CHRISTMAS Fiesta

Mexican Food Recipes to Spice Up Your Holidays

- Merry Christmas from -

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Many of our friends have Christmas traditions that involve Mexican food. Nothing warms the heart like the aromas of homemade tamales and fresh queso in the days leading up to December 25th. Tamales and queso aside, here are a few of our favorites that can be enjoyed during the holidays or any time of year. We wish you and yours the very best as you gather to celebrate the birth of our Savior.

Jimmie Don & Marie

MEXICAN SHELLS

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Press each won ton wrapper into a miniature muffin cup and brush with vegetable oil. Bake for 5 minutes. Brown the ground beef in a skillet, stirring until crumbly; drain. Add the taco seasoning mix and cook using the package directions. Prepare the ranch salad dressing mix with the mayonnaise and milk using the package directions. Combine the ground beef mixture with 1½ cups of the salad dressing in a bowl. Add the Monterey Jack cheese and Cheddar cheese and mix well. Spoon into the baked shells. Bake for 5 minutes or until the cheese melts. Garnish with a dollop of sour cream and chopped green onions and serve hot. Makes 40.

1 (40-count) package won ton wrappers
Vegetable oil
1 lb. ground beef
1 envelope taco seasoning mix
1 envelope ranch salad dressing mix
1 c. mayonnaise
1 c. milk
1½ c. shredded Monterey Jack cheese
1½ c. shredded Cheddar cheese
Sour cream & chopped green onions

Salsa!

with corn & black beans

In a medium bowl, combine all ingredients, and mix well. Chill several hours or overnight. Serve cold with baked tortilla chips or vegetable dippers. Makes 12 one-third cup servings.

2 16oz cans chopped tomatoes, drained
1 16oz can black beans, rinsed & drained
1 c. salt-free canned corn, drained
1 4oz can chopped green chiles, mild
¼ c. onion, finely chopped
¼ c. celery, finely chopped
1 tsp. ground coriander
1 tsp. cumin
¼ tsp. garlic powder
¼ tsp. salt
chopped jalapenos to taste

CHICKEN ENCHILADAS

¼ c. butter
¼ c. flour
1 can chicken broth
1 lb. chicken breast, thinly sliced
½ onion, chopped
¼ c. butter, melted
½ tsp. cumin
½ tsp. garlic salt
½ lb. Monterey Jack cheese
¼ lb. Pepper Jack cheese
8 flour tortillas
⅛ c. milk
½ c. sour cream
cilantro, chopped
jalapenos, chopped

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease a 9x13 casserole dish. Melt butter in a heavy saucepan over low heat; whisk in flour until smooth. Cook 1 minute, stirring constantly, until thickened and bubbly; gradually whisk in chicken broth. Bring to a boil, stirring frequently. When slightly thickened, remove from heat. Sauté onion and chicken in ¼ cup butter. Season with cumin and garlic salt; set aside. Grate cheeses and mix together. Spoon about ¼ cup each of chicken mixture and grated cheese down center of each tortilla; roll and secure with toothpick, if necessary. Place in prepared pan. Mix milk and sour cream with sauce; pour over rolled enchiladas. Bake 30 minutes or until hot and bubbly. Remove from oven; garnish with remaining grated cheese, cilantro and jalapenos as desired.

Spanish Rice

2 Tbsp. oil
2 Tbsp. chopped onion
1½ c. white rice, uncooked
2 c. chicken broth
1 c. chunky salsa

Heat oil in a large, heavy skillet over medium heat. Stir in onion and cook until tender, about 5 minutes. Mix rice into skillet, stirring often. When rice begins to brown, stir in chicken broth and salsa. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 20 minutes until liquid is absorbed.

PECAN PRALINES

1 c. light brown sugar, not packed
1 c. granulated sugar
½ c. evaporated milk
2 Tbsp. butter
2 Tbsp. light corn syrup
Pinch of salt
1 tsp. vanilla
1¾ c. pecan halves

Using a wooden spoon, combine brown sugar and next 5 ingredients in a heavy saucepan. Cook 10 minutes or to a softball stage. Test for doneness by dropping a drop of mixture into cold water. Drop should be soft when picked up with fingers. Remove from heat. Add vanilla and pecans. Beat 1 minute or until mixture just starts to thicken. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto waxed paper. Mixture will be slightly runny and will set into soft pralines as it cools. Yields 2 dozen.

PUMPKIN+PRALINE=YUM

Pumpkin Base
1 can pumpkin
1 12oz can evaporated milk
3 eggs
1 c. sugar
4 tsp. pumpkin pie spice

Praline Topping
1 box Betty Crocker Golden Vanilla cake mix
1½ c. pecans, chopped
½ c. butter, melted

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease one 9 x 13 inch pan. In a large bowl, combine pumpkin, evaporated milk, eggs, sugar, and pumpkin pie spice. Mix well. Pour batter into the prepared pan. Sprinkle the dry cake mix evenly over the pumpkin mixture. Drizzle the melted butter over the cake mix. Sprinkle pecans evenly over the top. Bake for 50 to 60 minutes, or until done.

HOT CHOCOLATE *de* MÉXICO

1½ c. cold water
½ c. white sugar
¼ c. unsweetened cocoa powder
2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
1 tsp. ground cinnamon
¼ tsp. ground cloves
¼ tsp. salt
6 c. whole milk
1 Tbsp. vanilla

Whisk water, sugar, cocoa powder, flour, cinnamon, cloves and salt in a saucepan until smooth. Place over low heat; bring to a simmer, whisking constantly, until mixture is thickened and hot, about 4 minutes. Stir in milk; heat until hot chocolate just forms bubbles around the edge. Mix vanilla into hot chocolate. If desired, blend with an immersion blender for a frothy finish.

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