



MOLE COLORADITO OAXAQUEÑO

Oaxacan Coloradito Mole

I learned to make this flavorful combination of chiles and spices from my friend and teacher Carlota Santos. She has a little restaurant in her home where my husband, Eric, used to eat quite often before I came to live in Oaxaca. She always joked that she lost her best customer when I started to cook here, but gained a friend in me when she taught me the dishes she knew he liked to eat! I spent hours in her kitchen learning about this mole and the tamales and enchiladas you can make with the leftovers.

MAKES 8 SERVINGS

Seasoning ingredients for chicken stock (double the recipe; page 343)

1½ chickens (about 4½ pounds), cut into 8 servings, reserving the back and neck for stock

18 chiles anchos (about 9 ounces), stemmed and seeded (see page 330)

21 chiles guajillos (about 4½ ounces), stemmed and seeded (see page 331)

2 black peppercorns

2 whole cloves

1 whole allspice

1 piece of Mexican cinnamon, about 1 inch long (see page 337)

½ small head of garlic, cloves separated

1 small white onion, quartered

1 pound ripe tomatoes (2 medium-large round or 8-10 plum), quartered

1 sprig marjoram or Oaxacan oregano (see page 336), or ½ teaspoon dried

In a heavy 7-quart stockpot, heat 6 quarts water and the seasoning ingredients to a boil. Add the chicken pieces and lower heat to a simmer. Cover and cook the chicken for about 35 to 45 minutes or until the meat is tender and the juices run clear when the dark meat is pierced with a fork. Remove the chicken, strain, and reserve the stock.

Bring 2 quarts of water to a boil. On a 10-inch dry *comal*, griddle, or in a cast-iron frying pan over low heat, toast the chiles on both sides for about 10 minutes, toasting the *chiles anchos* a bit slower and longer than the *chiles guajillos* because of their thicker skins. Toast them on both sides until their skins start to blister and they give off their aroma. Remove the chiles from the *comal* or pan, place them in a medium bowl, and cover with the hot water. Soak the chiles for 20 minutes, turning to soften them. Puree in a blender, using as little of the chile water as possible, about 1 cup. Pass the puree through a sieve or food mill to remove the skins.

On the *comal*, toast the peppercorns, cloves, allspice, and cinnamon stick. Quickly grill the garlic and onion, turning them often until they become translucent. Cool them, then puree the spices, onion, and garlic in a blender with ½ cup of the reserved stock. Set aside.

In an 8-inch cast-iron frying pan over medium heat, cook tomato pieces and marjoram or oregano with no oil until condensed, 10 to 15 minutes. First they will give off their juices, then they will dry out. Puree the tomato mixture in a blender, then pass the mixture through a sieve or food mill.

2 tablespoons flower or
½ ripe plantain
½ bolillo or
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1 tablespoon
5 whole, unpeeled
3 tablespoons or
½ cup sesame
2 bars Mexican
each; see
Salt to taste

2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon sunflower or vegetable oil
½ ripe plantain, sliced
½ bolillo or French roll, sliced (see page 347)
1 tablespoon raisins
5 whole, unpeeled almonds
3 tablespoons lard, sunflower oil, or vegetable oil
½ cup sesame seeds
2 bars Mexican chocolate (3 ounces each; see page 349), or to taste
Salt to taste

In a medium frying pan, heat 2 tablespoons of the oil over medium heat and fry the plantain and bread slices until brown, about 12 minutes. Remove from the pan. Add more oil (if needed) and fry the raisins until they are plump, about 3 minutes. Remove them from the pan. Fry the almonds until light brown, about 4 minutes. Remove from the pan. Place the plantain, *bolillo*, raisins, and almonds in a blender with 1½ cups of the reserved broth and blend until smooth. Wipe out the frying pan and put over low heat. Add 1 teaspoon of oil and the sesame seeds and fry until brown, about 10 minutes, stirring constantly. Cool the seeds and grind in a *molcajete* or spice grinder.

In a heavy 6-quart stockpot, heat 1 tablespoon of lard over high heat until smoking. Add the chile puree a little at a time, stirring constantly. It will splatter about a bit, but keep stirring. Lower heat to medium and after about 20 minutes, or when chile puree is thick, add the tomato mixture and continue to cook, about 15 minutes, stirring to keep the *mole* from sticking or burning. Add the onion and ground spice mixture and stir well. Add the pureed plantain mixture and ground sesame seeds, stirring constantly, about 10 minutes. Add 4½ to 5 cups of the reserved broth to thin the sauce, then add the chocolate, stirring constantly. When the chocolate dissolves, add the salt. Let it cook down for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. The more time it has to cook, the better.

Return the chicken pieces to the broth and heat through. Add more broth to the *mole* if needed. The *mole* should be thick enough to just coat a spoon, no more. Place a piece of chicken on a serving plate and ladle a large spoonful of *mole* on top. It should completely cover the meat. Serve with corn tortillas.

Hint: You can use turkey or pork instead of chicken. If you want to make it less *picante*, use half the amount of chiles and the same amount of the other ingredients. You can use any leftover *mole* for *Tamales Oaxaqueños* (page 261) made with banana leaves or *Enchiladas Oaxaqueñas* (page 259).