

Masa & Tortillas

The Latin American Dough For Tortillas, Tamales, Sopes, & more

Latin American cuisine would be nowhere without Masa, a dough made from very finely ground corn, which is used to make Tortillas, Tamales, Gorditas, Sopes... it is everything in Latin cooking. Think of it like the all purpose flour that you're used to using for biscuits, rolls, pizza dough, and other common baked goods. The flour required to make Masa is in most all grocery stores, typically found in either the Latin/Ethnic section or by where the Cornmeal is sold, sometimes labeled as "Maseca, Instant Tamale Mix." Note, this is NOT a traditional recipe, this is my version. I like my tortillas a little softer, so I add yogurt in place of lard. This makes the masa softer and also helps the texture should you choose to make tamales by adding the additional baking powder.

Ingredients:

- 2 cups Masa Harina, Maseca, or other brand Instant Corn Masa (corn flour NOT cornmeal!!)
- 1-1/4 cup Water
- 1/2 cup Fat Free Plain or Greek Yogurt
- 1/2 tsp salt
- Additional water if needed for mixing
- *** (add 2tsp baking powder if being used to make Tamales)
- *** (use chicken broth instead of water, if making Tamales)

Directions:

1. In a large mixing bowl, combine the corn flour, 1-1/4 cups water, yogurt, and salt. Mix thoroughly until you form a semi-firm dough ball. If dough appears dry while mixing, add additional water as needed.



SERVING SIZE & POINTS:

- The servings & points vary, depending on how much you use. For tortillas I use 1/8 portions, for tamales I use 1/4 portions. The points listed below are for 1/8 sections, which make a good sized tortilla, using a tortilla press.

	G	B	P
Points: 1 serving =	2	2	2
2 servings =	3	3	3
3 servings =	5	5	5



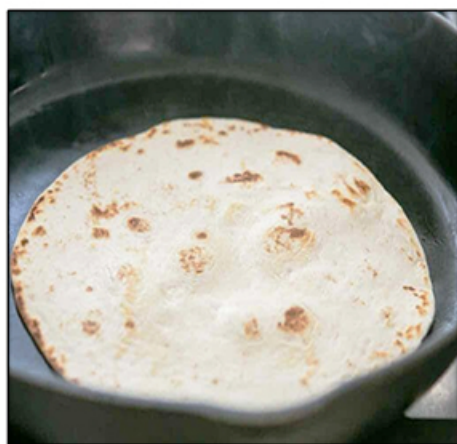
2. Remove dough to a cutting board, and cut into 2 equal sized 1 cup dough balls. Then portion each 1 cup dough ball into 1/4's and then into 1/8's sized portions.



3. Roll each one of the 16 small dough sections into a circular ball. Then, on a flat surface, use your palm and fingers to press the dough balls into tortilla sized rounds.



4. For perfectly uniform tortillas, you can use a traditional tortilla press to form them. They are fairly inexpensive and can be purchased at most ethnic grocery stores, walmarts, or online, for around \$10-15. Get a metal one.



5. To cook the tortillas, heat a skillet, griddle, or large pan on medium-high heat. Cook each tortilla for around 45 seconds on each side.



6. Keep tortillas warm by placing them in a covered container, or place them on a plate covered with a dish cloth. Tortillas are best served warm... unlike revenge.



A



B



C



D

A FEW DIFFERENT USES:

- A) Sopos - Traditionally, the base is made from a circle of fried masa with sides pinched up to resemble a shallow cup. However for WW purposes you should spray it with cooking spray and then bake it. This can then be topped with any number of toppings. Bake the shells at 350 degrees for 10-15 minutes.
- B) Tamales - If you are a WW member, you can view a video in Connect where I show how to make 3 point Tamales. Search for #dhallaktamales and scroll down to my DIY Tamale video.
- C) Arepas - Arepas are awesome. For best results use a 3 point 1/4 cup section of the Masa dough, form it into a 1/2" thick tortilla round. For the non-fried WW version, cook it on a hot griddle or pan for 45 seconds on each side, and then remove it from the heat and slice it ALMOST completely in half down its length like a big pocket. Stuff it with fillings of your choice, then return it to heat.
- D) If you need me to explain what a Taco is... put down this book. Put it down. No really, put it down. No food for you.

COOKING TIP:

- You can easily HALF this recipe if you don't want to make a big batch.
- If you plan to make Tamales OR Arepas, make sure to add 1 tsp of baking powder to each cup of flour that you use to help them fluff up a little bit.
- If you would like to NOT use the yogurt in this recipe due to dairy allergies, you can replace it with an equal amount of silken tofu.
- If you would like an even MORE chewie tortilla, you can substitute 1/4 cup of the corn flour with 1/4 cup of all purpose flour. I personally love the texture that way... but I'm a full-on Gringo.
- If you buy a tortilla press, I would recommend a metal one. They are a few dollars more, but they are more durable. I've broken 2 plastic ones from the hinges breaking with too much pressure.
- Instead of a tortilla press you can put one of the balls of masa between 2 layers of plastic wrap and press down with a pot.
- For more savory tortillas add 1/2 tsp garlic and onion powder to the flour.



Tamales with shredded chicken breast and roasted tomatillo sauce.
4 points for 1, 8 points for 2 on **BLUE** & **PURPLE**.

"Gringo" Tamales

REAL tamales, made with my low point & fat Masa recipe

Ok, I'm going to start off by stating the obvious. Tamale purists, do NOT read the rest of this write up yet. You need to immediately drive to UC Berkeley, go to one of their designated "safe spaces", then get ready to picket. These are not traditional tamales... but they are freaking good, low calorie, virtually fat free and can be used as a healthier blank canvas. Fill them with whatever you want, use whatever sauce you want... but adjust your points accordingly.

I am providing less of a recipe and more of a GUIDE for how to make these. I am using foil, rather than cornhusks, on purpose. 99% of the people reading this have never made Tamales and for them, the thought of going to a store to find corn husks, soak them in water then trying to use them, is a no-go. But... EVERYONE has foil. Again, use this as a GUIDE. If you want to use corn husks, USE CORN HUSKS. Use this Gringo Tamale Guide as a template.

IMPORTANT:

- The points provided to the right, are for a 2 cup batch of my low point Masa (recipe pg. 38-39), sectioned into 6 separate 1/3 cup dough portions. From there, the points will vary depending on what YOU use for filling and for a sauce. In the picture above I used shredded chicken breast with my 0 point Tomatillo sauce (recipe pg. 79). In the recipe-guide pictures to the right, they were filled with my low point chorizo.

Ingredients:

- 1 (2 cup) batch of my Low Point Masa, recipe pg. 38-39
- Make sure you add the additional baking powder and do the chicken broth swap to the Masa, as indicated in the recipe.

Filling Ideas:

- Shredded/Chopped chicken breast, pork, beef, veggies, cheese, heck... even fruit. There are sweet tamales too.

Sauce Ideas:

- My low point red enchilada sauce (pg 77), roasted tomatillo sauce (pg 79), or even a simple fruit puree with a little chili powder or cayenne pepper added, for use with sweet fruit tamales (strawberry and pineapple are popular).

Wrappers:

- 8 decent sized squares of foil wrap, oooooooor....
- 8 packaged, store bought corn husks, soaked

Note:

Remember, I'm showing how to make these with foil wrap. It's a near-identical process using corn husks. Watch a quick youtube video on making Tamales to see how to use traditional corn husks. If you see it one time, that's all you need. My goal here is to make this as accessible to as many people as possible.

Servings Info.:

Yield: 6 Tamales

Servings: 6

Serving Size: 1 Tamale

Points:

G B P

1 serving = 4 4 4

2 servings = 9 8 8

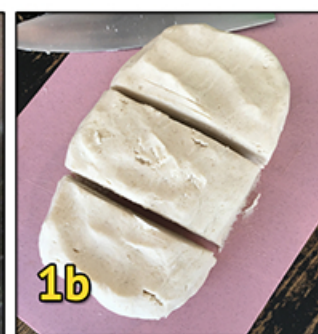
3 servings = 13 13 13

4 servings = 17 17 17

Directions:



1a



1b

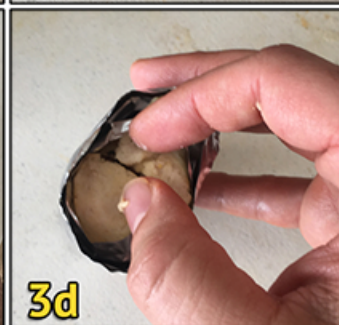
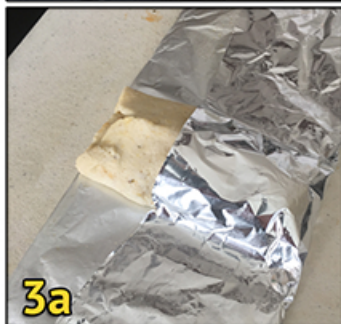
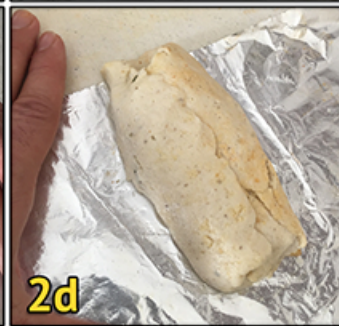


1c



1d

- (A) Make a 2 cup batch of my Masa, as indicated in the recipe on pg 24. Cut the ball into 2 equal portions, then (B) cut each big masa ball into 3 equal 1/3's. (C) Tear off 6 sections of foil wrap, 1 for each tamale. (D) Lay each one down on a cutting board or counter and fold the bottom 1/3 up and onto itself. This is only done so that the foil isn't so much larger than the tamales when we roll them up.




2. (A) Spray the foil with cooking spray, then lightly wet your hands. Press a 1/3 section of Masa down onto the foil, using your hands to create a shape similar to what's pictured. Just to the top of the foil. (B) Add whatever filling you will be using, leaving some exposed masa on the sides. (C) Fold the bottom up and onto the filling, then fold one side up, followed by the second side. (D) Join the two sides in the center and lightly press to join the two folds.
3. (A) Fold the bottom of the foil up and over the tamale. (B) Roll the tamale in the foil, not too loose, not too tight. Just like the 3 little bears, make it juuuust right. (C) Ta da!!!! (D) Gently press the exposed masa together. Rinse and repeat steps 2 and 3 until all of the tamales are rolled.
4. (A) Place the tamales in the bottom of a large stock pot steamer insert. You want to place them in so that the seam of each foil-wrapped tamale is pressed against the wall of the metal insert, or up against another tamale. You don't want them to unravel while steaming. Fill the empty space of the insert with upside down mugs and wadded up tin foil. The mugs help take up space without wasting too much additional foil. (B) Fill the bottom of your stock pot with enough water to JUST stop underneath the insert, then bring the water to a boil. Do NOT have the tamales in yet. Just heat up the water. (C) Once your water is boiling, place the insert, with the tamales, into the steamer and cover with the lid. Reduce the flame to medium. (D) Steam the tamales for 25 minutes. Done.

NOTES:

- As noted, the actual points of YOUR tamales will vary based upon your filling and sauce. The points shown on page 100 are just for the (6) 1/3 sections of masa.
- These are great as is. You can DEFINITELY use corn husks instead of foil, but it won't really do anything other than give the outsides a prettier appearance AND it's traditional. Trust me, I would NEVER prepare them in foil for my wife's Mexican family... it would not end well for this Gringo.
- A common sweet treat that you'll find at Tamale shops are fruit infused tamales. You can add cooked down berries or crushed pineapple to the masa, to give it a colored hue and some sweetness.
- Sweet corn and green chili & cheese are two more common fillings. I've even seen recipes for "chocolate" tamales, with cocoa powder added to the masa, for color, filled with chicken and brown mole' sauce.
- You can watch a video of me making the tamales in Connect, under the hashtag #dhallaktamales. I also have the video in my Youtube channel, The Guilt Free Gourmet.





Mexican Quick Mole

A simplified Quick Mole' sauce that can be thrown together in a pinch

Get ready to dodge angry mobs wielding torches and pitchforks because we're about to tackle the most holy of Mexican sauces, Mole' Poblano. Traditionally, Mole' is a very labor intensive sauce that takes an extremely long time to make and includes ingredients like bread, toasted nuts, seeds, peppers, oil, plantains and much more. It usually cooks for hours or even days. This one is ultra fast, flavorful and only 1 points for a 1/2 cup serving.

Serving Size:

Yields: 6 cups

Servings: 24

Serving Size: 1/4 cup servings

Points:

G B P

1 serving = 0 0 0

2 servings = 1 1 1

3 servings = 1 1 1

4 servings = 2 2 2

- points last checked 4/18/21 -

Ingredients:

- 3-4 medium cloves garlic, chopped
- 29 oz canned tomato sauce
- 1/4 cup 0 point sweetener of choice (monkfruit, stevia, swerve, etc.)
- 3 Tbsp PLUS 2 tsp unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1 to 2 tsp chili powder, to taste
- 1 to 2 tsp McCormick chipotle chili powder (optional but HIGHLY RECOMMENDED!)
- 1-1/2 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 cups fat free chicken broth
- 2 Tbsp PB2 or other brand powdered peanut butter
- 2 Tbsp masa harina (instant masa mix, or any brand corn flour... not cornmeal!)
- 1 tsp onion powder
- 2 Tbsp Lily's 'stevia sweetened' mini dark chocolate, or semi sweet chocolate chips
- 1/4 tsp sesame oil (optional, though recommended for a subtle, nutty flavor)
- 3 tsp sesame seeds, for toasting (toasting sesame seeds makes them less points)

Directions:

1. Spray a medium sized pot with cooking spray and cook the garlic till just fragrant.
2. Add the tomato sauce, sweetener, cocoa powder, black pepper, chili powder, cumin, cinnamon, broth, powdered peanut butter, masa harina, onion powder, chocolate chips and sesame oil to the pot. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat, cover and simmer for 15-20 mins.
3. Turn off heat and let cool for 30 minutes.
4. Toast the sesame seeds in a small pan over medium heat for 3-4 minutes, till starting to brown, set aside to use as a garnish on your plated meal.

Note:

- In the database, toasted sesame seeds are juuust lower in points than regular. Hence, why we're toasting them for our garnish, rather than using raw sesame seeds.
- 'Instant Masa Mix' can be found in the Mexican food aisle, at your grocery store. It is usually sold under the brand name 'Ma Se Ca' or 'Maseca' instant tamale mix.





Red Enchilada Sauce

This is a very fast, low fat and simple take on a Mexican classic

I need to start by addressing all of my Latino amigos that are reading this page. I understand that I've already messed with your Mole' sauce, I've already had you put fat free yogurt into Masa to make 3 point Gringo Tamales on Connect (#dhallakvids), I know that right now you're probably waving your fists in the sky and yelling "what more could this guy do to us?!" Well sorry, but I'm messing with your enchilada sauce now. Traditionally, red enchilada sauce is an incredibly delicious and spicy (depending on the peppers you use) puree of water, seasonings, a BOAT LOAD of oil and tons and tons and tons of dried hot chili peppers. In order to make it really low in points, we need to eliminate the oil. That's why I decided to replace it with tomato sauce and regular chili powder from the spice aisle. The reason being that it is more readily available to people and the thought of dealing with a big bag of dried chili peppers is an intimidating turn off to a lot of folks.

Ingredients:

- 2 cups fat free chicken broth
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 to 2 tsp chili powder, to taste. You can use regular chili powder, or other varieties, such as chipotle and anaheim chili powders.
- 1/4 tsp cayenne pepper **(ONLY IF YOU WANT IT SPICY!)**
- 1-1/2 tsp garlic powder
- 1-1/2 tsp onion powder
- 1-1/2 tsp ground cumin
- 1/4 to 1/2 tsp salt, to taste
- 30 oz canned tomato sauce (0 point tomato sauce)

Directions:

- 1 Pour ALL of the ingredients into a medium sized pot and stir to combine over medium heat.
- 2 Bring the sauce to a boil, then cover and reduce the heat to a low simmer. Allow sauce to simmer covered for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- 3 Remove from heat and season to taste.

Serving Size:

Yields: 6 cups

Servings: 12

Serving Size: 1/2 cup

Points:**

G B P

1 serving = 0 0 0

2 servings = 0 0 0

3 servings = 0 0 0

4 servings = 0 0 0

- points last checked 4/18/21 -

NOTES:

- Various types of dried chili powders can be found in the spice aisle (McCormick's sells chipotle chili powder), or usually in the Latin section of most supermarkets.
- Different brands of chili powder have different levels of heat. Adjust your spice used. Start small, add more to taste.
- Pairing this sauce with 1 point tortillas or wraps, shredded chicken, veggies, and the Fat Free cheese hack will give you some extremely legit, low point enchiladas.
- This sauce goes really well with my low point Tamales. You can find them in my Holiday recipes, or on my website in the 'featured recipes' section.


Roasted Tomatillo Sauce

A deliciously fresh and flavorful traditional Mexican green sauce



Low point chicken tamales with roasted tomatillo sauce

Ingredients:

- 2-1/2 lbs. Tomatillos, husks and stems removed
- 1 medium onion, rough chopped
- 2 medium green bell peppers, rough chopped, seeds removed
- 3 medium cloves garlic
- 4 good sized Pasilla peppers, chopped, seeds removed (they aren't spicy)
- 1/2 bunch fresh cilantro, around 1 handful
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 whole Jalapeno pepper (OPTIONAL!) 

Directions:

1. Preheat your oven to 375 degrees.
2. Line a large sheet pan with foil and spray with olive oil cooking spray.
3. Place all of the vegetables on the tray and spray them liberally with the cooking spray, then sprinkle lightly with salt and pepper.
4. Cook the vegetables at 375 degrees for 45 minutes, or until the tops of the vegetables are starting to blacken.
5. Turn the broiler to high in your oven and place the tray on the top rack under the broiler. Watch so that the vegetables don't burn to a crisp. You want to develop some black char across the tops of some of them.
6. Remove the tray from the oven and spoon all of the roasted veggies into a food processor or large blender. Make sure to also pour all of the juices in as well, along with the fresh cilantro and 1/4 tsp salt.
7. Process the vegetables on high for up to 1 minute. It should give you a thick green salsa.

Ever been to a Mexican restaurant or taco shop and put that delicious green sauce on your food instead of the red stuff, or had enchiladas with green sauce? Maybe pork chili verde? Then you've had tomatillo sauce.

Traditionally, it's just a bunch of tomatillos, a type of fruit that resembles a firm green tomato with a papery husk. They are typically boiled, then thrown in a blender with some peppers and other stuff. What WE'RE going to do is add a lot more savory depth to it by roasting all of the vegetables until the skins start to blister, then processing it. Would you rather eat boiled or roasted vegetables?

Yield: 5 cups

Servings: 10 servings

Serving Size: 1/2 cup

Points: 0 points per serving

Points:

G B P

1 serving = 0 0 0

2 servings = 0 0 0

3 servings = 0 0 0

4 servings = 0 0 0

- points last checked 4/18/21 -

Notes:

- Tomatillos are very easy to clean for this sauce, just pull the husks back like the husks on an ear of corn, twist the stem and pull. Remove any dirt or debris and you're good to go.
- Tomatillos have a sticky feel to them, that's fine.
- Add the Jalapeno to the roasting pan, if you want a spicy sauce. This base recipe is for a completely mild and non spicy sauce.
- If you plan to use this sauce for enchiladas, add some water or chicken broth to thin it out a bit.
- This sauce is delicious served with tacos, tamales, over chicken, pork, on nachos, enchiladas, eggs, pretty much anything.

