quick and easy flavors of

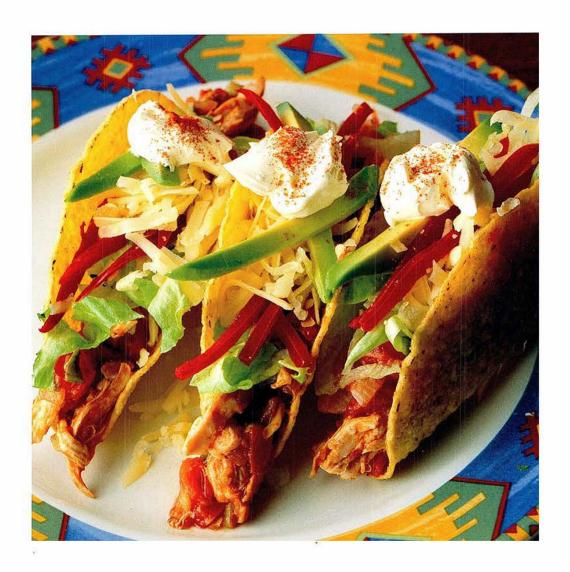
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quick and easy flavors of

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Styling DONNA HAY Photography WILLIAM MEPPEM



Introduction

When the conquistadors arrived in Mexico in the 16th century they discovered beans, chillies, corn, squash, tomatoes, avocados, peanuts, potatoes and turkey – these foods were the basis of the traditional Aztec diet. The Spanish introduced the Mexican people to wheat, beef, chicken and dairy products and it is a combination of both these old and new world foods which form the basis of what, today, we think of as Mexican food.

This book puts the authenic flavours of Mexico within easy reach of the home cook, but adapts the traditional methods and ingredients to suit today's lifestyle. Bearing this in mind, most of the recipes use less fat and the techniques are more suited to the modern way of cooking and eating.



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ABOUT THIS BOOK

THE PANTRY SHELF

Unless otherwise stated, the following ingredients used in this book are:

Cream Double, suitable for whipping Flour White flour, plain or standard

Sugar White sugar

WHAT'S IN A TABLESPOON? AUSTRALIA

1 tablespoon = 20 mL or 4 teaspoons

NEW ZEALAND

1 tablespoon = 15 mL or 3 teaspoons UNITED KINGDOM

1 tablespoon = 15 mL or 3 teaspoons The recipes in this book were tested in Australia where a 20 mL tablespoon is standard. The tablespoon in the New Zealand and the United Kingdom sets of measuring spoons is 15 mL. For recipes using baking powder, gelatine, bicarbonate of soda, small quantities of flour and cornflour, simply add another teaspoon for each tablespoon specified.

CANNED FOODS

Can sizes vary between countries and manufacturers. You may find the quantities in this book are slightly different to what is available. Purchase and use the can size nearest to the suggested size in the recipe.

MICROWAVE IT

Where microwave instructions occur in this book, a microwave oven with an output power of 850 watts (IEC705 -1988) or 750 watts (AS2895 - 1986) was used. The output power of most domestic microwaves ranges between 600 and 900 watts (IEC705 - 1988) or 500 and 800 watts (AS2895 - 1986), so it may be necessary to vary cooking times slightly depending on the output power of your microwave.

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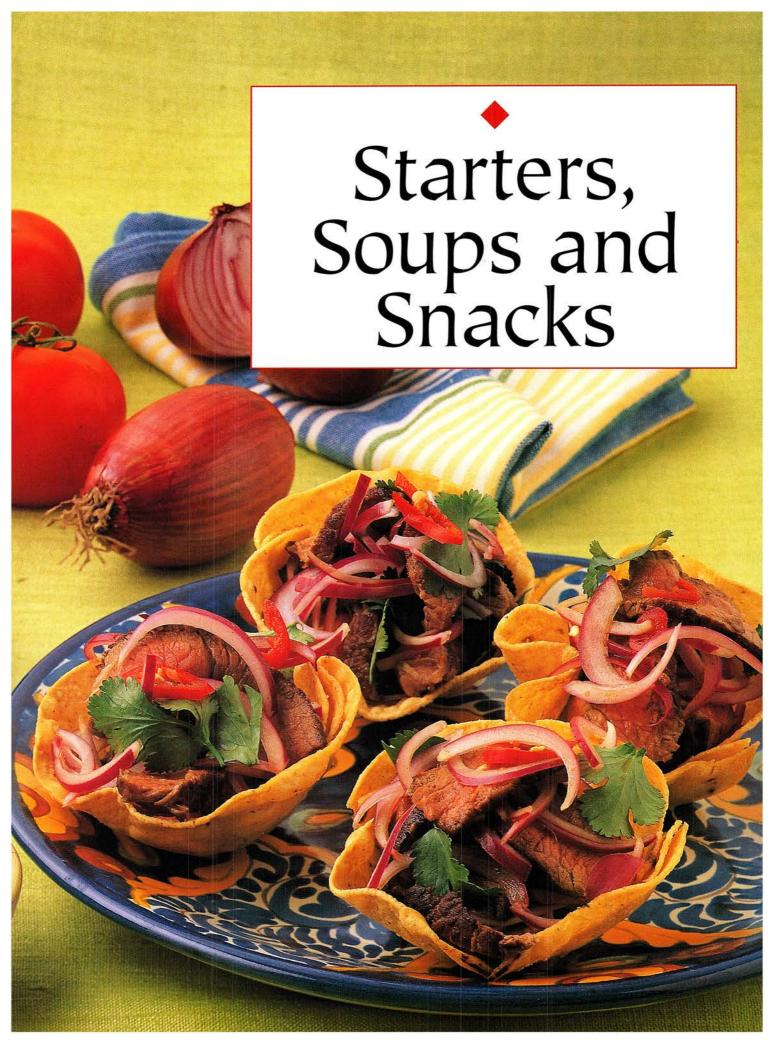
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Previous pages: Beef Tostada Cups, New Mexico Enchiladas

Oven temperature 180°C, 350°F, Gas 4

Corn tortillas are the traditional bread of the Aztec, Maya and other Mexican-Indians. The most readily available tortillas outside of Central and South America are made from yellow or blue cornmeal or wheat flour.

New Mexico Enchiladas

6 corn or flour tortillas

1/3 cup/90 mL/3 fl oz chilli sauce
45 g/11/2 oz grated tasty cheese
(mature Cheddar)

CHEESE AND SPINACH FILLING

- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
 1 onion, chopped
 2 fresh green or red chillies, chopped
 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
 1/2 bunch/250 g/8 oz silverbeet or
 English spinach, leaves shredded
 3 tomatoes, peeled and chopped
 2 potatoes, cooked and chopped
 155 g/5 oz feta cheese, crumbled
 125 g/4 oz grated tasty cheese
 (mature Cheddar)
- 1 To make filling, heat oil in a nonstick frying pan over a medium heat, add onion, chillies and cumin seeds and cook, stirring, for 4 minutes or until onion is golden and soft. Add silverbeet or spinach, tomatoes and potatoes and cook for 4 minutes or until silverbeet or spinach wilts and mixture is heated through. Stir in feta cheese and 125 g/4 oz of the tasty cheese (mature Cheddar).
- 2 Warm tortillas in a dry frying pan over a medium heat for 20-30 seconds or until heated through. Remove from pan, spread with a little chilli sauce and place in a baking dish. Top with some of the filling then another tortilla. Repeat layers to use all the filling and tortillas. Scatter tortilla stack with remaining tasty cheese (mature Cheddar) and bake for 20 minutes or until cheese melts and filling is heated. To serve, cut into wedges.

Serves 4



BEEF TOSTADA CUPS

vegetable oil for deep-frying 8 corn tortillas

BEEF FILLING

2 teaspoons mild chilli powder
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1/4 cup/60 mL/2 fl oz lime juice
500 g/1 lb rump steak, trimmed of
visible fat
2 red onions, sliced
1/2 bunch coriander

- 1 Heat oil in a saucepan until a cube of bread dropped in browns in 50 seconds. Deep-fry tortillas, one at a time pressed between two metal ladles, for 1 minute or until crisp and golden. Drain on absorbent kitchen paper.
- 2 To make filling, place chilli powder, cumin and lime juice in a glass or ceramic dish and mix to combine. Add steak, turn to coat and marinate for 5 minutes. Drain steak and cook on a preheated barbecue or under a grill for 2-3 minutes each side or until cooked to your liking. Rest steak for 2 minutes, then cut into strips and place in a bowl. Add onions and coriander leaves and toss to combine.
- 3 To serve, divide filling between tostada cups and serve immediately.

Makes 8

Oysters with Coriander Salsa

Serve these tasty snacks with salsas of your choice and lime wedges.

OYSTERS WITH CORIANDER SALSA

24 oysters in half shell crushed ice

LIME AND CORIANDER SALSA

- 3 small ripe tomatoes, diced
 3 jalapeño chillies, chopped
 4 tablespoons chopped fresh coriander
 3 cloves garlic, crushed
 1/4 cup/60 mL/2 fl oz lime juice
 freshly ground black pepper
- 1 To make salsa, place tomatoes, chillies, coriander, garlic, lime juice and black pepper to taste in a bowl and mix to combine. Cover and chill.
- 2 Just prior to serving, arrange oysters on a serving platter lined with ice, then top each oyster with a generous spoonful of salsa.

Great served with iced tequila shots spiked with Tabasco sauce or hot fresh red chillies.

Makes 24



FETA-STUFFED ANCHO CHILLIES

Oven temperature 200°C, 400°F, Gas 6

The ancho chilli is the favourite dried chilli of Mexican cooks. It is a mild to medium chilli and is the dried form of the poblano chilli. See Glossary on page 79 for more information. For an attractive presentation, decorate this dish with a swirl of sour cream and accompany with lime wedges.

6 ancho chillies

FETA AND GOAT'S CHEESE FILLING

500 g/1 lb soft feta cheese, crumbled
185 g/6 oz goat's cheese
4 tablespoons chopped fresh coriander
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1/3 cup/90 mL/3 fl oz lemon juice

TWO-TOMATO SALSA

250 g/8 oz cherry tomatoes, halved 250 g/8 oz yellow pear tomatoes, halved 1/2 red onion, sliced 1 tablespoon shredded fresh mint crushed black peppercorns

- 1 Place chillies in a bowl, pour over hot water to cover and soak for 20 minutes or until soft. Drain chillies and discard water. Make a slit in each chilli and carefully remove seeds and membranes.
- 2 To make filling, place feta and goat's cheeses, coriander, cumin and lemon juice in a bowl and mix to combine. Carefully spoon filling into chillies and place in a baking dish. Pour a little water into baking dish, cover and bake for 20 minutes or until heated through.
- 3 To make salsa, place tomatoes, onion, mint and black pepper to taste in bowl and toss to combine. To serve, divide salsa between serving plates and top with a chilli.

Serves 6



FRESH CORN TAMALES

28 dried corn husks
5 cups/750 g/1¹/2 lb fresh, frozen or
canned sweet corn kernels

1/4 cup/60 mL/2 fl oz milk
2 tablespoons sugar
30 g/1 oz butter, softened

- 1 Place corn husks in a bowl, pour over warm water to cover and soak for 30 minutes.
- 2 Place half the sweet corn kernels in a food processor or blender and with machine running, slowly add enough milk to make a mixture that has the

- consistency of cottage cheese. Transfer mixture to a bowl and repeat with remaining corn kernels and milk. Stir sugar and butter into corn mixture.
- 3 Drain corn husks and pat dry with absorbent kitchen paper. Place 1 heaped tablespoon of corn mixture in the centre of each husk, fold husks around filling to enclose, then tie to secure.
- 4 Place tamales in a steamer over boiling water and steam for 50 minutes or until tamales are firm to touch. Stand for 15 minutes before serving.

Makes 28

Fresh Corn Tamales, Limeade (page 75), Feta-stuffed Ancho Chillies

Allowing the tamales to stand before serving ensures that the filling does not stick to the husks. Serve with Salsa Mexicana (page 76) and/or crème fraîche.



STUFFED POBLANO CHILLIES

Oven temperature 180°C, 350°F, Gas 4

12 poblano chillies

BEEF AND BEAN FILLING

2 teaspoons vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped
315 g/10 oz beef mince
185 g/6 oz cooked or canned pinto
beans, rinsed and drained
pinch cayenne pepper
1/2 cup/125 mL/4 fl oz tomato purée

TOMATILLO SAUCE

2 x 315 g/10 oz canned tomatillos, drained and finely chopped 1 onion, chopped 3 tablespoons chopped fresh coriander 1/2 cup/125 mL/4 fl oz vegetable stock

- 1 Place chillies in a hot frying pan or comal and cook until skins are blistered and charred. Place in a plastic food bag and stand for 10 minutes or until cool enough to handle. Carefully remove skins from chillies and cut a slit in the side of each one. Carefully remove seeds and membranes and set aside.
- 2 To make filling, heat oil in a frying pan over a medium heat, add onion and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes or until soft. Add beef and cook, stirring, for 3-4 minutes or until brown. Stir in beans, cayenne pepper and tomato purée, bring to simmering and simmer for 5 minutes or until mixture reduces and thickens. Spoon filling into chillies and place in a baking dish.
- 3 To make sauce, place tomatillos, onion, coriander and stock in a saucepan, bring to simmering and simmer for 5 minutes or until sauce reduces and thickens. Pour sauce over chillies and bake for 25 minutes or until chillies are heated through.

Makes 12

This variation of a Mexican favourite, chilies rellenos, bakes rather than fries the stuffed chillies, making it a healthier and easier option for the home cook. If poblano chillies are unavailable choose another mild chilli such as New Mexico or one of the wax or banana chillies.



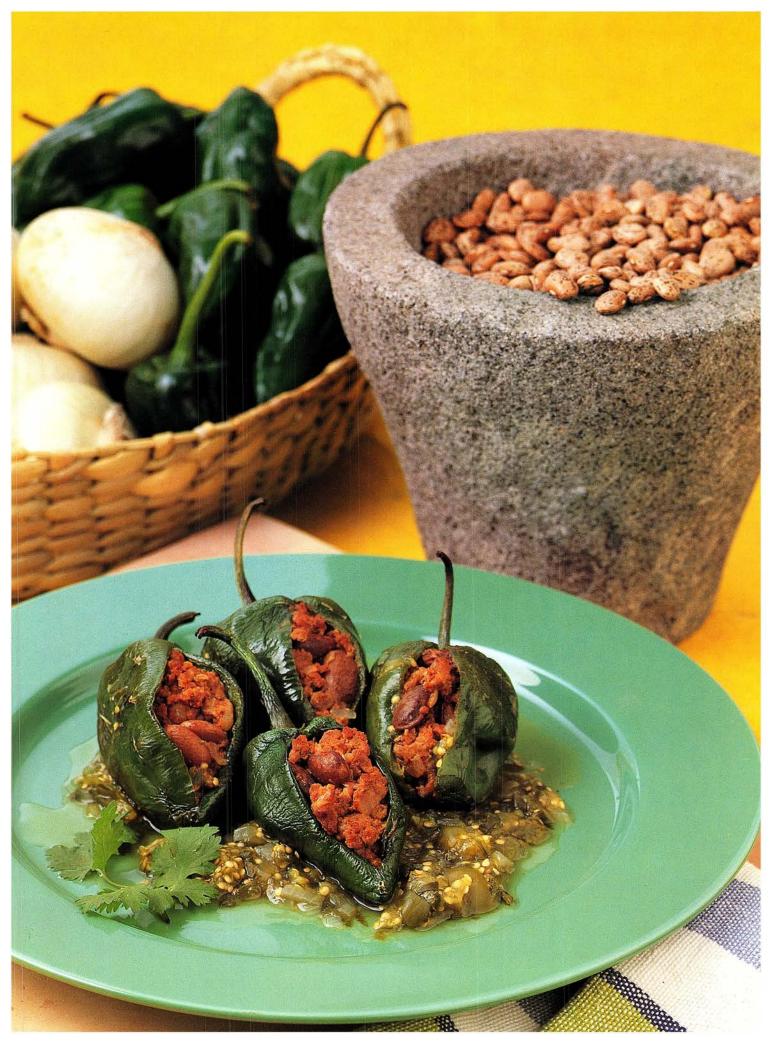
Place chillies a hot frying pan or comal and cook until skins are blistered and charred.



Spoon filling into chillies and place in a baking dish.



Pour sauce over chillies and bake for 25 minutes or until heated through.



PORK AND MARJORAM TAQUITOS

12 corn tortillas, warmed vegetable oil for shallow-frying

PORK AND MARJORAM FILLING

1 teaspoon vegetable oil

1 onion, chopped

2 fresh red chillies, chopped

2 cloves garlic, crushed

2 teaspoons ground cumin

500 g/1 lb pork mince

3 tablespoons chopped fresh marjoram

- 1 To make filling, heat oil in a frying pan over a high heat, add onion, chillies, garlic and cumin and cook, stirring, for 3 minutes or until onion and chillies are soft. Add pork and cook, stirring, for 3-4 minutes or until brown. Remove pan from heat, stir in marjoram and cool slightly.
- 2 Place 1 tablespoon of filling along the centre of each tortilla, then roll up and secure with wooden toothpicks or cocktail sticks.
- 3 Heat 1 cm/1/2 in oil in a frying pan until a cube of bread dropped in browns in 50 seconds. Cook taquitos, a few at a time, for 1-2 minutes or until crisp. Drain on absorbent kitchen paper.

Warming tortillas before folding or rolling makes them pliable and prevents breaking or cracking.

To warm tortillas, place in a dry frying pan over a medium heat for 20-30 seconds each side. Alternatively, wrap the tortillas in aluminium foil and heat in a low oven or place in a covered container and heat in the microwave. Serve taquitos with Salsa Verde (page 77).

Makes 12





RED CHICKEN ENCHILADAS

8 corn tortillas, warmed Remove skins from chillies and 250 g/8 oz cooked chicken, shredded 90 g/3 oz feta cheese, crumbled

RED CHILLI SAUCE

7 pasilla chillies, soaked in warm water until soft 3 tomatoes 1/2 onion, peeled 1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano 1 cup/250 mL/8 fl oz chicken stock

1 To make sauce, hold chillies and tomatoes over a gas flame or place under a grill until skins are blistered and charred. Place chillies and tomatoes in a plastic food bag and stand for 10 minutes or until cool enough to handle. Roast onion in the same way until golden.

tomatoes and roughly chop. Place chillies, tomatoes and onion in a food processor or blender and process to make a purée.

- 2 Transfer purée in a saucepan, stir in oregano and stock, bring to simmering and simmer for 8-10 minutes or until sauce reduces and thickens.
- 3 To serve, spread each tortilla with a little sauce, then top with a little chicken and feta cheese. Roll up and place enchiladas side by side in an ovenproof dish. Spoon over remaining sauce, scatter with remaining feta cheese and bake for 15 minutes or until heated through.

Makes 8

Above: Red Chicken Enchiladas Left: Pork and Marioram Taquitos served with Salsa Verde (page 77)

Oven temperature 180°C, 350°F, Gas 4

The best way to cook chicken for shredding is to poach it in a broth until tender. Allow chicken to cool in broth, Remove skin and bones, then shred chicken meat into small pieces. If cooking a whole chicken cut it into quarters and allow about 25 minutes cooking time.

CHICKEN TORTILLAS

2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 teaspoon ground cumin

1/2 teaspoon chilli powder

1/3 cup/90 mL/3 fl oz lime juice
1 tablespoon tequila
4 boneless chicken breast fillets
12 corn tortillas
1 red onion, sliced

1/2 bunch fresh coriander
Guacamole (page 76)

Roasted Chilli Salsa (page 76)

1/2 cup/125 g/4 oz sour cream
(optional)

- 1 Place garlic, cumin, chilli powder, lime juice and tequila in a bowl and mix to combine. Add chicken, turn to coat, then cover and marinate for 30 minutes.
- 2 Drain chicken and cook on a preheated hot barbecue or char-grill or in a frying pan for 3-4 minutes each side or until golden and cooked through. Cut chicken into slices.
- 3 Warm tortillas in a dry frying pan over a medium heat for 20-30 seconds each side or until heated through.
- 4 To serve, top each tortilla with chicken, onion and coriander leaves, fold or roll and accompany with bowls of Guacamole, salsa-and sour cream, if using.

Makes 12



CHEESE AND BEAN QUESADILLAS

155 g/5 oz cooked or canned black or black-eyed beans, drained 60 g/2 oz grated mozzarella cheese 60 g/2 oz grated tasty cheese (mature Cheddar) 2 tablespoons hot chilli sauce 12 flour tortillas, warmed 1 egg white vegetable oil

- 1 Place beans, mozzarella cheese, tasty cheese (mature Cheddar) and chilli sauce in a bowl and mix to combine.
- 2 Place 2 tablespoons of mixture on one-half of each tortilla. Brush edges with egg white and fold to enclose filling. Press edges together firmly to seal.
- 3 Brush quesadillas with a little oil and cook in a preheated dry frying pan over a medium heat for 2 minutes each side or until puffed and golden.

Makes 12

vianes 12

Serve with Roasted Chilli Salsa or Salsa Mexicana (page 76).

Beef, pork and lamb steaks

are also delicious prepared in this way. Adjust the

cooking times to suit the

meat you are using and according to personal taste.

Cheese and Bean Quesadillas, Chicken Tortillas



CHICKEN AND CHILLI TAMALES

30 dried corn husks

TAMALE DOUGH

125 g/4 oz butter, softened 750 g/1¹/2 lb fresh masa 2 tablespoons baking powder ³/4 cup/185 mL/6 fl oz chicken stock

CHICKEN AND GREEN CHILLI FILLING

1 tablespoon vegetable oil
2 fresh green chillies, chopped
1 tablespoon fresh oregano leaves
1 clove garlic, crushed
250 g/8 oz finely chopped chicken
1 tablespoon flour
1 tablespoon tomato paste (purée)

- 1 Place corn husks in a bowl, pour over warm water to cover and soak for 30 minutes.
- 2 To make dough, place butter in a bowl and beat until light and creamy. Place masa and baking powder in a bowl, then stir in stock and mix to combine. Gradually beat masa mixture into butter and continue beating to make a smooth dough.
- 3 To make filling, heat a frying pan over a high heat, add oil, chillies, oregano and garlic and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Stir in chicken, flour and tomato paste (purée) and cook, stirring, for 5 minutes or until chicken is cooked and mixture reduces and thickens.
- 4 Drain corn husks and pat dry with absorbent kitchen paper. Take 2 tablespoons of Tamale Dough and press to flatten, place on a corn husk, then top with 1 tablespoon of filling. Take another 2 tablespoons of dough press to flatten, then place over filling and press edges of dough to enclose. Fold corn husk around dough parcel to enclose, then wrap other husk around the parcel in the opposite direction and tie to secure. Repeat with remaining corn husks, dough and filling to make 15 tamales.
- 5 Place tamales in a steamer over boiling water and steam for 45 minutes or until cooked through.

Makes 15

Serve these tasty morsels with Salsa Ranchera (page 78). Fresh masa can be purchased from Mexican specialty food shops or wholesalers. For more information see Glossary on page 79.



Chicken and Chilli Tamales served with Salsa Ranchera (page 78)

Prawn Empanadas

vegetable oil for deep-frying

EMPANADA DOUGH 2³/4 cups/350 g/11 oz flour 60 g/2 oz soft butter ³/4 cup/185 mL/6 fl oz warm water

CHILLI AND PRAWN FILLING

2 teaspoons vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped
1 tablespoon fresh oregano leaves
2 teaspoons fresh lemon thyme leaves
500 g/1 lb peeled uncooked prawns
2 green tomatoes, peeled and chopped
4 poblano chillies, roasted, seeded and
peeled and chopped

- 1 To make dough, place flour and butter in a food processor and process until mixture resembles coarse breadcrumbs. With machine running, add enough of the warm water to form a smooth dough. Knead dough on a lightly floured surface for 3 minutes, then divide into 12 portions. Cover with a damp cloth and set aside.
- 2 To make filling, heat oil in a frying pan over medium heat, add onion, oregano and thyme and cook for 4 minutes or until onions are golden. Add prawns, tomatoes and chillies and simmer for 5 minutes or until mixture reduces and thickens. Cool.

- 3 Roll each portion of dough out to form an 18 cm/7 in circle about 3 mm/ ¹/8 in thick. Place 3 tablespoons of filling on one half of each dough round, then fold over to enclose filling and pinch edges to seal.
- 4 Heat oil in a saucepan until a cube of bread dropped in browns in 50 seconds, then cook empanadas, a few at a time, for 2-3 minutes or until crisp and golden. Drain on absorbent kitchen paper and serve.

Makes 12

Serve empanadas with Salsa Mexicana (page 76) or Salsa Ranchera (page 78) and lime wedges. If lemon thyme is unavailable use ordinary thyme and a little finely grated lemon rind.



Prawn Empanadas served with Salsa Mexicana (page 76)

TORTILLA SOUP

There are probably as many variations of this soup as there are cooks in Mexico. The constants are a good chicken stock, fried dried chillies - the type varies depending on the region and the cook - and fried tortilla strips. The tortilla strips give the soup a wonderful texture; at first they are crisp and crunchy, then soften to become chewy and meatlike and finally if left long enough they will dissolve into the soup and thicken it. Serve with lime wedges and crushed black peppercorns.

- 3 ripe tomatoes, roasted and peeled
 1 onion, roasted, peeled and quartered
 3 cloves garlic, roasted and peeled
 6 cups/1.5 litres/2¹/2 pt chicken stock
 1 tablespoon chopped oregano
 vegetable oil for shallow-frying
 8 day-old corn tortillas, cut into
 thin strips
- 2 dried pasilla chillies, cut into strips 1 avocado, chopped 1/2 cup/125 mL/4 fl oz cream (double)
- 1 Place tomatoes, onion and garlic in a food processor or blender and process until smooth. Place tomato mixture in a saucepan and cook over a medium heat, stirring, for 5 minutes. Stir in stock and oregano, bring to simmering and simmer for 15 minutes.
- 2 Heat 1 cm/1/2 in oil in a frying pan over a high heat and cook tortilla strips until golden and crisp. Drain on absorbent kitchen paper. Cook chillies in oil for 1 minute or until crisp. Drain on absorbent kitchen paper.
- 3 To serve, ladle soup into warm bowls, then top with tortilla strips, chillies, avocado and a spoonful of cream.

Serves 6

PINTO BEAN SOUP

185 g/6 oz dried pinto beans, soaked overnight and drained
1 onion, quartered
3 tomatoes, roasted and peeled
1 poblano chilli, roasted and peeled
4 cloves garlic
6 cups/1.5 litres/2¹/2 pt water
2-3 cups/500-750 mL/16 fl oz-1¹/4 pt chicken or vegetable stock vegetable oil for shallow-frying
6 day-old flour or corn tortillas, cut into strips
2 ancho chillies, seeded
155 g/5 oz feta cheese, crumbled
2 tablespoons fresh coriander leaves

1 Place beans, onion, tomatoes, poblano chilli, garlic and water in a saucepan. Bring to the boil and boil for 10 minutes, then reduce heat and simmer for 1 hour or until beans are

tender. Cool slightly, then purée beans and vegetables with cooking liquid in a food processor or blender.

- 2 Return purée to a clean saucepan, stir in stock, bring to simmering and simmer, stirring, for 10-15 minutes.
- 3 Heat 1 cm/¹/₂ in oil in a frying pan until a cube of bread dropped in browns in 50 seconds and cook tortilla strips until golden and crisp. Drain on absorbent kitchen paper. Add ancho chillies to pan and cook until crisp, then drain and cut into thin strips.
- 4 To serve, ladle soup into warm bowls. Arrange tortilla and chilli strips, feta cheese and coriander on a serving platter and pass with soup to garnish.

Serves 6

To roast the poblano chilli see recipe for Stuffed Poblano Chillies on page 12.



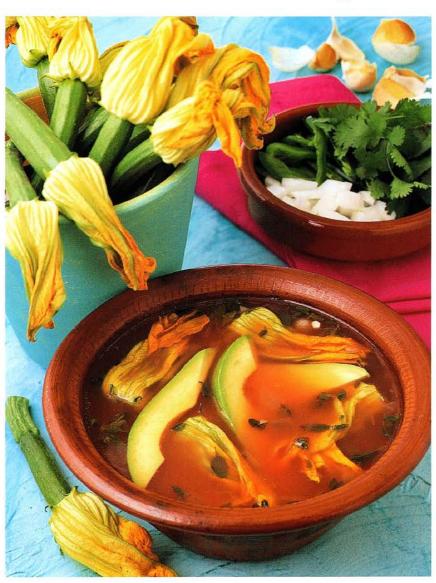
AZTEC FLOWER SOUP

Squash flowers or blossoms are very popular in Mexico where they are used in nearly every way imaginable. While it is the bright yellow pumpkin or winter squash flowers which are preferred by Mexican cooks, zucchini (courgette) flowers are an acceptable alternative. Serve this favourite soup with lime wedges.

2 teaspoons vegetable oil
1 onion, finely chopped
1 clove garlic, crushed
2 tablespoons white rice
2 teaspoons chopped fresh marjoram
2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme
8 cups/2 litres/3¹/₂ pt chicken stock
12 zucchini (courgette) flowers
440 g/14 oz cooked or canned
chickpeas, rinsed and drained
250 g/8 oz chopped cooked chicken
1 avocado, sliced
2 jalapeño chillies, sliced
1 tablespoon fresh coriander leaves
1/4 onion, chopped

- 1 Heat oil in a saucepan over a medium heat, add onion and garlic and cook, stirring, for 3 minutes or until onion is soft. Add rice, marjoram, thyme and stock, bring to simmering and simmer for 15 minutes.
- 2 Remove the stamens and pistils from the zucchini (courgette) flowers by pinching with your fingers. Check that there are no insects hidden in the petals and wash flowers by dipping into water briefly. Trim stalks and set aside.
- 3 Add chickpeas, chicken and zucchini (courgette) flowers to soup and cook for 3 minutes or until flowers are tender.
- 4 To serve, ladle soup into bowls and top with avocado, chillies, coriander and onion.

Serves 6



Aztec Flower Soup



SEAFOOD SOUP

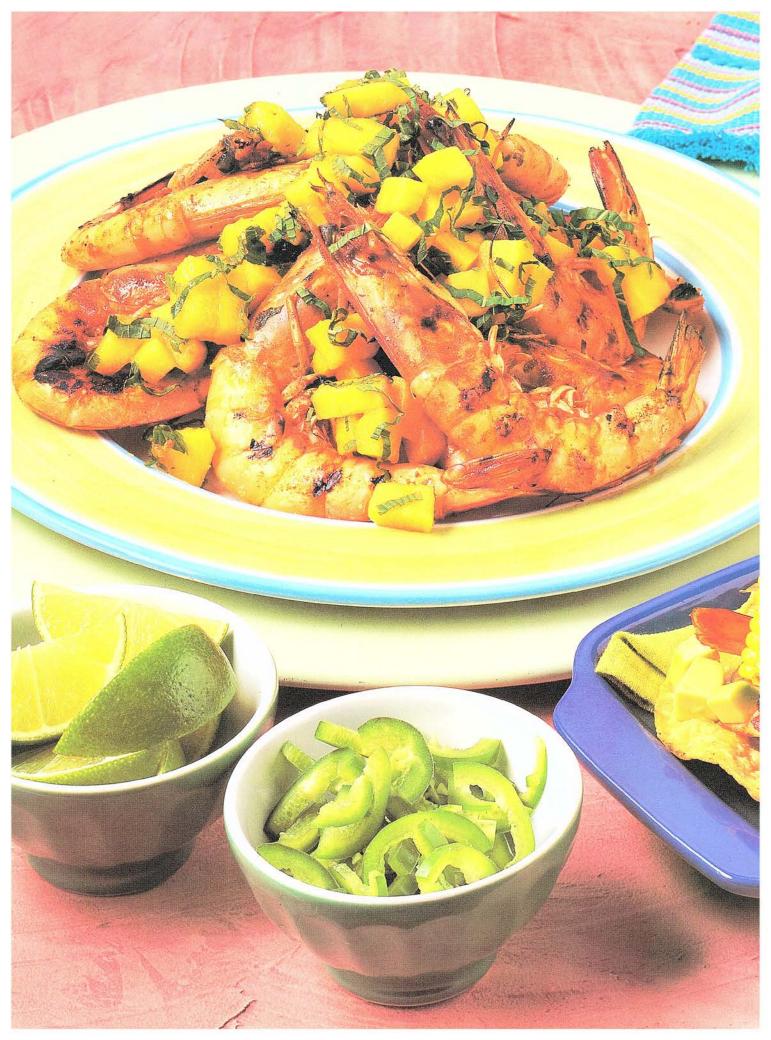
Seafood Soup

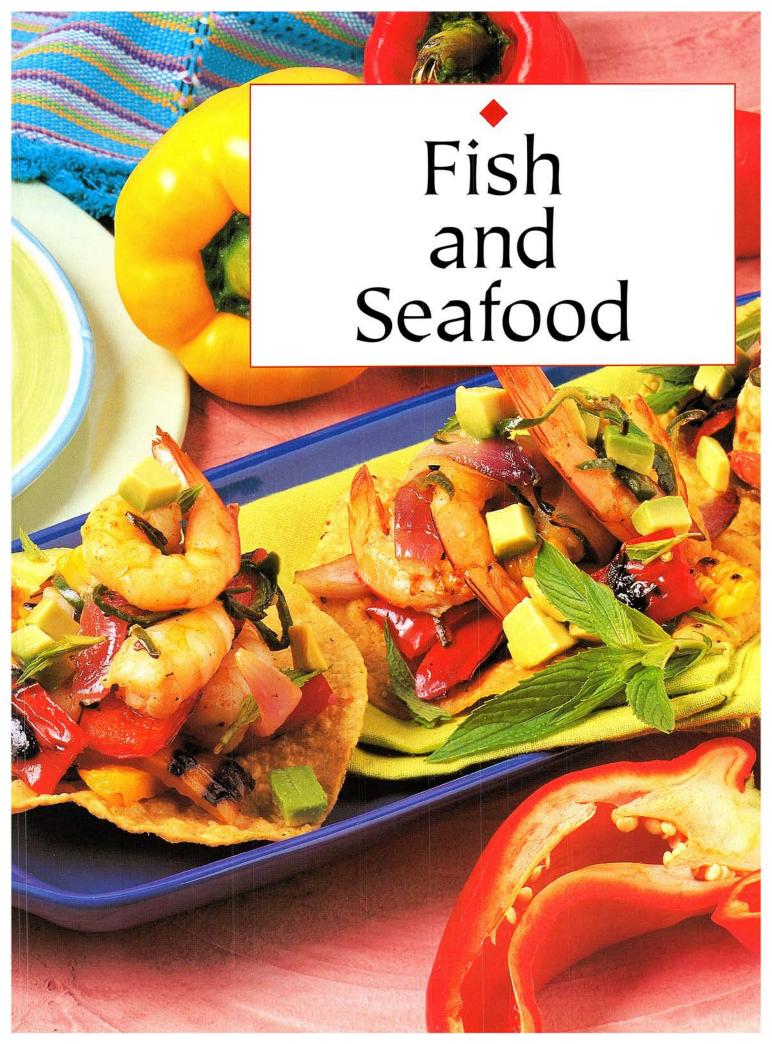
6 tomatoes, chopped
2 onions, chopped
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
4 cloves garlic, crushed
1 tablespoon oregano leaves
2 fresh coriander plants
1 fish head, such snapper, perch,
cod or haddock
10 cups/2.5 litres/4¹/4 pt water
2 uncooked crabs, cleaned and cut
into serving pieces
12 medium uncooked prawns, shelled
and deveined
185 g/6 oz fish fillet, cut into chunks

- 1 Place tomatoes and onions in a food processor or blender and process to make a purée.
- 2 Heat oil in a saucepan over a medium heat, add garlic and cook, stirring, for 1 minute or until golden. Stir in tomato mixture, then add oregano leaves and coriander plants, bring to simmering and simmer for 15 minutes. Add fish head and water and simmer 20 minutes. Strain stock and discard solids. Return stock to a clean saucepan.
- 3 Add crabs and prawns to stock, bring to simmering and simmer for 3 minutes. Add fish and simmer for 1-2 minutes or until all the seafood is cooked.

Serves 6

Serve this special soup with lime wedges, crushed black peppercorns and fresh coriander leaves.
When making the fish stock do not cook it for longer than 20 minutes, once the head has been added or it will become bitter.





Previous pages: Prawn Tostaditas, Barbecue Chilli Prawns Opposite: Roasted Garlic Fish served with Mexican Red Rice (page 65)

PRAWN TOSTADITAS

vegetable oil 8 corn tortillas 1/2 avocado, chopped 2 tablespoons shredded fresh mint

PRAWN AND VEGETABLE TOPPING

1 cob sweet corn
1 red pepper, quartered
1 yellow pepper, quartered
1 red onion, cut into wedges
375 g/12 oz medium uncooked
prawns, shelled and deveined
4 mild fresh green chillies, cut
into strips
1 tablespoon lime juice

1 To make topping, place sweet corn cob and red and yellow peppers on a preheated hot barbecue or char-grill and cook until lightly charred. Cut corn from cob and set aside. Cut peppers into strips and set aside.

- 2 Heat 2 teaspoons of oil in a frying pan over a medium heat, add onion and cook for 4 minutes or until golden. Add prawns, chillies and lime juice and cook for 2 minutes or until prawns change colour. Add sweet corn kernels and red and yellow peppers, toss to combine and set aside.
- 3 Heat 2.5 cm/1 in oil in a frying pan over a medium heat until a cube of bread dropped in browns in 50 seconds. Cook tortillas, one at time, for 45 seconds each side or until crisp. Drain on absorbent kitchen paper.
- 4 To serve, pile topping onto tortillas, then scatter with avocado and mint. Serve immediately.

Serves 4

Salsas, chillies, lime juice and lime wedges are standard accompaniments to any Mexican meal.



BARBECUE CHILLI PRAWNS

1 kg/2 lb medium uncooked prawns, in their shells 250 g/8 oz chopped pawpaw 2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint lime wedges sliced chillies

ORANGE MARINADE

2 tablespoons mild chilli powder

2 tablespoons chopped fresh oregano

2 cloves garlic, crushed

2 teaspoons grated orange rind

2 teaspoons grated lime rind

2 teaspoons grated lime rind 1/4 cup/60 mL/2 fl oz orange juice 1/4 cup/60 mL/2 fl oz lime juice

Serves 4

- 1 To make marinade, place chilli powder, oregano, garlic, orange and lime rinds and orange and lime juices in a bowl and mix to combine. Add prawns, toss, cover and marinate in the refrigerator for 1 hour.
- 2 Drain prawns and cook on a preheated hot char-grill or barbecue plate (griddle) for 1 minute each side or until they change colour.
- 3 Place pawpaw and mint in bowl and toss to combine. To serve, pile prawns onto serving plates, top with pawpaw mixture and accompany with lime wedges and sliced chillies.

Cooking the prawns in their shells results in them being more tender and juicy. However, if you prefer the prawns can be peeled before marinating.

ROASTED GARLIC FISH

1.5 kg/3 lb whole fish such as bream, snapper, whiting, sea perch, cod or haddock, cleaned

1 lemon, sliced
2 fresh red chillies, halved
3 sprigs fresh marjoram
7 cloves garlic, unpeeled
30 g/1 oz butter

1/3 cup/90 mL/3 fl oz coconut milk

1 Pat fish dry with absorbent kitchen paper. Place fish in a baking dish and fill cavity with lemon slices, chillies and marjoram sprigs.

2 Place garlic in a hot frying pan or comal and cook until skins are charred and garlic is soft. Squeeze garlic from skins into a bowl, add butter and mix to combine. Spread garlic butter over both sides of fish, cover with foil and bake for 40 minutes or until flesh flakes when tested with a fork. Remove foil, place under a hot grill and cook for 3-4 minutes each side or until skin is crisp. To serve, drizzle with coconut milk.

Oven temperature 150°C, 300°F, Gas 2

Serve fish with Mexican Red Rice (page 65) or tortillas and a salad.

Serves 4



FISH BAKED IN CORN HUSKS

Oven temperature 180°C, 350°F, Gas 4

16-24 dried corn husks
4 firm white fish fillets
3 tablespoons fresh coriander leaves
1 avocado, sliced
pickled jalapeño chillies
corn or flour tortillas, warmed

CHILLI LIME PASTE

3 cloves garlic, chopped
2 mild fresh green chillies, chopped
2 tablespoons fresh oregano leaves
2 tablespoons mild chilli powder
2 teaspoons grated lime rind
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1/4 cup/60 mL/2 fl oz lime juice

- 1 Place corn husks in a bowl, pour over warm water to cover and soak for 30 minutes.
- 2 To make chilli paste, place garlic, chillies, oregano, chilli powder, lime rind, cumin and lime juice in a food processor or blender and process until smooth.
- 3 Cut each fish fillet in half, then spread both sides with chilli paste.
- 4 Overlap 2-3 corn husks, place a piece of fish on top, then cover with more husks, fold to enclose fish and tie to secure. Place parcels on a baking tray and bake for 10-12 minutes or until flesh flakes when tested with a fork.
- 5 To serve, open fish parcels, scatter with coriander and accompany with avocado, chillies and tortillas.

Serves 4

Corn husks and banana leaves are used extensively in Mexico as wrappers for edible parcels. Corn husks are favoured in northern Mexico while banana leaves are more popular in southern and coastal areas.



Place corn husks in a bowl, pour over warm water to cover and soak for 30 minutes.



Cut fish fillets in half and spread both sides with chilli paste.



Place fish on top of corn husks, then cover with more husks, fold to enclose fish and tie to secure.



SKEWERS WITH TOMATO SAUCE

750 g/1¹/₂ lb white fish, cubed ¹/₄ cup/60 mL/2 fl oz lime juice freshly ground black pepper 6 corn or flour tortillas, warmed 2 tablespoons chopped fresh coriander lime wedges

TOMATO, OLIVE AND CAPER SAUCE

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 onion, finely chopped
1 clove garlic, crushed
4 ripe tomatoes, chopped
90 g/3 oz green olives
2 jalapeño chillies, chopped
2 tablespoons capers, drained
2 tablespoons chopped fresh flat
leaf parsley

- 1 Thread fish onto six lightly oiled skewers, brush with lime juice and season with black pepper to taste. Set aside.
- 2 To make sauce, heat oil in a frying pan over a medium heat, add onion and garlic and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes or until onion is soft. Add tomatoes, olives, chillies, capers and parsley and cook, stirring, for 5 minutes or until sauce is warm. Season with black pepper to taste.
- 3 Cook fish skewers on a preheated hot barbecue or char-grill for 1 minute each side or until tender. To serve, place fish skewers on tortillas, spoon over sauce, scatter with coriander and accompany with lime wedges.

Serves 6

Known in Mexico as Veracruzana sauce and originating from the region of Veracruz, the sauce in this recipe is traditionally served with and used as a cooking sauce for fish fillets and whole fish. It is also delicious served with grilled lamb or veal chops.



SEAFOOD TACOS

Above: Seafood Tacos Left: Skewers with Tomato Sauce

8 flour tortillas, warmed 155 g/5 oz feta cheese crumbled

SEAFOOD FILLING

2 teaspoons vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped
2 tomatoes, chopped
375 g/12 oz white fish, cubed
250 g/8 oz shelled and deveined
medium uncooked prawns
12 scallops

3 medium fresh green chillies, chopped 2 tablespoons chopped fresh oregano 1 teaspoon finely grated lemon rind

- 1 To make filling, heat oil in a frying pan over a high heat, add onion and cook for 4 minutes or until golden. Add tomatoes and cook for 5 minutes. Add fish, prawns, scallops, chillies, oregano and lemon rind and cook, tossing, for 3-4 minutes or until seafood is cooked.
- 2 To serve, spoon filling down the centre of each tortilla and scatter with feta cheese. Fold tortilla to enclose filling and serve immediately.

Serves 4

These indulgent tacos are wonderful served with Garlic and Chilli Salsa (page 78).

FISH WITH MARINATED ONIONS

4 firm white fish fillets

1/2 cup/60 g/2 oz flour

1 tablespoon ground cumin

1 tablespoon mild chilli powder

2 teaspoons ground coriander

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

LIME MARINATED ONIONS
3 white onions, thinly sliced
3 tablespoons fresh coriander leaves
1 tablespoon sugar
1/2 cup/125 mL/4 fl oz lime juice

- 1 To make marinated onions, place onions, coriander leaves, sugar and lime juice in a bowl, cover and marinate at room temperature for at least 1 hour.
- 2 Place fish fillets on absorbent kitchen paper and pat dry. Place flour, cumin, chilli powder and ground coriander in a plastic food bag and toss to combine. Add fish and toss to coat with spice mixture, then shake off excess.
- 3 Heat oil in a frying pan over a medium heat, add fish and cook for 1-2 minutes each side or until flesh flakes when tested with a fork. Serve with marinated onions.

Serves 4



MARINATED LIME FISH

625 g/1¹/4 lb firm white fish fillets, cut into strips
1 cup/250 mL/8 fl oz lime juice
3 ripe tomatoes, chopped
4 pickled jalapeño chillies, sliced
1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano
1/3 cup/90 mL/3 fl oz olive oil
1/2 onion, finely diced
3 tablespoons chopped stuffed olives
2 tablespoons fresh coriander leaves

- 1 Place fish in a bowl, pour over lime juice and marinate in the refrigerator, tossing occasionally, for 3 hours or until fish is opaque. Drain off half the lime juice, then add tomatoes, chillies, oregano and oil. Toss and chill for 1 hour longer.
- 2 Before serving, stand at room temperature for 20 minutes, then scatter with onion, olives and coriander.

Serves 6

served with roasted tomatoes and red and green peppers.

This simple fish dish is delicious

classic Mexican fish dish must be made with the freshest fish (never use frozen). Any firm fleshed fish can be used and prawns, scallops, crab or lobster are delicious and elegant alternatives.

Known the world over as

ceviche or seviche this



SPICED MUSSELS IN VINEGAR

2 teaspoons vegetable oil
2 onions, chopped
3 medium fresh green chillies, chopped
1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano
1 teaspoon ground cumin

1/2 teaspoon crushed black peppercorns
3 bay leaves
1 cinnamon stick

1/4 cup/60 mL/2 fl oz apple cider
vinegar

1 1/2 cups/375 mL/12 fl oz fish stock
1 kg/2 lb mussels in shells, scrubbed
and beards removed

- 1 Heat oil in a saucepan over a medium heat, add onions and cook, stirring, for 3 minutes or until soft. Add chillies, oregano, cumin, peppercorns, bay leaves and cinnamon and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes.
- 2 Stir vinegar and stock into pan and bring to the boil. Add mussels, bring to simmering, cover and simmer for 5 minutes or until mussels open. Discard any mussels that do not open after 5 minutes cooking. Serve mussels with pan juices.

Serves 4

Try this recipe using clams, cleaned baby octopus or squid.





GRILLED SCALLOPS WITH SALSA

Above: Grilled Scallops with Salsa Left: Spiced Mussels in Vinegar

30 scallops chilli or lime oil crisp tortilla chips

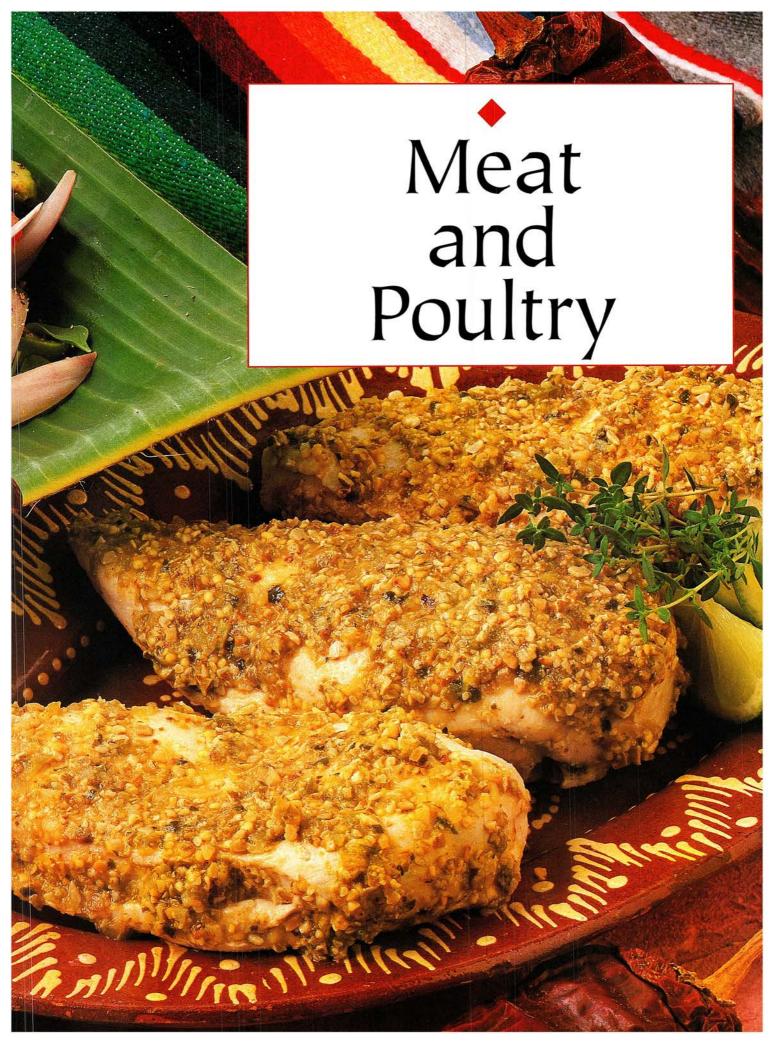
PINEAPPLE SALSA 125 g/4 oz chopped pineapple 1/4 red pepper, finely chopped 2 medium green chillies, chopped 1 tablespoon fresh coriander leaves 1 tablespoon fresh mint leaves 1 tablespoon lime juice

- To make salsa, place pineapple, red pepper, chillies, coriander, mint and lime juice in a bowl, toss to combine, then stand for 20 minutes.
- 2 Brush scallops with oil and cook on a preheated hot char-grill or barbecue plate (griddle) for 30 seconds each side or until they just change colour. Serve immediately with salsa and tortilla chips.

Serves 4

To make crisp tortilla chips, cut day-old tortillas into wedges and shallow fry for 1-2 minutes or until crisp.





Previous pages: Chicken in Pumpkin Seed Sauce, Chicken in Banana Leaves

CHICKEN IN PUMPKIN SEED SAUCE

4 boneless chicken breast fillets

1/2 onion

2 cloves garlic

2 stalks fresh coriander

4 cups/1 litre/1³/4 pt water

PUMPKIN SEED SAUCE
2 x 440 g/14 oz canned tomatillos,
drained
12 serrano chillies
1/2 bunch fresh coriander

1/4 onion, chopped
1 clove garlic
11/2 cups/45 g/11/2 oz green pumpkin
seeds (pepitas)
3 tablespoons unsalted peanuts

1 Place chicken, onion, garlic, coriander stalks and water in a saucepan over a low heat, bring to simmering and simmer for 15 minutes. Remove chicken from liquid. Strain cooking liquid and discard solids. Reserve liquid for sauce.

- 2 To make sauce, place tomatillos, chillies, coriander leaves, onion and garlic in a food processor or blender and process until smooth.
- 3 Heat a frying pan over a medium heat, add pumpkin seeds (pepitas) and cook, stirring, for 3-4 minutes or until seeds pop and are golden. Place pumpkin seeds (pepitas) and peanuts in a clean food processor or blender and process to make a paste. Return nut paste to frying pan and cook, stirring, for 3 minutes or until golden. Gradually stir in tomatillo mixture and 2 cups/500 mL/16 fl oz of the reserved cooking liquid, bring to simmering and simmer, stirring frequently, for 10 minutes. Add chicken to sauce and simmer for 5 minutes or until heated through.

Serves 4

If the sauce is too thick add cooking liquid to achieve the desired consistency. Canned serrano chillies can be used in place of fresh if you wish.



ROASTED CHILLI DUCK

Oven temperature 220°C, 425°F, Gas 7

2.5 kg/5 lb duck
sea salt
crushed black peppercorns
1 orange, halved
1 head garlic, cloves separated
2 tablespoons mild chilli powder
2 tablespoons sweet paprika
3 cloves garlic, crushed
2 tablespoons tequila
3 tablespoons chopped fresh mint

- 1 Pierce skin of duck all over with a fork, then rub with salt and black pepper and place on a rack set in a baking dish. Place orange and garlic cloves in cavity of bird and bake for 30 minutes. Drain juices from pan.
- 2 Combine chilli powder, paprika, crushed garlic and tequila and rub over duck. Reduce oven temperature to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4 and bake for 40 minutes or until skin is crisp and meat is tender. Just prior to serving, scatter with mint.

Serves 4

Serve with a pile of warm flour tortillas and a selection of salsas, for recipes see Sauces and Condiments chapter (page 76).

CHICKEN IN BANANA LEAVES

2 whole chicken breasts on the bone, skin removed
4 large banana leaves
4 spring onions, chopped
3 tablespoons fresh coriander leaves

SPICE MIXTURE

3 New Mexico chillies
1 cup/250 mL/8 fl oz water
2 hot fresh green chillies, chopped
3 cloves garlic, chopped
2 tablespoons sweet paprika
1 tablespoon fresh oregano leaves
2 teaspoons ground cumin
2 teaspoons finely grated orange rind
2 tablespoons lemon juice

- 3 Cut chicken breasts in half and spread each with spice mixture. Warm banana leaves by holding over a gas flame or heating in the mircowave until pliable. Place a piece of chicken on each banana leaf, top with any remaining spice mixture and scatter over spring onions and coriander. Fold banana leaves around chicken to enclose and tie to secure. Place parcels in a glass or ceramic dish and marinate in the refrigerator for 3 hours or overnight.
- 4 Transfer chicken parcels to a baking dish and bake for 25-35 minutes or until chicken is tender.

Oven temperature 160°C, 325°F, Gas 3

Banana leaves are a popular wrapper in southern and coastal Mexico. Corn husks or aluminium foil can be used instead, but the dish will lack the flavour imparted by the banana leaves.

Serves 4

- 1 To make spice mixture, place chillies in a hot frying pan or comal and cook until skins are blistered and charred. Transfer chillies to a bowl, pour over water and soak for 30 minutes.
- 2 Drain chillies and discard soaking liquid. Place soaked chillies, green chillies, garlic, paprika, oregano, cumin, orange rind and lemon juice in a food processor or blender and process to make a paste.



Roasted Chilli Duck

SPICED SHREDDED BEEF

750 g/1¹/₂ lb boneless beef chuck, blade or brisket, trimmed of visible fat 1 onion, halved 2 cloves garlic, peeled 1 clove 2 teaspoons cumin seeds 8 cups/2 litres/3¹/₂ pt water

GREEN CHILLI AND TOMATO SAUCE

2 teaspoons vegetable oil 1 onion, chopped 2 hot green chillies, chopped 440 g/14 oz canned tomatoes, undrained and chopped

1 Place beef, onion, garlic, clove, cumin seeds and water in a saucepan over a medium heat, bring to simmering and simmer, skimming the top occasionally, for 1¹/₂ hours or until beef is very tender. Remove pan from heat and cool beef in liquid. Skim fat from surface as it cools. Remove beef from liquid and shred with a fork. Reserve cooking liquid for making sauce.

- 2 To make sauce, heat oil in a frying pan over a high heat, add onion and chillies and cook, stirring, for 3 minutes or until tender. Stir in tomatoes and 1 cup/250 mL/8 fl oz of the reserved cooking liquid, bring to simmering and simmer for 10 minutes or until mixture reduces and thickens.
- 3 Add shredded beef to sauce and simmer for 5 minutes or until heated through.

Serves 6



The cooking time will depend on the cut of meat used. For a complete meal, serve on warm flour tortillas with salad and Green Rice with Herbs (page 65).

Quail in Rose Petal Sauce

1 lime, sliced
3 cloves garlic, sliced
8 quail, cleaned
vegetable oil
freshly ground black pepper
red or pink rose petals, for garnish
(optional)

ROSE PETAL SAUCE

12 red or pink fragrant roses,
petals only

2 large sweet plums, seeded and
chopped
12 chestnuts

1 cup/250 mL/8 fl oz water
15 g/1/2 oz butter

2 cloves garlic, crushed
2 tablespoons honey

- 1 To cook quail, place a slice of lime and a slice of garlic in the cavity of each bird. Truss birds and place in a baking dish. Brush with oil, sprinkle with black pepper and bake for 20-25 minutes or until quail are tender.
- 2 To make sauce, place rose petals and plums in a food processor or blender and process until smooth. Set aside. Make a cross in base of each chestnut, place in a hot frying pan or comal and cook, shaking pan occasionally, until shells split and open.
- 3 Bring a saucepan of water to the boil, add chestnuts and boil for 20 minutes. Drain chestnuts and remove

shells and skins. Add chestnuts and the 1 cup/250 mL/8 fl oz water to rose purée and process until smooth.

- 4 Melt butter in a frying pan over a medium heat, add garlic and cook, stirring, for 3 minutes. Add rose purée and honey, bring to simmering and simmer for 10 minutes.
- 5 Place birds on a serving platter, spoon over sauce and garnish with additional rose petals, if desired.

Serves 4

Oven temperature 180°C, 350°F, Gas 4

It was a recipe of this name that set passions on fire in the now well-known Mexican book (and film) *Like Water for Chocolate*. Try it if you dare! Best served with plain boiled or steamed rice and a simple salad.



Left: Spiced Shredded Beef served with Green Rice with Herbs (page 65) Right: Quail in Rose Petal Sauce

PORK WITH MOLE AND DUMPLINGS

Mole means sauce and as such you will find hundreds in Mexican cooking. Believed to have originated from the states of Oaxaca and Puebla some of the most famous moles include mole poblano (often referred to as turkey with chocolate sauce as it includes a small of amount of Mexican chocolate), mole negro (black), mole rojo (red), mole amarillo (yellow) and mole verde (green).

Accompany this one-dish meal with bowls of thinly sliced onions and lime wedges.

1 kg/2 lb pork cutlets, trimmed
of visible fat

1/2 onion
2 cloves garlic
315 g/10 oz green beans
315 g/10 oz zucchini (courgettes),
chopped

MOLE AMARILLO
2 ancho chillies
4 guajillo chillies
250 g/8 oz canned tomatillos,
drained and peeled
1 tomato
6 cloves garlic
2 tablespoons ground coriander
2 black peppercorns
1 clove
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
MASA DUMPLINGS
500 g/1 lb fresh masa
60 g/2 oz butter or lard

- 1 Place pork, onion and garlic in a saucepan and pour over enough cold water to cover. Bring to simmering over a medium heat and simmer, skimming the surface occasionally, for 50 minutes or until pork is tender.
- 2 Add beans and zucchini (courgettes) and simmer for 5 minutes, then remove pork and vegetables and set aside. Strain cooking liquid and reserve.
- 3 To make mole, place ancho and guajillo chillies in a bowl, pour over hot water to cover and soak for 20 minutes or until soft. Drain chillies and discard water. Place chillies in a hot frying pan or comal and cook until skins are blistered and charred. Set aside until cool enough to handle then carefully remove seeds.
- 4 Place chillies, tomatillos, tomato, garlic, coriander, peppercorns, clove and cumin in a food processor or blender and process to make a purée. Push purée through a sieve to remove large pieces.
- 5 Heat oil in a frying pan over a medium heat, add purée and cook, stirring, for 8 minutes. Stir in 6 cups/ 1.5 litres/2¹/₂ pt of the reserved cooking liquid, bring to simmering and simmer for 10 minutes.
- 6 To make dumplings, place masa and butter or lard in a bowl and knead to combine. Divide dough into 24 pieces and roll into small flat balls. Make a thumb print in each dumpling to about halfway through. Add dumplings to mole and cook, stirring gently, for 8-10 minutes or until dumplings are tender. Add reserved pork and vegetables to mole and simmer for 4 minutes or until heated through.

Serves 6



Place masa and butter or lard in a bowl and knead to make a dough.



Roll dough into small flat balls. Make a thumb print in each dumpling.



SLOW-BAKED CHILLI LAMB

Oven temperature 150°C, 300°F, Gas 2

1.5 kg/3 lb leg lamb, trimmed of visible fat

CHILLI HERB PASTE

4 ancho chillies
3 cloves garlic, unpeeled
1 ripe tomato, peeled and chopped
1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon crushed black peppercorns
2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar

1 To make chilli paste, place chillies and garlic in a hot dry frying pan or comal over a high heat and cook until skins are blistered and charred. Place chillies in a bowl, pour over hot water to cover and soak for 30 minutes. Drain chillies and discard water.

- 2 Squeeze garlic from skins. Place chillies, garlic, tomato, oregano, cumin, peppercorns and vinegar in a food processor or blender and process to make a purée.
- 3 Place lamb in a glass or ceramic dish, spread with chilli paste, cover and marinate in the refrigerator for at least 3 hours or overnight.
- 4 Transfer lamb to a baking dish and roast for 3 hours or until tender.

Serves 6



CRISPY LAMB TORTILLA PIZZA

Oven temperature 180°C, 350°F, Gas 4

Slice lamb and serve with

warm tortillas, vegetables

and a selection of salsas.

500 g/1 lb fresh masa
315 g/10 oz Refried Beans (page 64)
315 g/10 oz feta cheese, crumbled
1 cup/250 mL/8 fl oz Enchilada Sauce
(page 78)

lime wedges chopped fresh chillies

TWICE-COOKED LAMB

1.5 kg/3 lb leg lamb
1 onion, halved
2 cloves garlic
3 sprigs fresh oregano
1/2 teaspoon cumin seeds
chilli powder

1 To cook lamb, place lamb, onion, garlic, oregano and cumin seeds in a saucepan and pour over enough water to cover. Bring to the boil, cover, reduce heat and simmer for 1¹/₂ hours or until

very tender. Drain lamb and place in a baking dish. Sprinkle with chilli powder and bake for 30 minutes. Shred lamb and set aside.

- 2 Take 4 tablespoons masa, place between sheets of nonstick baking paper and roll out to form a large, very thin round. Place tortilla in a hot dry frying pan or comal and cook for 3 minutes each side or until crisp. Keep warm while cooking remaining tortillas.
- 3 Spread tortillas with beans, then top with shredded lamb, feta cheese and Enchilada Sauce and bake for 10 minutes or until topping is heated through. Serve with lime wedges and chopped chillies.

Serves 4

Slow-baked Chilli Lamb, Crispy Lamb Tortilla Pizza

Fresh masa can be purchased from Mexican specialty food stores or wholesalers. For more information about masa see Glossary on page 80.



SANTA FE GRILLED BEEF

6 scotch or eye fillet steaks
1 avocado, sliced
lime wedges
2 spring onions, sliced

SPICE MIX

1/2 onion, very finely chopped
3 cloves garlic, crushed
1 tablespoon mild chilli powder
2 teaspoons grated lime rind
1 teaspoon ground cumin
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon lime juice

- 1 To make spice mix, place onion, garlic, chilli powder, lime rind, cumin, oil and lime juice in a bowl and mix to combine.
- 2 Spread spice mix over both sides of each piece of steak and place between sheets of plastic food wrap. Pound with a meat mallet or rolling pin until steaks are 5 mm/¹/₄ in thick.
- 3 Cook steaks on a preheated hot barbecue or in a frying pan for 30-60 seconds each side or until tender. Serve immediately with avocado slices, lime wedges and spring onions.

Serves 6

For a complete meal add warm tortillas, Refried Beans (page 64) and a lettuce salad.



PORK WITH RED CHILLI SAUCE

1 kg/2 lb boneless pork loin, trimmed of visible fat 90 g/3 oz green olives 1 onion, sliced

RICH RED CHILLI SAUCE
8 ancho chillies, seeded and deveined
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano
1 1/2 cups/375mL/12 fl oz chicken or
beef stock
1 cup/250 mL/8 fl oz orange juice
1/3 cup/90 mL/3 fl oz apple
cider vinegar

- 1 To make sauce, cut chillies into flat pieces. Heat oil in a frying pan over a medium heat, add chillies and cook for a few seconds each side. Remove chillies from pan, drain on absorbent kitchen paper and place in a bowl. Pour over boiling water to cover and soak for 2-3 hours. Drain chillies and discard water.
- 2 Heat frying pan over a medium heat, add chopped onion and garlic and cook, stirring, for 3 minutes or until soft. Place onion mixture, chillies, cumin, oregano and ²/₃ cup/170 mL/5¹/₂ fl oz stock in a food processor or blender and process to make a purée. Return mixture to frying pan and cook, stirring, for 5 minutes or mixture reduces and thickens. Stir in remaining stock, orange juice and 1 tablespoon vinegar, bring to simmering and simmer for 25 minutes or until sauce reduces and thickens. Cool.
- 3 Combine cool sauce with remaining vinegar. Place pork in a glass or ceramic

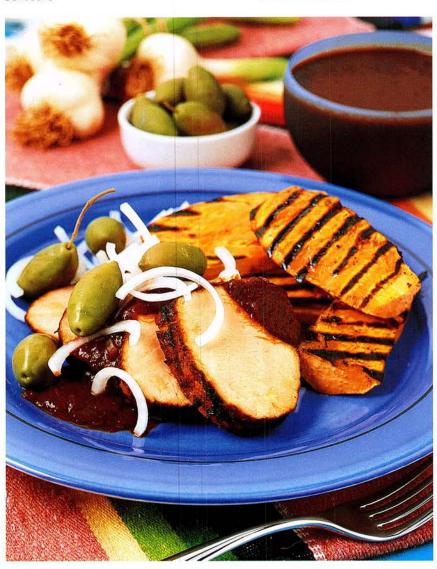
Right: Pork with Red Chilli Sauce Left: Santa Fe Grilled Beef served with Refried Beans (page 64) dish and coat with one-third of the sauce, cover and marinate in the refrigerator for 2-3 hours.

4 Drain pork and cook on a preheated hot barbecue grill or in a frying pan for 2-3 minutes each side or until brown. Transfer to a baking dish and bake for 45-50 minutes or until tender. Heat remaining sauce in a saucepan over a low heat. To serve, cut pork into slices and arrange on a serving platter, spoon over sauce and scatter with olives and sliced onion.

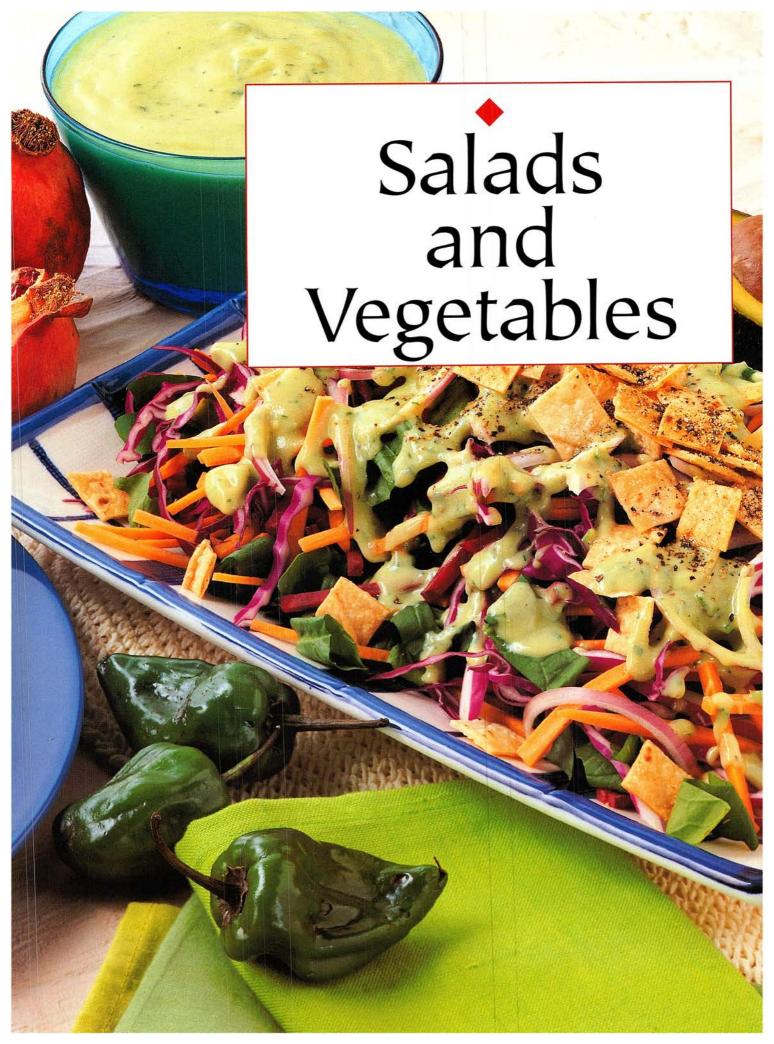
Oven temperature 150°C, 300°F, Gas 2

If you prefer the meat can be barbecued for the entire cooking time. After the initial cooking time, reduce the heat to low and cook until meat is tender. This recipe is also good made with chicken. For a complete meal, serve with warm tortillas and salad.

Serves 6







Previous pages: Mixed Vegetable Salad, Poblano and Walnut Salad Opposite: New Mexico Chicken Salad

Oven temperature 200°C, 400°F, Gas 6

The avocado tree belongs to the laurel family making it a cousin to the bay tree. It is native to Mexico and Central America where both the fruit and leaves are used in cooking. Probably the best known Mexican avocado dish is Guacamole a recipe for which can be found on page 76.

MIXED VEGETABLE SALAD

500 g/1 lb red cabbage, shredded 3 beetroot, peeled and shredded 1/2 bunch/250 g/8 oz English spinach, leaves shredded

2 carrots, peeled and shredded 1 red onion, thinly sliced

GARLIC CROUTONS

- 6 day-old flour tortillas, cut into 1 cm/¹/2 in squares 3 cloves garlic, crushed 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
 - AVOCADO DRESSING

1 avocado, peeled and chopped
1 cup/250 mL/8 fl oz milk
2 tablespoons fresh coriander leaves
1 fresh green chilli, chopped
1 tablespoon lime juice
freshly ground black pepper

- 1 Place cabbage, beetroot, spinach, carrots and onion in a bowl and toss to combine. Pile onto a serving platter.
- 2 To make croûtons, place tortilla pieces, garlic and oil in a bowl and toss to combine. Place tortilla pieces in a single layer on baking trays and bake for 10-15 minutes or until golden and crisp.
- 3 To make dressing, place avocado and milk in a food processor or blender and process until smooth. Add coriander, chilli, lime juice and black pepper to taste and process until smooth.
- 4 To serve, scatter croûtons over salad and drizzle with dressing.

Serves 6



POBLANO AND WALNUT SALAD

2 tablespoons vegetable oil 8 poblano chillies, seeded and sliced 12 lettuce leaves 60 g/2 oz watercress leaves 3 ripe tomatoes, chopped 1 avocado, chopped seeds of 1 pomegranate (optional)

WALNUT DRESSING
60 g/2 oz walnuts
1/2 cup/125 mL/4 fl oz milk
90 g/3 oz feta cheese, crumbled
1 tablespoon sugar

- 1 Heat oil in a frying pan over a medium heat, add chillies and cook, stirring, for 2-3 minutes or until crisp. Drain on absorbent kitchen paper.
- 2 To make dressing, place walnuts in a frying pan over a low heat and cook, stirring, for 3 minutes or until nuts are lightly toasted. Place nuts and milk in a food processor or blender and process until smooth. Add feta cheese and sugar and process until smooth.
- 3 To serve, place lettuce, watercress, tomatoes and avocado in a bowl, toss to combine, then pile onto a serving platter. Drizzle with dressing and scatter with chilli strips and pomegranate seeds, if using.

Serves 4

Pomegranates also known as Chinese apples, contain white seeds surrounded by juicy red sacs. The seeds make a wonderful garnish for savoury and sweet dishes.

NEW MEXICO CHICKEN SALAD

1 bunch young rocket edible flowers of your choice 6 radicchio leaves, shredded 1 grapefruit, peeled, all white pith removed, segmented 2 smoked chicken breasts, sliced

PINE NUT AND CHILLI DRESSING 4 tablespoons pine nuts, toasted

6 bay leaves

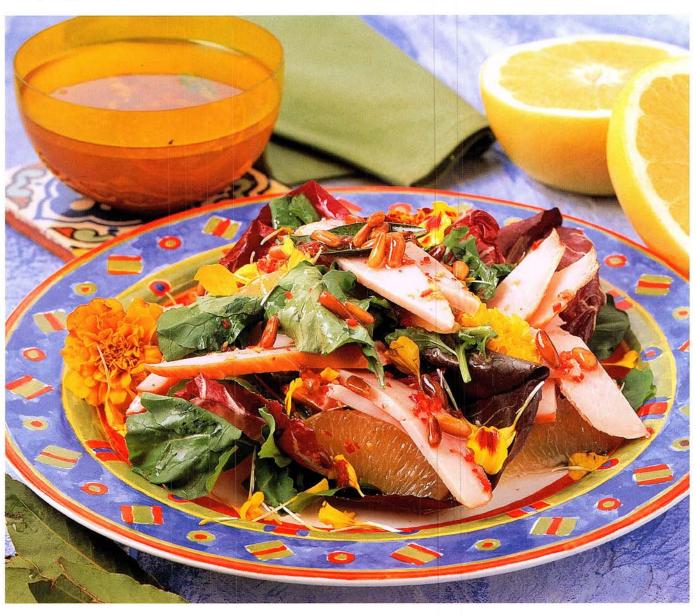
2 fresh red chillies, finely chopped 2 tablespoons sugar

¹/₃ cup/90 mL/3 fl oz red wine vinegar ¹/₄ cup/60 mL/2 fl oz olive oil 1 Arrange rocket, flowers and radicchio attractively on serving plates. Top with grapefruit and chicken.

2 To make dressing, place pine nuts, bay leaves, chillies, sugar, vinegar and oil in a bowl and whisk to combine. Just prior to serving, drizzle dressing over salad.

Serves 4

Edible flowers you might like to choose from include nasturtiums, scented geraniums, roses, marigolds, violets and zucchini (courgette) flowers and the flowers of most herbs such as chives, rocket, borage, dill, rosemary, lavender and basil. Look out for mixed packs of edible flowers in greengrocers and specialty food shops.



SQUASH WITH GREEN ONIONS

Oven temperature 200°C, 400°F, Gas 6

There is archaeological evidence that certain varieties of pumpkin were grown and eaten in Mexico as long ago as 2000 BC. 1 kg/2 lb butternut pumpkin (squash),
peeled and chopped
350 g/11 oz yellow or green patty
pan squash
4 carrots, peeled and halved
2 teaspoons finely grated lime rind
1 tablespoon olive oil
freshly ground black pepper
155 g/5 oz feta cheese, crumbled

GREEN ONION DRESSING

12 spring onions, sliced 3 mild fresh green chillies, sliced 1/3 cup/90 mL/3 fl oz olive oil 1/4 cup/60 mL/2 fl oz apple cider vinegar

2 tablespoons lime juice

- 1 Place pumpkin (squash), patty pan squash, carrots, lime rind, 1 tablespoon olive oil and black pepper to taste in a baking dish, toss to combine and bake for 30 minutes or until vegetables are golden and soft.
- 2 To make dressing, place spring onions, chillies, ¹/₃ cup/90 mL/3 fl oz olive oil, vinegar and lime juice in a bowl and whisk to combine.
- 3 Place vegetables on a serving platter, scatter with feta cheese and drizzle with dressing.

Serves 6





MEXICAN ORANGE SALAD

Above: Mexican Orange Salad Left: Squash with Green Onions

6 oranges, peeled and all white pith removed, sliced crosswise 2 red onions, sliced 90 g/3 oz toasted almonds, chopped 2 medium fresh red chillies, chopped 1/2 bunch fresh coriander 4 tablespoons fresh mint leaves 1/4 bunch/125 g/4 oz English spinach, leaves shredded

Place oranges, onions, almonds, chillies, coriander leaves and mint in a bowl, toss to combine and stand for 30 minutes. Line a serving platter with spinach then pile salad on top.

Serves 6

Garnish with extra red onion and serve with grilled meats or chicken.

ROASTED PEPPERS WITH HERBS

3 red peppers
2 green peppers
4 medium fresh green chillies
2 onions, quartered
2 tablespoons fresh marjoram leaves
2 tablespoons fresh thyme leaves
1/4 cup/60 mL/2 fl oz lime juice
1/4 cup/60 mL/2 fl oz olive oil
freshly ground black pepper

- 1 Place red and green peppers and chillies in a hot frying pan or comal and cook until skins are blistered and charred. Place peppers and chillies in a plastic food bag and stand for 10 minutes or until cool enough to handle.
- 2 Carefully remove skins from peppers and chillies, then cut off tops and remove seeds and membranes. Cut into thick slices.
- 3 Place onions in frying pan or comal and cook for 5 minutes or until soft and charred.
- 4 Place peppers, chillies, onions, marjoram, thyme, lime juice, oil and black pepper to taste in a bowl and toss to combine. Stand for 30 minutes before serving.

Serves 6

A comal is a steel, cast iron or unglazed earthenware cooking disk, which is used for cooking and heating tortillas and for toasting other ingredients such as chillies and pumpkin seeds. See Glossary on page 79 for more information.



Place red and green peppers and chillies in a hot frying pan or comal and cook until skins are blistered and charred.



Carefully remove skins from peppers and chillies, then cut off tops and remove seeds.



Place onions in hot frying pan or comal and cook until soft and charred.



GREENS WITH GARLIC DRESSING

1 bunch/500 g/1 lb English spinach, shredded

185 g/6 oz green beans 4 zucchini (courgettes), sliced

ROASTED GARLIC DRESSING

6 cloves garlic, unpeeled

1/2 cup/125 mL/4 fl oz olive oil

3 tablespoons balsamic or
red wine vinegar
freshly ground black pepper

2 tablespoons chopped fresh flat
leaf parsley

- 1 Boil, steam or microwave spinach, beans and zucchini (courgettes), separately, until they just change colour. Drain and place on a serving platter.
- 2 To make dressing, place garlic in a frying pan or comal over a high heat and cook until skins are charred. Cool slightly and remove skins. Place garlic, oil, vinegar and black pepper to taste in a food processor or blender and process until smooth. Stir in parsley and spoon over warm greens.

Serves 4



POTATOES IN CHILLI VINEGAR

. 2 kg/4 lb baby new potatoes, halved

CHILLI VINEGAR DRESSING

2 red onions, sliced
3 jalapeño chillies, chopped
3 fresh red chillies, seeded and chopped

2 cloves garlic, crushed
2-3 tablespoons sugar
2 tablespoons capers, drained
2 tablespoons fresh thyme leaves
1 tablespoon fresh oregano leaves
4 fresh or dried bay leaves
1 cup/250 mL/8 fl oz apple
cider vinegar

cider vinegar ¹/₂ cup/125 mL/4 fl oz water

- 1 Place potatoes in a saucepan of boiling water and cook until tender. Drain and place in a serving bowl.
- 2 To make dressing, place onions, jalapeño and red chillies, garlic, sugar, capers, thyme, oregano, bay leaves, vinegar and water in a bowl and mix to combine. Pour dressing over warm potatoes, toss to combine and stand at room temperature for 2 hours before serving.

Serves 6

Potatoes in Chilli Vinegar, Greens with Garlic Dressing

Many of today's favourite

vegetables are native to

Mexico and were unknown

in the old world prior to the

16th century. These include

pumpkins (squash), sweet

and hot peppers, potatoes

Don't keep this salad just for

Mexican meals, it makes an

interesting addition to any

buffet table or salad bar.

additional sliced chillies.

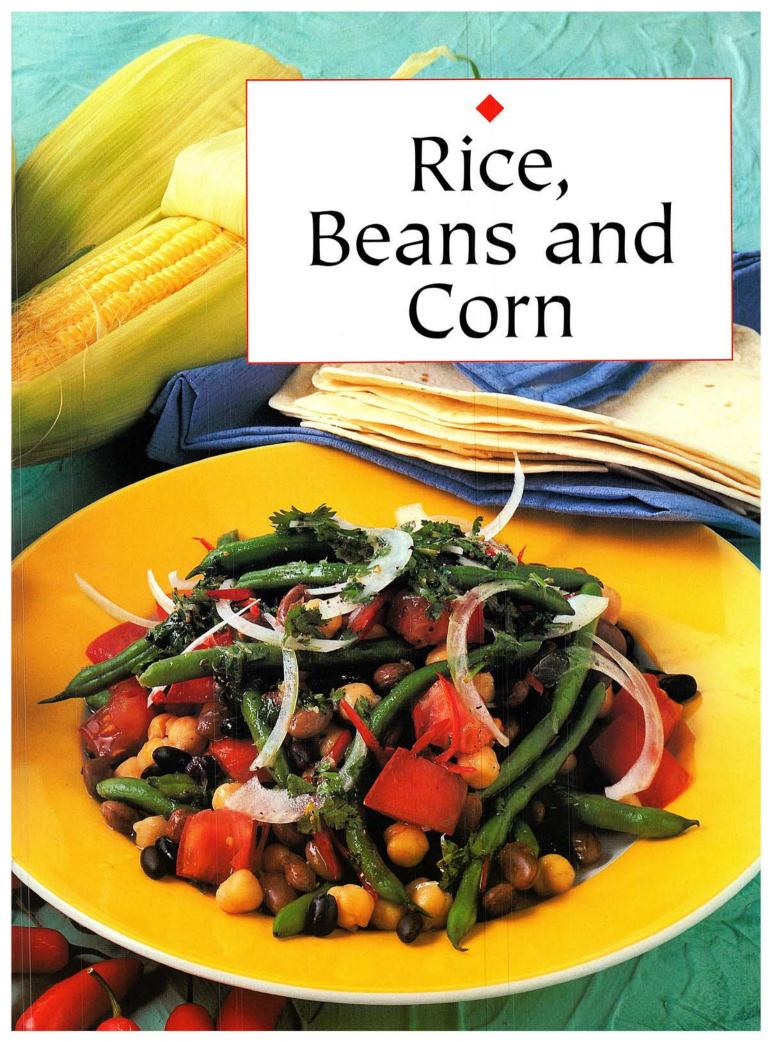
For extra zing, garnish with

zucchini (courgettes),

and tomatoes.







Previous pages: Guanajuato-style Bean Salad, Corn Pudding

The people of Guanajuato

beans you use in this dish the

Serve with warm flour tortillas

say the more varieties of

better your luck will be.

for a satisfying light meal.

Guanajuato-style Bean Salad

155 g/5 oz cooked or canned chickpeas, drained and rinsed
155 g/5 oz cooked or canned black beans, drained and rinsed
155 g/5 oz cooked or canned pinto beans, drained and rinsed
250 g/8 oz green beans
3 tomatoes, diced
3 mild fresh red chillies, cut into strips
1/2 onion, very thinly sliced

CORIANDER AND LIME DRESSING
2 tablespoons chopped fresh coriander

1/4 cup/60 mL/2 fl oz lime juice
2 tablespoons olive oil
freshly ground black pepper

- 1 Place chickpeas and black and pinto beans in a bowl and toss to combine.
- 2 Boil, steam or microwave green beans until just tender, drain and refresh under cold running water. Add cooked fresh beans, tomatoes, chillies and onion to bowl and toss to combine.
- 3 To make dressing, place coriander, lime juice, oil and black pepper to taste in a bowl and whisk to combine. Drizzle dressing over salad and stand for 30 minutes before serving.

Serves 6



CORN PUDDING

Oven temperature 190°C,375°F, Gas 5

1.2 kg/2¹/2 lb fresh, frozen or canned sweet corn kernels
125 g/4 oz butter, melted
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 zucchini (courgettes), grated
3 medium fresh red chillies, chopped
1/2 onion, finely sliced
60 g/2 oz grated mozzarella cheese

- 1 Place $875 \text{ g/}1^3/4$ lb sweet corn kernels and butter in a food processor or blender and process until smooth. Transfer sweet corn mixture to a bowl, stir in baking powder and remaining sweet corn kernels.
- 2 Place zucchini (courgettes) between sheets of absorbent kitchen paper and squeeze to remove as much liquid as possible. Stir zucchini (courgettes) and chillies into corn mixture, then pour into a 23 cm/9 in greased ovenproof dish.
- 3 Scatter with onion and cheese and bake for 30 minutes or until pudding is firm and a skewer inserted in the centre comes out clean.

Serves 8

Serve this delicious corn bake as an accompaniment to grilled meats or seafood, or with a salad and warm tortillas as a vegetarian meal.

CORN CREPES WITH VEGETABLES

1/2 cup/60 g/2 oz flour 1/3 cup/60 g/2 oz corn meal (polenta) 3 eggs

30 g/1 oz butter, melted
3/4-1 cup/185-250 mL/6-8 fl oz milk
155 g/5 oz cooked or canned sweet
corn kernels, roughly chopped
4 tablespoons chopped fresh coriander
1 fresh green chilli, finely chopped

VEGETABLE FILLING

1 cob sweet corn
2 red peppers, quartered
2 red onions, quartered
4 plum (egg or Italian) tomatoes,
quartered
chilli oil

- 1 Place flour and corn meal (polenta) in a bowl, mix to combine and make a well in the centre. Add eggs, butter and enough milk to make a batter, then whisk until smooth. Stir in chopped sweet corn, coriander and chilli. Stand batter for 30 minutes.
- 2 To make filling, brush sweet corn cob, red peppers, onions and tomatoes with chilli oil and cook on a preheated hot barbecue grill or comal until

vegetables are roasted and slightly charred. Cool slightly, then cut corn from cob. Place vegetables in a heatproof dish, cover and keep warm.

- 3 To cook crêpes, heat an oiled 23 cm/9 in frying pan over a medium heat. Pour 3-4 tablespoons of batter into pan and swirl to coat base, then cook for 1-2 minutes each side or until golden. Remove crêpe from pan and keep warm. Repeat with remaining mixture to make 4 crêpes.
- 4 To serve, spoon filling on to one half of each crêpe and fold over.

For a complete meal serve with Garlic and Chilli Salsa (page 78) and lime wedges.

Serves 4



Corn Crêpes with Vegetables

BLACK BEAN NACHOS

Oven temperature 180°C, 350°F, Gas 4

Fresh epazote (chenopodium ambrosioides) is a herb much used in traditional Mexican cooking. It has an anise flavour and is often used in bean dishes as it brings out their flavour and some people believe it reduces their gaseous effects. It is not readily available commercially outside of Mexico except occasionally as a dried herb. Outside of Mexico it is called wormseed or wormweed and is often considered a weed. In Mexico dried epazote is used as a medicinal tea.

250 g/8 oz dried black beans, soaked overnight and drained
21/2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, crushed
2 hot fresh red chillies, chopped
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 cup/250 mL/8 fl oz vegetable stock
125 g/4 oz grated mozarella cheese
6 mild fresh red chillies, cut into
thin strips
250 g/8 oz corn chips or fried corn
tortilla pieces

- 1 Place beans in a saucepan and pour over fresh cold water to cover by 5 cm/2 in. Bring to the boil and boil for 10 minutes. Reduce heat, cover and simmer beans for 45 minutes or until beans are tender. Drain and set aside.
- 2 Heat ¹/₂ tablespoon oil in a frying pan over a medium heat, add onion, garlic, hot chillies and cumin and cook, stirring, for 3 minutes or until onions are soft. Add half the beans and cook, mashing with a potato masher until beans form a coarse purée. Add remaining beans and stock, bring to simmering and simmer for 5 minutes or until mixture reduces and thickens.
- 3 Transfer bean mixture to an ovenproof dish, sprinkle with cheese and bake for 20 minutes or until cheese melts.
- 4 Heat remaining oil in a frying pan over a high heat until very hot, add mild chillies and cook for 2 minutes or until crisp. Drain on absorbent kitchen paper. To serve, arrange corn chips around bean mixture, then scatter with fried chilli strips.

Serves 4

These nachos are delicious served with a salsa of your choice and sour cream. Shown here served with Salsa Mexicana (page 76).



Add half the beans to the frying pan and cook, mashing to form a coarse purée.



Transfer bean mixture to an ovenproof dish and sprinkle with cheese.



Cook mild chillies in hot oil for 2 minutes or until crisp.



Drunken Beans

375 g/12 oz dried pinto beans, soaked overnight and drained
1 onion, halved
3 cloves garlic
15 g/1/2 oz butter
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped
2 tomatoes, chopped
2 serrano chillies, chopped
1 bunch fresh coriander, leaves chopped
1 cup/250 mL/8 fl oz beer

- 1 Place beans in a saucepan and pour over fresh cold water to cover by 5 cm/2 in. Bring to the boil and boil for 10 minutes. Reduce heat, add halved onion and garlic, cover and simmer for 1½ hours or until beans are tender. Drain and set aside.
- 2 Heat butter and oil in a frying pan over a medium heat, add chopped onion and cook for 3 minutes or until soft. Add tomatoes, chillies, coriander, beer and beans, bring to simmering and simmer for 40 minutes or until mixture reduces and thickens.

Serves 4



REFRIED BEANS

375 g/12 oz dried black, pinto or light pink beans, soaked overnight and drained

1/2 onion

15 g/1/2 oz butter or lard

10 cups/2.5 litres/41/4 pt water

3 serrano chillies, chopped

1/2 cup/125 mL/4 fl oz vegetable oil

- 1 Place beans, onion, butter or lard and water in a saucepan or claypot, bring to the boil and boil for 10 minutes. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 1½ hours or until beans are tender. Add more water during cooking as required the beans should always be covered. Stir in chillies.
- 2 Heat oil in a frying pan over a medium heat, add 3-4 spoonfuls of beans with their cooking liquid and cook mashing with a potato masher until beans form a coarse purée. Keep adding beans and cooking in this way until all beans are added and mashed, then continue to cook, stirring, until liquid evaporates.

Serves 6

Traditionally lard would be used for frying the beans, not vegetable oil.
Canned refried beans are also available from the Mexican section of most supermarkets and are a good alternative when you do not have time to make your own.

Serve beans with roasted or grilled meats and tortillas.

For a complete meal these beans are delicious served with crumbled feta cheese and roasted tomatoes or with salsa on tortillas.

GREEN RICE WITH HERBS

1 onion, quartered and roasted
8 English spinach leaves
3 tablespoons chopped fresh flat
leaf parsley
3 tablespoons chopped fresh corinader
2 mild fresh green chillies, seeded
and chopped
2 cloves garlic, roasted
3 cups/750 mL/1¹/4 pt chicken stock
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 cup/220 g/7 oz white rice

- 1 Place onion, spinach, parsley, coriander, chillies, garlic and ¹/₃ cup/ 90 mL/3 fl oz stock in a food processor or blender and process to make a purée.
- 2 Place remaining stock in a saucepan over a medium heat, bring to the boil, then reduce heat and keep warm.
- 3 Heat oil in a separate saucepan over a medium heat, add rice and cook stirring for 2-3 minutes or until rice is opaque. Stir in herb purée and hot stock, bring to simmering, cover and simmer for 20-25 minutes or until rice is tender and liquid absorbed.

For those who find even mild chillies too hot use sweet green peppers in this dish instead. Serve this simple rice dish with grilled or roasted meats or fish.

Serves 6



Mexican Red Rice

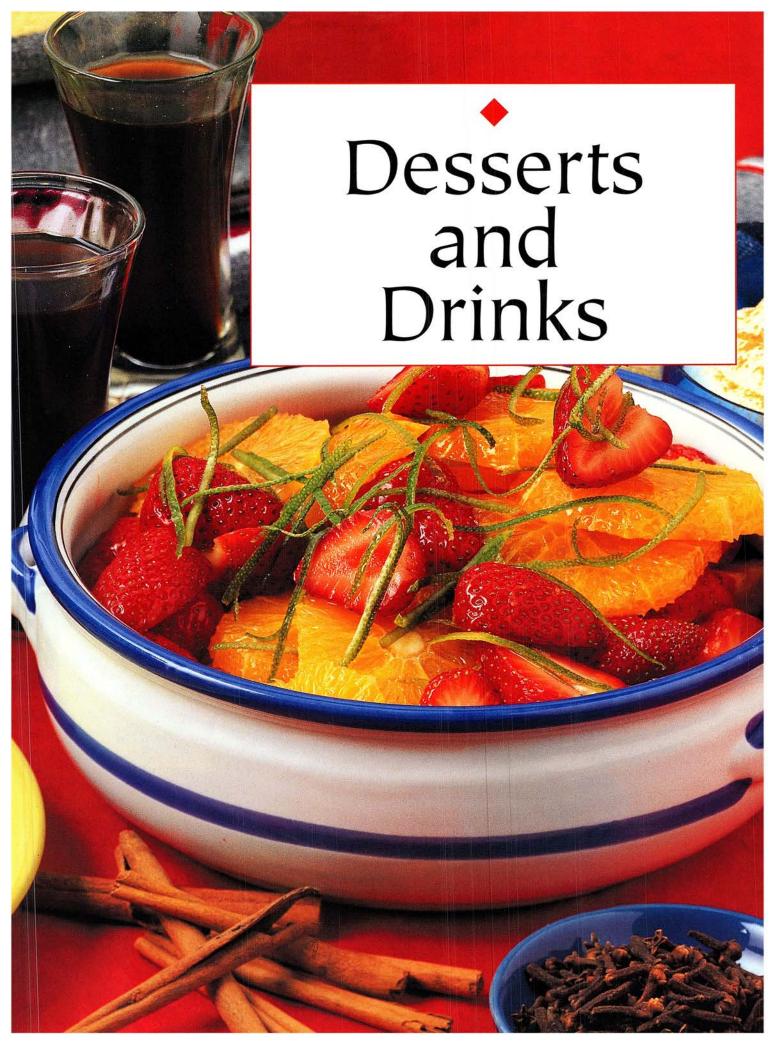
2 cups/440 g/14 oz long grain white rice
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, crushed
4 fresh green chillies
1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano
4 cups/1 litre/1³/4 pt chicken stock
1 cup/250 mL/8 fl oz tomato purée freshly ground black pepper

- 1 Place rice in a bowl, pour over warm water to cover and soak for 5 minutes. Drain and discard water.
- 2 Heat oil in a deep frying pan over a medium heat, add onion and garlic and cook, stirring, for 4 minutes or until golden and soft. Add rice and cook, stirring, for 1 minute.
- 3 Stir in chillies, oregano, stock, tomato purée and black pepper to taste and bring to the boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 20 minutes or until rice is tender.

Serves 6

Serve rice with grilled meats or chicken, tortillas and salsas.





Previous pages: Aztec Oranges, Mexican Coffee (page 72), Fruit-filled Chimichangas

Fruit-filled Chimichangas

4 flour tortillas vegetable oil for deep-frying sugar for sprinkling

FRUIT AND COCONUT FILLING 125 g/4 oz chopped pineapple 60 g/2 oz chopped strawberries 4 tablespoons flaked coconut 2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint

- 1 To make filling, place pineapple, strawberries, coconut and mint in a bowl and mix to combine.
- 2 Warm tortillas, one at a time, in a dry frying pan over a medium heat for 20-30 seconds each side or until soft. Place 1-2 tablespoons of filling down the centre of each tortilla and fold in half to enclose. Press edges together to seal.
- 3 Heat oil in a saucepan over a high heat until a cube of bread dropped in browns in 50 seconds. Hold tortilla parcels with 2 sets of tongs and carefully deep-fry for 2-3 minutes or until golden and crisp. Drain on absorbent kitchen paper, then sprinkle generously with sugar and serve.

Serves 4



AZTEC ORANGES

4 oranges, peeled, all white pith removed and sliced crosswise
250 g/8 oz strawberries, hulled and halved
2 tablespoons sugar shredded rind of 1 lime
2 tablespoons lime juice
2 tablespoons tequila
1 tablespoon orange flower water

Place oranges and strawberries in a bowl. Combine sugar, lime rind, lime juice, tequila and orange flower water and pour over fruit. Toss, cover and chill for 3 hours before serving.

Serves 6

chimichangas that the splattering oil does not burn your hands. For safety wear oven gloves on both hands and ensure your lower arms are covered.

Chimichangas are delicious

Take care when frying the

Chimichangas are delicious served with whipped cream and Mexican Coffee (page 72) as a sweet treat or dessert.

Serve with whipped cream flavoured with a little sugar and ground cinnamon.

CARAMELISED MILK

1 cup/250 g/8 oz sugar 8 egg yolks 1/3 cup/45 g/11/2 oz cornflour 5 cups/1.2 litres/2 pt milk 1/2 cup/60 g/2 oz almond meal 1 tablespoon vanilla essence pinch ground cinnamon SUGAR TOPPING 1/2 cup/125 g/4 oz sugar 30 g/1 oz butter

1 Place sugar and egg yolks in a bowl and beat until thick and creamy. Blend cornflour with ¹/₂ cup/125 mL/4 fl oz of the milk. Beat almond meal, remaining milk, cornflour mixture, vanilla

essence and cinnamon into egg mixture. Pour mixture into a saucepan and cook over a low heat, stirring constantly, until mixture boils and thickens.

- 2 Pour mixture into a heatproof serving dish, cover surface with a piece of greased baking paper and chill for several hours or until set.
- 3 For topping, remove paper from top of pudding, then sprinkle with sugar and dot with butter. Heat a comal or large metal spoon over a high heat for 10 minutes or until very hot. Run comal or spoon over topping until sugar caramelises.

Serves 8

Try to use pure vanilla, which is an extract from the vanilla bean (pod), rather than imitation vanilla essence which is a synthetic product called vanillin.



SWEET PUMPKIN COYOTAS

Oven temperature 200°C, 400°F, Gas 6

COYOTAS DOUGH 625 g/1¹/4 lb flour 220 g/7 oz butter, chopped pinch salt cold water

SWEET PUMPKIN FILLING 750 g/1¹/₂ lb butternut pumpkin (squash), peeled and chopped ¹/₂ cup/90 g/3 oz brown sugar 45 g/1¹/₂ oz butter, diced 2 tablespoons water

- 1 To make filling, place pumpkin (squash) in a baking dish, then scatter with sugar, dot with butter and drizzle with water. Cover and bake for 30-40 minutes or until pumpkin (squash) is soft and golden. Cool.
- 2 To make dough, place flour, butter and salt in a food processor and process until mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. With machine running, add enough cold water to form a soft dough. Turn dough onto a lightly floured surface and knead for 10 minutes or until soft and elastic. Chill.
- 3 Divide dough into 16 equal pieces. Roll out each piece to form a 3 mm/¹/s in thick round.
- 4 Place 1-2 tablespoons of filling in the centre of eight of the dough rounds. Top with remaining rounds and press edges to seal. Place coyotas on greased baking trays, reduce oven temperature to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4 and bake for 25-30 minutes or until golden. Serve warm.

Makes 8

Serve these with Traditional Hot Chocolate (page 74) as shown here or with Mexican Coffee (page 72) as a sweet afternoon treat or dessert.



Place pumpkin (squash) in a baking dish, then scatter with sugar, dot with butter and drizzle with water.



Divide dough into 16 equal pieces. Roll out each piece of dough to form a 3 mm/¹/₈ in thick round.



Place some filling in the centre of eight of the dough rounds. Top with remaining dough rounds and press edges to seal.



MEXICAN COFFEE

Coffee was drunk by the Aztecs who believed it gave them strength and vigour. Standing the coffee before serving allows the grounds to sink to the bottom of the pan.

1/3 cup/60 g/2 oz dark brown sugar
 3 cinnamon sticks
 3 cloves
 4 cups/1 litre/1³/4 pt water
 4 tablespoons ground dark
 roasted coffee

Place sugar, cinnamon, cloves and water in a saucepan over a medium heat and cook, stirring, until sugar dissolves. Stir in coffee and bring to the boil. Remove pan from heat, cover and stand for 10 minutes. Strain coffee into cups and serve.

Makes 4 cups/1 litre/13/4 pt



MANGO SHERBET

 $2^{1}/2$ cups/625 g/ $1^{1}/4$ lb sugar 2 cups/500 mL/16 fl oz water 1.5 kg/3 lb fresh mango flesh

- 1 Place sugar and water in a saucepan over a low heat and cook, stirring, until sugar dissolves. Bring to the boil and boil for 30 seconds. Pour syrup into a heatproof bowl and chill.
- 2 Place mango in a food processor and process until smooth. Push puréed mango through a fine sieve, then stir in syrup. Pour mango mixture into a ice-cream maker and freeze following manufacturer's instructions.

 Alternatively, pour mixture into a shallow freezerproof container and freeze until ice crystals start to form around the edges. Using a fork, stir to break up ice crystals. Repeat the process once more then freeze until firm.

Serves 6

Drained canned mangoes can be used in place of the fresh mango in this recipe.

LEMON SHERBET

2¹/₂ cups/625 g/1¹/₄ lb sugar 3 cups/750 mL/1¹/₄ pt water 2 cups/500 mL/16 fl oz lemon juice

- 1 Place sugar and water in a saucepan over a low heat and cook, stirring, until sugar dissolves. Bring to the boil and boil for 30 seconds. Pour syrup into a heatproof bowl and chill.
- 2 Combine sugar syrup and lemon juice, pour into an ice-cream maker and freeze following manufacturer's instructions. Alternatively, pour mixture into a shallow freezerproof container and freeze until ice crystals start to form around the edges. Using a fork, stir to break up ice crystals. Repeat the process once more then freeze until firm.

Orange or lime juice or puréed berries can be used in place of the lemon juice to create different flavoured sherbets.

Serves 6



TRADITIONAL HOT CHOCOLATE

1 vanilla bean (pod), split
8 cups/2 litres/3¹/2 pt milk
185 g/6 oz Mexican chocolate
2-3 tablespoons sugar

Mexican chocolate is rather
coarse and is made by
grinding together cacao

- 1 Place cinnamon stick, vanilla bean (pod) and milk in a saucepan over a high heat and heat until milk is almost boiling. Remove cinnamon stick and vanilla bean (pod).
- 2 Add chocolate and whisk with a wire whisk until chocolate melts and milk is frothy. Add sugar to taste, then pour into cups and serve immediately.

Makes 8 cups/2 litres/31/2 pt



Mango Puddings

4 egg yolks
1 cinnamon stick
6 cups/1.5 litres/2¹/₂ pt milk
2 cups/500 g/1 lb sugar
3 mangoes, flesh puréed and strained
³/₄ cup/75 g/2¹/₂ oz almond meal
ALMOND CINNAMON TOPPING
60 g/2 oz chopped blanched almonds

2 tablespoons sugar

1 tablespoon ground cinnamon

1 cinnamon stick

- 1 Place egg yolks in a bowl and whisk to combine. Set aside.
- 2 Place cinnamon stick and milk in a saucepan over a medium heat and bring to the boil. Remove pan from heat and stand for 10 minutes, then remove cinnamon stick.
- 3 Stir in sugar, return pan to a medium heat and cook, stirring, until sugar dissolves. Remove pan from heat and whisk a little of the hot milk mixture into egg yolks, then whisk egg yolk mixture back into hot milk. Return pan to heat and cook, stirring constantly, until mixture thickens. Remove from heat and stir in puréed mango and almond meal. Divide mixture between six heatproof serving bowls and chill for several hours or until set.
- 4 To make topping, combine chopped almonds, sugar and cinnamon. Just prior to serving, sprinkle topping over puddings.

Serves 6

This delicious mango custard is the perfect finish to a spicy meal.

beans, sugar, canela

(Mexican soft cinnamon) and almonds. It is never eaten as

a sweet but is used for hot chocolate and mole.

LIMEADE

1 cup/220 g/7 oz caster sugar 6 cups/1.5 litres/2¹/₂ pt water 6 limes, sliced ³/₄ cup/185 mL/6 fl oz fresh lime juice crushed ice Place sugar and water in a jug and stir to dissolve. Add lime slices and lime juice and chill for at least 1 hour. To serve, three-quarters fill tall glasses with crushed ice and pour over limeade.

Makes 8 cups/2 litres/31/2 pt

For a grown-up drink add a shot of tequila.



Sauces and Condiments

Guacamole

2 avocados, stoned, peeled and mashed ¹/₂ small white onion, chopped 2 fresh green chillies, chopped 3 tablespoons chopped fresh coriander Salsa is a word associated 2 tablespoons lime juice with Mexican food and a ¹/₂ tomato, chopped bowl of salsa on the side fresh coriander leaves gives even the simplest meal a Mexican flavour. Salsas vary according to the cook. the season and the ingredients available, just to name a few of the changeables. A salsa can

be made from raw or cooked

ingredients, can be made

flavour - again it's all up to

the cook, the season and

ingredients available! The

word sauce. Today, most

people think of a salsa as

being a chunky sauce-like

accompaniment.

word salsa comes from the

Spanish word for sauce and is often used instead of the

with or without tomatoes and can be mild or hot in Place avocados, onion, chillies, chopped coriander and lime juice in a bowl and mix lightly with a fork to combine. Spoon in a serving bowl and top with tomato and coriander leaves.

Makes 2 cups/500 mL/16 fl oz



ROASTED CHILLI SALSA

3 tomatoes 3 jalapeño or hot green chillies 1 small white onion, unpeeled 2 cloves garlic, unpeeled 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin freshly ground black pepper water (optional)

Place tomatoes, chillies, onion and garlic in a hot dry frying pan or comal and roast until skins are blistered and charred and flesh of vegetables are soft. Peel onion and garlic, roughly chop and place in a bowl. Roughly chop tomatoes and chillies and add to onion mixture. Then add oregano, cumin and black pepper to taste. Toss to combine and thin with water, if desired.

Makes 1¹/₂ cups/375 mL/12 fl oz



2 ripe tomatoes, peeled, seeded and finely chopped 2-3 hot fresh green chillies, seeded and chopped 1 small white onion, finely chopped 1 clove garlic, crushed 2 tablespoons chopped fresh coriander 2 tablespoons lime juice

Place tomatoes, chillies, onion, garlic, coriander and lime juice in a bowl and toss to combine. Stand for at least 30 minutes before serving.

Makes 2 cubs/500 mL/16 fl oz

Pumpkin Seed Salsa

3 tomatoes $1^{1}/2$ cups/45 g/ $1^{1}/2$ oz green pumpkin seeds (pepitas) 2 tablespoons water 2-3 medium fresh green chillies, chopped 2 tablespoons chopped fresh coriander 1 Cook tomatoes in a hot dry frying pan or comal until skins are blistered and charred. Cool slightly and peel.

2 Place pumpkin seeds (pepitas) in a baking dish and bake for 4-6 minutes or until seeds are toasted and golden. Place pumpkin seeds (pepitas) and water in a food processor or blender and process to make a rough paste. Add tomatoes, chillies and coriander and process to combine.

Makes 13/4 cups/440 mL/14 fl oz

Oven temperature 160°C, 325°F, Gas 3

For centuries the Mexicans have enjoyed pumpkin seeds (pepitas) as a nutritious and tasty snack. In their simplest form the seeds are toasted and seasoned with salt.

ROASTED CORN SALSA

3 cobs sweet corn 1 tablespoon olive oil 1 red pepper, quartered 3 mild fresh green chillies, halved and seeded 2 cloves garlic, unpeeled 1 tablespoon chopped fresh coriander 2 teaspoons chopped fresh oregano

- 1 Brush corn cobs with oil and cook on a preheated hot char-grill or barbecue for 6-8 minutes or until lightly charred and soft. Cut corn from cobs and place in a bowl.
- 2 Brush red pepper and chillies with oil and cook on preheated hot char-grill or barbecue with garlic for 4 minutes or until skins are lightly charred. Chop red pepper and chillies and squeeze garlic from skins. Add red pepper, chillies, garlic, coriander and oregano to sweet corn and toss to combine.

Makes 2 cups/500 mL/16 fl oz



500 g/1 lb canned tomatillos, drained and roughly chopped 2-3 medium fresh green chillies, seeded and chopped 1 small white onion, chopped 1 clove garlic, chopped 2 tablespoons fresh coriander leaves pinch ground cumin

Place tomatillos, chillies, onion, garlic, coriander and cumin in a food processor and process to finely chopped. Chill.

Makes 11/2 cups/375 mL/12 fl oz

This green salsa is even better if made with fresh tomatillos instead of the canned ones.

SALSA RANCHERA

This standard salsa is great served with grilled meats, chicken and fish. It is also the base sauce for the well known huevos rancheros once the sauce is cooked make four indentations in the sauce, break in 4 eggs, and cook for 5 minutes longer or until eggs are cooked to your liking.

2 teaspoons vegetable oil 1 green pepper, chopped 1 onion, chopped 2 medium fresh green chillies, seeded and chopped 2 cloves garlic, chopped 5 ripe tomatoes, roasted, peeled, seeded and chopped 1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano 1 teaspoon ground cumin 1 tablespoon chopped fresh coriander Heat oil in a frying pan over a medium heat, add green pepper, onion, chillies and garlic and cook, stirring, for 4 minutes or until vegetables are soft. Add tomatoes, oregano and cumin and simmer for 10 minutes or until sauce reduces and thickens. Stir in coriander.

Makes 2 cups/500 mL/16 fl oz



GARLIC AND CHILLI SALSA

4 medium fresh green chillies, seeded and chopped 2 tomatoes, peeled and chopped 6 cloves garlic, chopped 1 tablespoon chopped fresh coriander 2 tablespoons chopped fresh flat leaf parsley 1 teaspoon ground cumin 2 teaspoons lime juice

Place chillies, tomatoes, garlic, coriander, parsley and cumin in a food processor or blender and process to roughly chopped. Stir in lime juice and chill until required.

Makes 1 cup/250 mL/8 fl oz



ENCHILADA SAUCE

500 g/1 lb canned tomatillos, drained and chopped 1 white onion, chopped 1 hot fresh green chilli, seeded Tomatillos look like green and chopped tomatoes but they aren't -1 clove garlic, crushed 2 tablespoons fresh coriander leaves 1 cup/250 mL/8 fl oz chicken or vegetable stock lime juice

Place tomatillos, onion, chilli, garlic and coriander in a food processor or blender and process until smooth. Transfer to a saucepan and bring to simmering over a low heat. Stir in stock and simmer for 8-10 minutes or until sauce reduces and thickens. Stir in lime juice to taste.

Makes 13/4 cubs/440 mL/14 fl oz

in fact they don't even belong to the same family. They are also known as cape gooseberries and ground cherries.

Glossary

FRESH CHILLIES

Habanero: The habanero chilli is closely related to the Scotch Bonnet chilli for which it is sometimes mistaken. The habanero is the hottest chilli in the world and the Scotch Bonnet is only slightly

less hot. Both are small lantern-shaped chillies, the habanero is about 5 cm/2 in long and the Scotch Bonnet is just a little smaller. Habaneros are said to be 30-50 times hotter than jalapeños.

The habanero is also available dried and smoked dried. When dried it is mostly used for sauces and as with the fresh should be used with caution.

Jalapeño: Available as red or green this is one of the most popular and best known chillies. Being the riper form the red jalapeño chilli is sweeter than the green.

Poblano: The colour of this coneshaped chilli ranges from green to red. It is one of the most popular chillies used in Mexican cooking, is used at all stages of ripeness and is seldom eaten raw. Poblano chillies are most

often roasted and stuffed, used in moles and sauces or as roasted chilli strips. If poblano

chillies are unavailable one of the other mild chillies such as Anaheim or New Mexico could be used instead.

Serrano: This green or red chilli is considered by many to be the best one for salsas. Serrano literally means 'from the mountains' and it was in the mountains of northern Puebla and Hidalgo in Mexico that this chilli was first grown. If unavailable use jalapeño chillies instead. In Mexico serrano and ialapeño chillies are considered to be interchangable.

DRIED CHILLIES

Ancho: This chilli is the dried form of the poblano chilli and is the most popular dried chilli in Mexico. It is the sweetest of the dried chillies and adds a sweet-smoky flavour to dishes. It is much used in moles and other sauces.

Chipotle: This is a dried, smoked jalapeño chilli which adds a smoky hot flavour to dishes. They are also available canned usually in an adobo sauce which takes up the flavour of the chilli.

Guajillo:

This mild to medium chilli has a piney, slightly fruity flavour and is mostly used in salsas, sauces, soups and

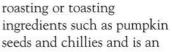


Pasilla: This chilli is also known as chilli negro. The name pasilla means 'little raisin' and this chilli has a raisin-like aroma with a wrinkled raisin-coloured skin. Along with the ancho and mulato chillies it one of the three chillies known as the 'holy trinity' which are used in the preparation of mole nero (black).

BANANA LEAVES: Like corn husks these are used for wrapping food and impart a distinctive flavour. They are never eaten. Before using for wrapping fresh leaves need to softened. This can be done by: passing the leaves over a gas flame until they are soft; blanching in boiling water for 20-30 seconds; or heating in the microwave on HIGH (100%) for 45-60 seconds or until soft. Remove the thick mid-rib before using or the leaves will be difficult to wrap around the food. Banana leaves are used more often in southern and coastal Mexico.

COMAL: This is a cooking disk made from steel, cast iron or

unglazed earthenware and is traditionally used for cooking tortillas. It is also used for

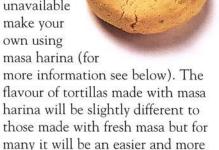


essential piece of equipment for any Mexican cook. A heavy skillet or frying pan are suitable alternatives.

CORN HUSKS: These are the dried outer leaves of the corn husks which are used for wrapping tamales and various other foods. They need to be soaked well before using so that they become soft and pliable and are easier to wrap around the food. They are available from specialty food stores.

MASA: In Mexico masa refers to corn dough which is used for making tortillas. Fresh masa is available from specialty Mexican food stores or can sometimes be

purchased from good Mexican restaurants. If it is unavailable make your own using



convenient alternative. Instant

packet directions for how to use.

masa is sometimes available - follow

MASA HARINA: This flour-like powder is fresh corn masa which has been dried and finely ground. It should not be confused with corn meal (polenta) which cannot be used for making tortillas. If you are unable to obtain fresh masa, then use masa harina. To reconstitute masa harina it is usually simply a matter adding water and sometimes

butter or some other fat, however for best results follow the packet directions. Masa harina is available from stores specialising in Mexican food stuffs.

MEXICAN CHOCOLATE: This

does not resemble European chocolate in the slightest. Rather than being velvety and smooth it is grainy and is never eaten as confectionary. Mexican chocolate is made by grinding together cacao beans, sugar, canela (Mexican soft cinnamon)



and almonds, then pressing the mixture into tablets. It is primarily used for making hot chocolate and a small amount is used in the famous dish mole poblano often referred to by those outside of Mexico as turkey with chocolate sauce! The origins of flavouring savoury dishes with chocolate dates back to the Mayan empire, where chilli stews seasoned with chocolate were a specialty. At this time women were forbidden to taste chocolate and only high ranking men where allow to eat dishes seasoned with chocolate.

PUMPKIN SEEDS: For centuries



form the seeds are toasted and seasoned with salt. Often called pepitas, they are simply the dried seeds of pumpkin and various other squash. In Mexico pumpkin seeds can be purchased raw, roasted, shelled, unshelled or ground. Pumpkin seed sauce is a popular accompaniment for simply prepared meat, poultry, fish and vegetables or can be offered as dip for tortillas.

TOMATILLOS: While these look like green tomatoes, and are often called Mexican green tomatoes, they don't even belong to the tomato family. Instead they are a member of the gooseberry family and can also be called cape gooseberries and ground cherries. Tomatillos can be difficult to buy fresh outside of Mexico, however they are readily available canned and these make a good alternative if fresh are unavailable and means that no cooking is required.

TORTILLA PRESS: These are available from specialty Mexican food stores or kitchenware shops and make the process of shaping tortillas a little quicker and

easier. The best tortilla presses are made from cast iron or wood.



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