

MEXICAN TORTILLAS with FARM-FRESH LARD

Moving away from Crisco, decided to use all farm-fresh lard from Reverence Farm, and/or RFarm bacon drippings....and make larger tortillas. With fresh lard, the tortillas needed a bit more salt, but boy are they even more delicious!

The recipe makes 24 large tortillas, each about 12 inches in diameter.

INGREDIENTS

Set 1

12 cups or 1.5 kilograms all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons or 8 grams baking powder
1 tablespoon + 1 teaspoon salt or 23 grams total

Set 2

1 ½ cups or 355 milliliters fresh lard or bacon drippings

Set 3

8 cups or 1.9 liters boiling water

Tools: *large roasting pan, fork, 8-cup measuring pitcher, spatula, medium container with a cover, two kitchen towels, rolling pin that is even all the way across, cast iron skillet or comal, 10-inch round pan lined with wax paper and a cover to set over it*

DIRECTIONS

1. Mix all the dry ingredients in the roasting pan.
2. Add the lard or the bacon fat. Blend with your hand until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs.
3. Heat the water in the microwave until it boils.
4. Pour about 4 cups of the boiling water over the flour. Blend together with a fork.
5. Add a little bit more water at a time, using the fork, until the dough comes together somewhat; by this time, the dough should be cool enough to use your hand.
6. Use one hand to form a non-sticky ball. Knead a few times in the pan.
7. Transfer dough onto a lightly floured surface. Gently knead the dough into a disc then fold the disc in half and shape the dough into a log.
8. Divide the log in half then in half again. Divide each half into three equal pieces. Divide each small piece in half again.
9. Fold the edges of the dough to the center, forming a circle. Flip the circle over, cup your hands around the dough and rotate to form a ball.
10. Put all the balls into the container.
11. Drench the kitchen towel in water then wring it out.
12. Drape the moistened towel over the container then fit the cover over the towel; you don't have to snap the cover closed. **DO NOT USE** a moist paper towel; it will dry out and cause the dough to become a bit dry.
13. Set the dough aside for one hour. Line the round pan with parchment paper or wax paper. Drape a dry kitchen towel over the pan then place the cover on top of the towel. This is your makeshift tortilla warmer.
14. Preheat your skillet to just under medium heat. As you cook the tortillas, you may have to reduce the heat to between medium-low and medium.
15. Lightly dust your work surface with flour. Working with one ball of dough at a time, use a rolling pin to roll the dough out into a circle. The dough should be quite thin such that you could almost see your work surface through it.

16. Place the rolling pin on the dough then drape the dough over the pin and roll the dough up part way. Transfer to and unroll on the skillet or griddle. Cook the tortilla till it is nicely browned on the bottom, about 60 seconds (these are larger tortillas compared to my original recipe); time depends on your stove. You will see bubbles form in the tortilla; don't pop them. Do not cook tortillas for longer than 1 minute on this side.
17. Flip the tortilla to the other side and cook till browned; the second side will be ready more quickly than the first side, about 45 seconds.
18. Place finished tortilla in the tortilla warmer. Cook all tortillas and keep in the warmer until ready for use.

***NOTE:** Once these are completely cooled, I roll two layers of parchment paper into a tube and place it in the middle of 3 to 4 stacked tortillas. Fold the layer of tortillas in half over the tube then store in freezer storage bags on the counter....otherwise the large tortillas will not fit in the 1-gallon freezer bags.*

Recipe courtesy Paula Quinene of PaulaQ.com.