

“TRIP TO MEXICO”

This week's meal plan includes delicious recipes inspired by the flavors of Mexico. Without being cliché, I've created these easy-to-make and sure-to-please dishes based on traditional foods of Mexico. Pay attention to the various alternate options this week in case you don't like certain flavors or don't have the right kitchen equipment. Some of these recipes are absolute standards in our Southern California home, such as homemade tortillas and my delicious “Horchata” Smoothie. Hasta luego mis amigos!



REALLY GOOD TACOS



ROASTED ADOBO CHICKEN WITH TOMATO AND PEPPER SALAD



CHICKEN POZOLE



SHRIMP SALAD WITH MEXICAN RICE



COCONUT-LIME FLAN



TOPPINGS FOR POZOLE



“HORCHATA” SMOOTHIE

WHAT'S FOR DINNER

- Roasted Adobo Chicken with Tomato and Pepper Salad
- Chicken Pozole
- Shrimp Salad with Mexican Rice
- Leftovers Creation: Really Good Tacos

EXTRAS

- Coconut-Lime Flan
- Adobo Seasoning (if unavailable for purchase already mixed)

NOURISHING ADDITIONS

- “Horchata” Smoothie
- Homemade Tortillas

SUGGESTED EXTRAS

(Recipes and shopping list items not included.)

- When you have homemade tortillas on hand, the options for snacks and extra meals are unlimited. Quesadillas, tacos, enchiladas, sandwich wraps, homemade chips (*fried in organic lard*) and homemade quacamole, burritos, and so much more!
- Many of the fresh ingredients from Mexico can be used for non-Mexican dishes, such as a shrimp and veggie salad, fresh chicken and tomato pasta (*with brown rice or quinoa pasta!*)

PLANNING NOTES

- Hominy, white beans, brown rice and black beans need to be soaked overnight for this week's recipes: Chicken Pozole, Really Good Tacos, and Shrimp Salad with Mexican Rice. Canned options are available for these, but not recommended for health reasons.
- Make the Adobo Seasoning and Homemade Tortillas ahead of time, and make extra for other meals!
- To make the “Horchata” Smoothie, you must first freeze milk in ice-cube trays.
- The Coconut Lime Flan requires at least 4 hours to chill

ROASTED ADOBO CHICKEN WITH TOMATO AND PEPPER SALAD

Total Time: 1 hour

Ingredients:

1 roasting chicken, butterflied (*instructions below*)
 extra virgin olive oil
 salt and pepper
 1 tablespoon Adobo seasoning (*on this week's recipe list*)

For Salad

2 tomatoes, seeded and chopped
 2 bell peppers, seeded and chopped
 zest and juice of 1 lime
 2-3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
 1 teaspoon flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped
 2 teaspoons cilantro, finely chopped

Preheat oven to 425°F.

Butterfly chicken by placing breast-side down and cutting along one side of backbone with sharp kitchen shears. (You may wish to completely cut out backbone by repeating on the other side, to use for making stock, etc., but I suggest roasting the backbone and enjoying the delicious meat located on the backbone.) Cut a slit in the top of the breast bone then turn chicken breast-side up in a baking dish. Firmly press down to flatten chicken.

Drizzle chicken liberally with oil, salt and pepper, and adobo seasoning. Place in oven for 15 minutes, then reduce heat and continue to roast chicken for 45 minutes, until skin is golden brown and crispy and meat is fully cooked (juice runs clear when cut).

For salad, place ingredients in a mixing bowl and gently toss until blended. Serve with chicken.

CHICKEN POZOLE

Total Time: 3-4 hours to make stock and chicken, 12-24 hours for overnight soak of hominy and white beans, plus 45 minutes to finish soup recipe

* *Add extra water to the beginning stock of this recipe to save for other recipes. The stock of this recipe can be slow-cooked for up to 8 hours.*

Ingredients:

2-4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil and/or butter
 1 onion, chopped
 1 tablespoon adobo seasoning
 6-8 bone-in pieces of chicken (*legs are best*)
 salt and pepper
 2 tablespoons white vinegar
 1 pound hominy, soaked for 12-24 hours
 ½ pound white kidney beans/cannellini beans, soaked for 12-24 hours
 2-3 cups kale, roughly chopped
 ¼ cup cilantro, finely chopped
 1 cup cabbage, finely sliced
 ½ onion, finely sliced
 2 limes, sliced into wedges

Sauté oil or butter in a large stockpot and sauté onion for 5-8 minutes. Add adobo seasoning and chicken pieces, season liberally with salt and pepper, then add vinegar and 8-10 cups of water. (*Add 2-3 cups more water if you'd like to reserve some of the chicken stock for other recipes before continuing with recipe.*) Bring to a boil then reduce heat to simmer stock for 3-4 hours (*up to 8 hours over very low heat in a stockpot*).

*To increase nutrition and flavor of stock, you may want to use sharp kitchen shears to cut chicken bones while simmering to release marrow. This step makes it a little more difficult to extract meat for soup later, but is recommended, especially on large bones like legs.

Remove chicken from stock using a slotted spoon and separate meat from bones. Set meat aside. Add hominy, beans, and kale to stock and let simmer for 30 minutes until hominy and beans are soft. Using an immersion blender (*or removing 1-2 cups of soup and placing in a blender*), blend soup very lightly to puree only a small portion of the soup to thicken it. Stir chicken meat into soup and season, as needed, with salt and pepper.

For serving, prepare cilantro, cabbage, finely sliced onion and lime wedges for optional toppings to soup.

SHRIMP SALAD WITH MEXICAN RICE

Total Time: 45 minutes, plus overnight soaking of brown rice

**Sometimes pre-cooked organic brown rice is available in grocery stores. If the ingredients are only rice and water (and maybe salt), then this is an acceptable alternative and time saver for preparing brown rice dishes.*

Ingredients:

For Rice:

2 cups brown rice, soaked overnight in 4 cups water plus 4 tablespoons raw milk whey, yoghurt, kefir, buttermilk, or lemon juice (*optional*)
salt and pepper
¼ cup butter and/or olive oil
1 onion, chopped
1-2 tomatoes, seeded and chopped
¼ -½ cup green chilies (*optional- this can be canned or finely chopped Anaheim or Serrano chilies*)
½ cup peas

For Shrimp Salad:

1 pound raw wild shrimp
2 tablespoons butter or olive oil, plus additional oil for garnish
2 garlic cloves
salt and pepper
2 bell peppers, seeded and chopped
4 tomatoes, seeded and chopped
4 avocados, seeded and chopped (*cutting tip- see below*)
¼ cup cilantro, finely chopped, plus some for garnish
zest and juice of 1 lime, plus limes for garnish

For rice, soak brown rice overnight in 4 cups water plus 4 tablespoons raw milk whey, yoghurt, kefir, buttermilk, or lemon juice (*optional*). Place rice and liquid over heat and bring to a boil. Cover and simmer for 30-45 minutes, until rice is soft and liquid is absorbed.

Heat butter and/or oil and sauté onions for 5 minutes, until soft and translucent. Stir in tomatoes, chilies, and peas, and season with salt and pepper. Continue to sauté for 5-8 minutes, then keep warm until serving.

For shrimp, sauté garlic in butter or oil until beginning to brown, then add shrimp. Sauté for 5-7 minutes, until shrimp has turned pink and has curled. Transfer to a dish to cool. Place bell peppers, tomatoes, avocados, cilantro, lime juice and lime zest in a large mixing bowl and gently toss with salt and pepper. Roughly chop cooled shrimp and add to vegetable mixture, gently tossing to incorporate ingredients. Serve shrimp salad with rice (*optionally in avocado skins- see below*) and drizzle with a little bit of lime juice, olive oil, and finely chopped cilantro.

**To cut avocados and save the skins as a serving dish, run a sharp knife all around the lengthwise diameter of the avocado, pressing against the pit. Twist the avocado to break into two pieces. Remove the pit by gently squeezing it out or popping your knife into it and pulling it out. Carefully use your knife to cut a grid of squares into the flesh of the avocado, then spoon out cubes using a spoon or the back of your knife.*

REALLY GOOD TACOS

Total Time: 20 minutes, plus 30 minutes to make homemade tortillas.

**Cooked black beans are needed for this recipe. Soak beans overnight then boil in salted water until soft, or use store-bought canned beans if necessary.*

Ingredients:

“Homemade Tortillas”, or store-bought corn or corn-flour blend tortillas

¼ cup organic lard or butter

1 onion, chopped

1 ½ cups cooked black beans

1 ½ cups cooked chicken meat

¼- ½ cup green chilies (*optional- this can be canned or finely chopped Anaheim or Serrano chiles*)

****Optional: Leftover Tomato and Pepper Salad may be added to pan***

salt and pepper

cheddar cheese, grated

cabbage, shredded

cilantro, roughly chopped

lime, sliced into wedges

queso fresco or sour cream (*optional*)

Heat lard or butter in a large saucepan or skillet and sauté onion for 8-10 minutes until beginning to brown. Add beans, meat, chiles, and optional leftover salad, season liberally with salt and pepper, and let simmer for 10-15 minutes, stirring often and gently mashing beans to make mixture smooth and thick. Build tacos as desired with tortillas, meat and bean filling, and topped with cheese, cilantro, cabbage, freshly squeezed lime juice and queso fresco or sour cream (*optional*)

COCONUT LIME FLAN

Total Time: 1 hour, plus 4+ hours to chill

Ingredients:

Butter

¼ cup shredded coconut, unsweetened and lightly toasted in a skillet

6 eggs, separated

1 ½ cups sugar, separated

1 cup whole milk

1 cup whole coconut milk

zest of 2 limes

1 tablespoon rum (*optional*)

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Prepare a buttered 10-inch cake dish and drizzle coconut in pan, then place cake pan in a larger pan to be used for a water bath.

Beat egg yolks with sugar until pale yellow and fluffy. Whisk in sugar, milk, coconut milk, lime zest and rum (*optional*). Set mixture aside while preparing caramel. Place sugar in a small saucepan with 1 tablespoons of water- just enough to dissolve sugar when pan is shaken (*do not stir in water*). Heat sugar, swirling pan often, until sugar turns golden brown. Pour sugar into buttered cake pan over coconut. Sugar will harden in a few minutes.

Pour custard mixture over hardened sugar, then fill outer pan with enough water to come half-way up sides of cake pan. Gently place in the oven to bake for 40 minutes, until custard is set. Remove from oven and let cool, then cover with a dish towel or plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 4 hours.

To serve, gently turn flan out (*flipping upside-down*) onto a large serving plan.

“HORCHATA” SMOOTHIE

Total Time: 5 minutes, plus 1+ hours to freeze milk
This is not really a Horchata drink, traditionally made with starchy rice, but it is a delicious slushy drink that tastes just like Horchata, or maybe more like cinnamon-vanilla ice cream.

Ingredients:

12 milk cubes, made by freezing milk in an ice cube tray
2 cups milk
2-4 raw egg yolks (*no egg white*)
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 teaspoons cinnamon
¼ cup maple syrup

Puree ingredients in a blender until smooth. Top with a sprinkling of cinnamon, and enjoy!

ADOBO SEASONING

This seasoning is a basic Latin flavor mixture that be stored in an airtight container for up to 6 months. Pre-mixed adobo is often available in stores, but you can also make your own with this recipe.

Ingredients:

¼ cup garlic powder
2 tablespoons onion powder
2 tablespoons black pepper
2 tablespoons dried oregano
2 tablespoons cumin
¼ teaspoon cayenne red pepper

Mix ingredients well and store in an airtight container for up to 6 months, or use immediately for recipes.

HOMEMADE TORTILLAS

A tortilla maker is used for this recipe, but you may just roll dough as thinly as possible into a disk and bake on a flat pan over the stove for 1-3 minutes per side. You may also have a simple tortilla press to flatten dough, then bake in a pan on the stove.

Makes 10-12 tortillas

Ingredients:

1/3 cup masa harina
1 2/3 cup all purpose or sprouted all purpose flour
2 tablespoons
3 tablespoons lard
¾ tablespoon salt
¾ cup very warm water

Place all ingredients except water in a food processor and pulse until a coarse crumb forms. Slowly add water while pulsing until a ball of dough forms. Transfer dough to a floured surface and roll into a 3-inch round log.

Heat tortilla press. Slice 1-inch disks from roll of dough. Use hands to press and flatten disk and cook with tortilla press according to manufacturer's instructions (*or on a skillet- see note above*). Serve tortillas immediately, or store in an airtight container for a few days.