



Humitas

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Categories: Main Dish - S American, Min Dish - Vegetable

Servings: 16

Start to Finish Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

Notes: Humita (from Quechua humint'a) is a Native American dish from pre-Hispanic times, and a traditional food in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador and Peru, although their origin is unclear. In Argentina, Chile, Ecuador and Peru they are known as humitas, in Bolivia as humintas, in Brazil as pamonha, and in Venezuela as hallaquitas. It consists of masa harina and corn, slowly steamed in a pot of water. Ecuadorian humitas are prepared with fresh ground corn with onions, eggs and spices that vary from region to region, and also by each family's tradition. The dough is wrapped in a corn husk, but is steamed rather than baked or boiled. Ecuadorian humitas may also contain cheese. This dish is so traditional in Ecuador that they have developed special pots just for cooking humitas. Ecuadorian humitas can be salty or sweet. Place of origin: Andean states; Main ingredients: Maize, maize husk; Variations: Multiple

Description: Ecuadorian humitas are prepared with fresh ground corn with onions, eggs and spices that vary from region to region, and also by each family's tradition. The dough is wrapped in a corn husk.

Ingredients - Humitas

8 med Ears Corn (4 cups of kernels)

1/4 c chopped Scallions, white part only

1/2 c unsalted Butter, melted

3 lg Eggs, separated

1/2 c Cornmeal, or more if needed

1 t Baking Powder

1 t Salt

1 t Sugar

6 ozs Chihuahua, Mozzarella, or Muenster cheese, shredded

2 T Brandy

Kitchen twine, cut into 15-inch lengths

2 c Water

Ají Criollo (see recipe below)

Ingredients - Ají Criollo

4 Ajies or hot peppers

1/2 bunch Cilantro, stems and leaves

1/2 c Water

3 lg cloves Garlic

Juice from 1/2 Lime or Lemon

3 T White Onion

Directions - Humitas

- 1) Bring a large part of water to a boil. Cut through the corncob at the stem end where the kernels start and carefully remove the husks. Set aside the largest for wrapping and blanch them in boiling water for a couple of minutes to make them more pliable. Remove from the water and drain on paper towels. Cut the rest of the husks into strips for tying or to cover the humitas before steaming.
- 2) Remove the silk from the corn and rinse. Cut the kernels from the cobs, adding the milk scraped from the cobs. Reserve the cobs for later use. Place the corn and scallions in food processor or blender and pulse until finely ground. Add the butter, egg yolks, cornmeal, baking powder, salt, sugar, cheese, and brandy. Pulse until well incorporated and smooth and transfer to a bowl. The mixture should be thick but not runny. Add more cornmeal, as needed.
- 3) In a separate bowl or using a stand mixer, whip the egg whites to form soft peaks. Carefully fold the whites into the corn mixture.
- 4) To assemble the humitas, place two husks on the worktable, slightly overlapped. Place a few spoonfuls of corn batter in the center of the husks. Fold bottom edge over the mixture, fold down the top half, then fold in the sides to form a packet. Tie with string or corn husk strips. Repeat with remaining batter.
- 5) Place the cobs in the bottom of a large saucepan. Add the water until cobs are almost covered. Cover the cobs with the remaining husks. Place humitas open side up over steamer. Cover with remaining husks. Cover the pot and bring to a boil. Steam until the humitas feel firm to the touch, about 30 minutes for small and 45 minutes for large. Add more boiling water if needed. Remove from

heat and serve with ají criollo. Leftovers are great for breakfast and can be reheated or pan fried.

Directions - Aji Criollo

1) Combine the hot peppers, cilantro, water, garlic cloves and lime juice in the blender or food processor and blend well. Add the chopped white onions or scallions and salt to taste.