

POSOLE For Cinco de Mayo

Next week we will once again celebrate Cinco de Mayo (5th of May), the annual occasion for jubilant celebration of Mexico's triumphant victory over France at the Battle of Puebla in 1862, with our neighbors south of the border. No matter what your ancestry may be, this holiday is a wonderful opportunity for everyone to celebrate the culture and the flavors of Mexico. So, join me in making the traditional Mexican dish of Posole, a hearty Mexican soup/stew that is made with hominy. Hominy, which has very early beginnings, is dried white or yellow corn kernels from which the hull and germ have been removed.

You may have heard of hominy as it is referred to hominy grits, which is hominy ground to simmer with liquid to make grits as eaten in the South. However, we will be using the hominy found in a can in the canned vegetable or Mexican section of Jungle Jim's to make this traditional Mexican dish, Posole or Pozole (pronounced "poh SOH leh"); actually Pozole is the Mexican name for hominy.

Posole originated in Jalisco, in the middle of Mexico's Pacific Coast region. Although pork is the traditional choice of meat, it can be made with chicken or a combination of both. Bowls of chopped radishes, green onion, cilantro, and cheese are set out on the table to top the bowls of Posole. It can also be served with sour cream and some like it served over shredded lettuce. As you can see, the variations are endless. Visit the Mexican section at Jungle Jim's to pick up many delicious authentic Mexican foods to compliment your Posole. I have also included recipes for Simple Margaritas, Salsa, and Guacamole to serve pre-Pozole – it's time to celebrate and have a great time!

Posole (Mexican Pork Stew)

1 lb.	Boneless Pork, trimmed of fat and cut into strips or cubes, (can be pork shoulder, pork loin, or pork chops)
1 Tab.	Olive Oil
½ Cup	Onion, chopped
2	Garlic cloves, minced
1	10 -14 ½ oz. can of chopped Mexican Tomatoes with Hot Chilies
1	4 oz. can of Green Chilies, undrained
1 Teas.	Chili Powder
½ Teas.	Ground Cumin
½ Teas.	Dried Oregano, crushed
½ Tsp.	Salt
¼ Tsp.	Freshly ground Pepper
2	14 ½ oz. cans of low-sodium Chicken Broth
1	14 ½ oz. can of Hominy, drained
½ Cup	Fresh Cilantro, snipped
Toppings:	(Can set out as few or many as you desire) Sliced or shredded radishes Sliced or chopped green onions Shredded Cheese Sour Cream Shredded Lettuce Lime Wedges*

In a large saucepan or Dutch oven, brown pork in hot oil over medium hot heat. Remove pork from pan and set aside. In remaining oil, saute onion until tender, about 4 minutes. Add garlic, cooking for just a minute more. Add tomatoes, chilies, seasonings, and broth. Stir until combined. Add browned pork back into the pot and stir. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, cover, and simmer for one hour. Add the drained can of hominy and simmer an additional 30 minutes. Add the cilantro and remove from the heat. Ladle into bowls and serve with one or more of the toppings. Can be made ahead and reheated.

NOTE: This is not a highly spicy recipe; however, you can add additional spicy peppers or crushed red pepper. There are spicy peppers in the tomatoes. So, add those first and taste for spiciness after you have simmered the first hour. If you are unsure, just put out a bowl of chopped jalapeno peppers and allow your family and friends to add heat to their individual tastes.

*Lime: I'm not sure if it is traditional or if it is my tradition to serve with a wedge of lime with each bowl of Posole, but a squeeze of fresh lime juice over Posole at serving time wakes up the flavors and adds the most delightful taste! You simply must try it!

Simple Margaritas

1	6 oz. can Frozen Limeade Concentrate, thawed
6 oz.	Tequila
2 oz.	Triple Sec

Fill blender $\frac{3}{4}$ full with crushed ice. Pour in limeade concentrate, tequila and triple sec. Blend until smooth. Rim margarita glasses with wedge of fresh lime and dip into margarita salt or a combination of $\frac{1}{2}$ salt and $\frac{1}{2}$ sugar.

Naturally, you can alter the taste of your Margaritas by using top shelf liquors and substituting Grand Marnier for the Triple Sec. It's all according to your preferences. You can add fresh lime juice if you like it tart and if it is too tart, you can add a splash of orange juice, which will take off the bite. You can also add partially thawed frozen raspberries or strawberries for fruity Margaritas!

Mexican Salsa

4 Cups	Fresh Tomatoes, peeled, seeded and chopped
1 Cup	Green Onions, chopped (or red onion if you prefer)
1	4 oz. can of chopped green chilies, undrained
2 or more	Jalapeno or Serrano peppers, chopped
2 cloves	Garlic, minced
1 Tab.	Freshly squeezed Lime Juice or more to taste
$\frac{1}{2}$ Tsp.	Ground Cumin
$\frac{1}{4}$ Cup	Fresh Cilantro, chopped, or more to taste
	Salt and Pepper to taste

Combine all ingredients and chill at least one hour.

This is a very basic salsa, you can add chopped avocado, rinsed and drained canned black beans, roasted corn kernels, chopped jicama, chopped mango, etc.

Guacamole

2	Large, ripe Avocado, peeled and pitted
1 Tab.	Freshly squeezed lime juice
$\frac{1}{4}$ Cup	Onion, finely chopped
1 clove	Garlic, minced
	Salt and Pepper to taste

Optional:

1 Roma tomato, peeled, seeded, and chopped finely
1-2 Jalapeno or Serrano chiles, seeded and chopped finely

Mash up the avocados with a fork or mixer. Add the lime juice and blend well. Add the remaining ingredients, combining until you reach the consistency you prefer. For best quality, serve immediately or cover tightly and chill until serving time.

Happy Cinco de Mayo!! Have a great time!
Jungle Jim's Margie Potts