



Media Advisory

Christmas Isn't Christmas Without Tamales -- And Tamales Aren't Tamales Without Lard, Coast Packing Says

West's Leading Supplier of Animal Fat Shortenings Offers Tasty Holiday Recipes for Preparing a Traditional Favorite

VERNON, Calif. (Dec. 13, 2016) – Holiday time is tamale time, and [Coast Packing Company](#) - the leading supplier of animal fat shortenings in the Western U.S. -- is offering recipes for this popular dish that are sure to make a lard lover of anyone passing through the kitchen.

“Preparing and serving tamales at Christmas time is a wonderful family tradition,” said Eric R. Gustafson, CEO of the 95-year-old company and an advocate of healthy animal fats in the American diet. “Lard is making a comeback in so many foods, but where tamales are concerned, it’s never left. Lard is one of those minimally processed animal fats that makes food taste better and, unlike industrially-produced partially hydrogenated fats, promotes health.”

Coast wishes everyone a very happy holiday season and extends its thanks to Maria Salazar ([www.deliciousdays.com](#)), SeriousEats.com -- and *El Aviso Magazine* contributing writer Kathy Jurado, for a bonus, family-tested way to make tortillas. The recipes follow:

Grandma’s Salazar’s Tamales

<http://www.deliciousdays.com/archives/2007/03/27/grandma-salazars-tamales/>

Required time: 2 days

Ingredients

- 3 pounds pork roast
- 3 pounds beef roast
- 2 large onions
- 4 cloves garlic
- 1/3 to ½ cup chili powder or more (depends on heat of chili powder and spice tolerance of tamale eaters)
- Salt

- Pepper
- Cumin
- 8 cups masa harina
- 2 cups lard
- Corn husks (2-3 packages for full recipe)

Directions: Day 1:

- Cook meat (pork or beef, or both in separate pots) in a large pot of water (or in a slow-cooker filled with water) with an onion, 2 garlic cloves, 1 teaspoon of chili powder, salt and pepper. Cook for the day, 4 hours minimum. The more broth you can generate from the meat, the better.
- After the meat is cooked (so that it falls apart and shreds easily), remove from pot, set aside to cool, and puree the onion and garlic with the broth. Season broth mixture to taste with chili powder and salt.
- Shred meat finely with two forks (you can even chop it after shredding), and store covered in refrigerator separately from broth.
- Soak corn husks in water overnight.

Directions: Day 2:

- Rinse and clean corn husks thoroughly. Drain well and pat dry.
- Season shredded meat with chili powder, salt, and cumin (optional) to taste. As you season the meat, add a small amount of broth to moisten meat, but it should not be runny.
- For every 2 cups of masa harina (meal), add ½ cup of shortening or lard, 1tsp. of salt, and enough chili powder to make a pink dough. Add broth mixture a little at a time to masa and mix with your hands to get a smooth, spreadable consistency. If you run out of broth, you can use hot water, but you will wish you had plenty of broth. (If you use about 6 pounds of meat, you will likely use about 8 cups of masa harina in total.)
- Assemble the tamales: spread masa about 1/8 inch thick on corn husk with fingers, leaving about ½ inch border along the sides and 2 inch border along the top and bottom of husk. Use about 2 Tbsp. of shredded meat to fill the tamale, like a cigar. Fold sides until they just overlap, fold narrow end under, and place tamale folded side down. Grandma Salazar tears thin strips of the corn husks to tie a “little belt” around each tamale to keep it secure. Although this isn’t necessary, it does look the nicest and makes each tamale a little gift to be opened.
- To cook, steam fresh tamales for 15 minutes or until masa is no longer sticky.
- Store in freezer. Steam frozen tamales for 20 minutes. (This is a real treat a few days or a few weeks later. After you’ve recovered, it’s almost like someone else made them for you).

A few tips:

- The key to good tamales is to spread the masa thinly on the husk.
- The more the merrier when it comes to making tamales. They are certainly labor-intensive, but oh, so rewarding.
- Plan two days for the project, and make sure you (or your neighbors) have enough freezer space to preserve the abundance.

- If you are a pro, serve tamales like my Grandma or my mom does with beef or chicken enchiladas, refried pinto beans or tostadas, and some Spanish rice.
- We like to mix the beef and pork for the tamales, but if you're a purist, feel free to go with one or the other.

Basic Mexican Tamale Dough Recipe

<http://www.serious-eats.com/recipes/2015/05/basic-mexican-tamale-dough-recipe.html>

This master dough recipe for Mexican tamales starts with either fresh *masa* -- the nixtamalized corn dough used to make tamales and tortillas -- from a tortilleria or *masa harina*, nixtamalized corn flour that's reconstituted with water or stock. Then, lard, baking powder, and chicken stock are beaten into it to create a light, tender, and flavorful tamale that can be stuffed with your favorite filling, like [green chili and pork](#), [rajas and queso](#), or [red chili with chicken](#). You'll want to have an electric mixer handy. Note that:

- Back lard adds a mild porky flavor; pork back lard is preferable for its mild pork flavor, although more neutral tasting leaf lard can be substituted
- Beating the dough until light and airy creates the most tender tamale
- Resting the masa for an hour allows for better hydration and lighter tamales

Ingredients

- 2 pounds fresh masa for tamales from a tortilleria or 3 cups of masa harina para tamales mixed with 2 cups water or chicken stock and left to rest, covered, for 15 minutes
- 8 ounces lard, preferably back lard
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 cup [homemade chicken stock](#) or store-bought low-sodium broth, plus more as needed

Directions

- Combine lard, salt, and baking powder and, using an electric mixer, beat at medium-high speed until well whipped, about 1 minute.
- Add one-fourth of the masa at a time to the lard, beating between additions until thoroughly incorporated. Add chicken stock and continue beating until dough is light and has a soft and spreadable hummus-like texture. Cover masa with plastic and refrigerate for 1 hour.
- Remove masa from refrigerator and re-whip, adding additional chicken stock 1 tablespoon at a time, if necessary, to return it to original hummus-like texture. Use tamale dough in any tamale recipe.

Mom's Homemade Tortillas

Kathy Jurado, El Aviso Magazine

Ingredients

4 1/2 cups white flour (set aside 1/2 cup flour for rolling out the masa)
3/4 cup lard

1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup of water
Medium or large griddle or cast iron frying pan
Rolling pin

Directions

Some people use a bread mixer, but my mother (and all her daughters) uses hands and muscles. Kneading the masa is great for your arms and stomach muscles.

First, blend all the dry ingredients together in a large bowl (flour - 4 cups only, salt, baking powder). Add lard and mix into the mixed dry ingredients; the mixture should be crumbly when it is mixed together thoroughly. Add the water; start with half the water and mix it into the lard and flour mix. The masa should start to stick together into a firm dough. Add water a little at a time to make sure it mixes well, which will enable you to control the texture. (Too much water can make the masa unusable to roll out. If your masa is too sticky, add flour for firmness.)

Knead your masa for 5 to 10 minutes to make sure all ingredients are blended together, until the masa is a firm ball of dough. Put the prepared masa into a plastic bag, making sure to squeeze out any excess air. Let sit for 10 minutes.

Preheat the griddle or cast iron pan to cook your fresh tortillas. Set heat on medium. The griddle or pan needs to be hot to cook the tortillas properly.

Remove the masa from the plastic bag and shape into medium-size balls; set them aside. The number of masa balls will vary, but usually you can make about 15. Put the remainder of the flour in a separate dish. You will use this to flour your counter and roll your masa ball.

Take a masa ball and, using your fingers, knead it into a flat patty. Roll it in the flour dish and place it on your counter. Place the rolling pin in the middle of the flattened masa ball and roll outwards. Turn the masa ball over each time you roll it. This will keep the masa from sticking to your rolling surface. The tortilla should be thin when it is completely rolled out. Remove the tortilla from your rolling counter and hold it in the palm of your hand, then gently lay it on the heated griddle or pan.

Watch the tortilla rise; as soon as it does, use a fork or spatula to flip the tortilla. (Make sure to adjust the heat under your griddle so the tortilla doesn't cook too fast.) The tortilla should rise when both sides are cooked. Turn the tortilla over a couple of times to make sure it is thoroughly cooked. The tortilla should not have any raw dough; it will have brown spots from cooking on the heated pan, and should be light and airy.

Remove the cooked tortilla from the heated pan and set it on a warming dish or other, to keep it soft. My mother would keep the cooked tortillas between two clean kitchen towels. Warning: If your tortilla rises while cooking, do not use your hand to squash it down. It is

filled with hot steam and could cause a serious burn. It should deflate by itself.

Now that you have a stack of fresh homemade tortillas, pull out the butter, or pour a bowl of fresh beans, rice or make a delicious and hot burrito. You can put anything in your tortilla and it is going to be delicious! Enjoy!

About Coast Packing Company

Coast Packing Company (www.coastpacking.com), a closely held corporation, is the number one supplier of animal fat shortenings – particularly lard and beef tallow -- in the Western United States. The company sells to major manufacturers, distributors, retailers, smaller food service operations and leading bakeries. The company participates actively in various ethnic markets – from Hispanic retail chains, with its VIVA brand, to various Asian specialty markets. Based in Vernon, Calif., Coast Packing Company is regional, national and, increasingly, global. In some cases, supplier relationships are multigenerational, extending back 50 years and more. Coast is a founding member of the Healthy Fats Coalition (<http://www.healthyfatscoalition.org/>).

For more information about Coast Packing Company, visit: www.coastpacking.com. Follow us via social media on Facebook at www.facebook.com/coastpackingco, Twitter [@coastpackingco](https://twitter.com/coastpackingco) and Pinterest www.pinterest.com/coastpackingco.

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