive Prep Time: **3 hours 5 minutes**

Cook Time: **1 hour 50 minutes**

Yield: **6 to 8 servings**

1 1/2 cups sugar, divided
7 egg yolks
1 (14-ounce) can sweetened condensed milk
1 (12-ounce) can evaporated milk
3/4 cup milk
1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1/8 teaspoon salt
4 egg whites
1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese
Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Cook 1 cup sugar in a medium-size saucepan over medium heat, and cook, stirring constantly, 5 minutes or until sugar melts and turns a light golden brown. Quickly pour hot caramelized sugar into a 2-quart flan dish. Using oven mitts, tilt dish to evenly coat bottom and sides. Let stand 5 minutes. Sugar will harden.

Whisk together egg yolks and next 5 ingredients in a large bowl.

Process egg whites, cream cheese, and remaining 1/2 cup sugar in blender until smooth. Stir egg white mixture into egg yolk mixture. Pour mixture through a wire-mesh strainer into a large bowl; pour custard over caramelized sugar.

Place dish in a large shallow pan. Add hot water to pan to a depth of 1/3 up sides of dish.

Bake for 1 hour and 45 minutes. Remove dish from water bath; cool completely on a wire rack. Cover and chill at least 3 hours.

Run a knife around edge of flan to loosen; invert onto a serving plate.

El Flan Perfecto

1 3/4 cups whipping cream
1 cup milk (do not use low-fat or nonfat)
Pinch of salt
1/2 vanilla bean, split lengthwise

1 cup sugar
1/3 cup water

3 large eggs
2 large yolks
7 tablespoons sugar

Position rack in center of oven and preheat to 350°F. Combine cream, milk and salt in heavy medium saucepan. Scrape seeds from vanilla bean into cream mixture; add bean. Bring to simmer over medium heat. Remove from heat and let steep 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, combine 1 cup sugar and 1/3 cup water in another heavy medium saucepan. Stir over low heat until sugar dissolves. Increase heat to high and cook without stirring until syrup turns deep amber, brushing down sides of pan with wet pastry brush and swirling pan occasionally, about 10 minutes. Quickly pour caramel into six 3/4-cup ramekins or custard cups. Using oven mitts as aid, immediately tilt each ramekin to coat sides. Set ramekins into 13x9x2-inch baking pan.

Whisk eggs, egg yolks and 7 tablespoons sugar in medium bowl just until blended. Gradually and gently whisk cream mixture into egg mixture without creating lots of foam. Pour custard through small sieve into prepared ramekins, dividing evenly (mixture will fill ramekins). Pour enough hot water into baking pan to come halfway up sides of ramekins.

Bake until centers of flans are gently set, about 40 minutes. Transfer flans to rack and cool. Chill until cold, about 2 hours. Cover and chill overnight. (Can be made 2 days ahead.)

To serve, run small sharp knife around flan to loosen. Turn over onto plate. Shake gently to release flan. Carefully lift off ramekin allowing caramel syrup to run over flan. Repeat with remaining flans and serve.

Sopapillas

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 25 minutes

Inactive Prep Time: 1 minute

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Yield: about 3 dozen

1 package active dry yeast
1 1/2 cups milk
1/4 cup sugar
1/4 cup melted unsalted butter
1 large egg
4 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon cornmeal
1 teaspoon salt
Vegetable oil, for frying
Honey

In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with a dough hook, combine the yeast, milk, sugar, and butter, and mix well for 2 minutes. Add the egg, and mix well. Add 4 cups of the flour, the cornmeal and salt. Beat at low speed until all the flour is incorporated, then on medium speed until a ball of dough forms, adding more flour as needed if too sticky.

Remove from the mixer, form into a ball, and place in a lightly oiled bowl. Cover and let rise in a warm place until nearly doubled, about 1 hour.

Turn out the dough onto a lightly floured surface and pat into a thick rectangle, about 1-inch thick. Roll out until about 1/4-inch thick, and with a sharp knife, cut the dough into squares, about 2 1/2 to 3 inch-square.

Heat the fryer to 360 degrees F.

Drop the dough into the hot oil, being careful not to overcrowd the sopapillas as they are cooking, and turning them constantly to cook on all sides until golden, about 3 minutes per batch. Remove the sopapillas from the oil with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels.

Serve the sopapillas hot, drizzled with honey.

Pumpkin Flan

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 8 hours

Cook Time: 1 hour 15 minutes

Yield: 8-10 servings

1 1/3 cups sugar

6 large eggs

2 cups canned pumpkin puree

3/4 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon ground ginger

1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

1/4 teaspoon ground allspice

2 cups heavy cream

Cinnamon whipped cream as an accompaniment

In a small skillet combine 2/3 cup of the sugar with 1/4 cup water and bring the mixture to a boil, stirring and washing down any sugar crystals clinging to the sides with a brush dipped in cold water until the sugar is dissolved. Cook the syrup, swirling the skillet, until it is a deep caramel, pour it into a warm 2-quart glass loaf pan, tilting the pan to coat the bottom evenly, and let the caramel harden.

In a bowl beat the eggs with the remaining 2/3 cup sugar, beat in the pumpkin puree, salt, ginger, cinnamon, allspice, and cream, and pour the custard into the loaf pan. Set the loaf pan in a deep baking pan, add enough hot water to the baking pan to reach halfway up the sides of the loaf pan, and bake the flan in the middle of a preheated moderate oven (350 degrees F) for 1 hour and 15 minutes, or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Let the flan cool and chill it, covered, overnight. Run a thin knife around the edge of the loaf pan, invert a platter over the pan, and invert the flan onto the platter. Serve the flan, cut into slices, with the cinnamon whipped cream.

Pajas

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 30 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Yield: 20 to 24 cookies

1 cup pecan halves

1 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

2 1/2 cups sweetened shredded coconut

1/2 cup chopped dried apricots

1/2 cup chopped semisweet chocolate or chocolate morsels

7 ounces canned sweetened condensed milk

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper, or use a nonstick pan.

Toss the pecans in the melted butter to evenly coat. Spread the nuts on an ungreased baking sheet and bake 10 to 15 minutes, or until golden and aromatic. Set aside to cool, and then chop roughly. Place the chopped pecans and the remaining ingredients in a bowl and mix with a wooden spoon until evenly moistened. Spoon about 2 tablespoons of batter for each cookie onto the lined baking sheet and gently flatten to circles of about 2 1/4-inches in diameter (these cookies do not spread). Bake 10 minutes or until the coconut turns very pale golden, being careful not to overbrown. Transfer to racks to cool.

Chocolate Chipotle Brownies

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Inactive Prep Time: 1 hour

Cook Time: 40 minutes

Yield: about 24 squares

1 teaspoon plus 1 cup butter (2 sticks)

1 tablespoon plus 1 cup all-purpose flour

4 ounces unsweetened chocolate, roughly chopped

1 1/2 cups sugar

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

3/4 teaspoon ground chipotle chile pepper

4 eggs

1 cup chopped Mexican chocolate or semisweet chocolate morsels

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees F.

Grease and flour an 11 by 7-inch baking pan or dish with 1 teaspoon of the butter and 1 tablespoon of the flour. Heat the remaining butter and the unsweetened chocolate in a saucepan over low heat, stirring constantly, until melted. In a medium bowl, stir together remaining flour, sugar, cinnamon, and ground chipotle. Add sugar mixture to melted chocolate mixture, stirring to combine. Add eggs, mixing until smooth. Stir in chopped chocolate or chocolate morsels.

Pour mixture into the prepared baking pan or dish. Bake until the center is set, 35 to 40 minutes. Cool completely and then cut into small squares.

Mexican Wedding Cookies

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 40 minutes

Yield: 2 1/2 dozen cookies

1 cup unsalted butter, at room temperature

1/2 cup confectioners' sugar, plus more for coating baked cookies

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting hands

1 cup pecans, chopped into very small pieces

Preheat the oven to 275 degrees F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper.

Using an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar at low speed until it is smooth. Beat in the vanilla. At low speed gradually add the flour. Mix in the pecans with a spatula. With floured hands, take out about 1 tablespoon of dough and shape into a crescent. Continue to dust hands with flour as you make more cookies. Place onto prepared cookie sheets. Bake for 40 minutes. When cool enough to handle but still warm, roll in additional confectioners' sugar. Cool on wire racks.

Arroz con Leche y Pasas

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 40 minutes

Yield: 4 to 6 servings

4 1/2 cups milk

1 teaspoon butter

1/4 cup sugar

1/4 teaspoon cinnamon

2 cups white rice

2 egg yolks

1 orange, zested

1 lemon, zested

1/4 cup currants, reconstituted in rum for 10 minutes

Heat the milk in a sauce pan on low with the butter, sugar and cinnamon. Mix in rice and let simmer for 30 minutes. Using a whisk, whisk in egg yolks and zests. Strain the currants, discarding the rum. Add the currants to the rice and serve hot.rvings

Dulce de Leche

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour

Yield: 1 quart

4 cups milk

2 cups sugar

1 teaspoon baking soda

Vanilla extract

Scald milk in heavy bottom sauce pan. Add all other ingredients, cook on medium low until it turns into caramel, about 1 hour.

Venezuelan Corn Cakes: Cachapas

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 5 minutes

Yield: 15 pancakes

10 ears of corn

2 tablespoons sugar

1/4 cup milk

Pinch salt

Corn oil, for sauteing

1/4 cup sour cream, for garnish

Remove kernels form husk of corn using a sharp knife. Puree in a blender. Mix in the sugar, milk, and salt. Heat griddle to medium heat, lightly coat with canola oil. Spoon mixture onto hot griddle to form "pancakes" of your desired size. Cook for 2 minutes on each side. Garnish with sour cream