

Corn tortillas using dried masa harina (Tio Pablo brand)

In Mexico, corn is prepared in a special way to make tortillas. First, the corn kernels are fully dried. Then, the dried corn kernels are soaked in water with either ash or hydrated limestone (called 'lime' or calcium hydroxide). Traditionally this soaked corn is ground using stones, and is called masa. Fresh masa is used to make tortillas and tamales. Masa can also be dried and made into a special kind of flour called masa harina. That's what we are using today.

Ingredients:

3 cups masa harina

1 $\frac{7}{8}$ cup warm water

You will need a tortilla press. If you don't have a press you can roll out the dough between two pieces of baking paper until very thin.

What to do:

- 1) Mix masa harina with warm water.
- 2) Knead dough lightly for a few minutes.
- 3) Press dough into a ball, set in a bowl, and cover the bowl with a damp tea towel. Let sit for at least 10 minutes.
- 4) Divide the dough into 32 equal pieces.* Roll each piece into a ball.
- 5) Warm two frying pans to medium heat on the stove. You do not need any oil.
- 6) Cut two pieces of baking paper to approximately the size of the press. Place one piece on the base of the press. You will be able to re-use the paper when making more tortillas.
- 7) Place one ball of dough on top of the baking paper. Place the second piece of baking paper on top of the ball of dough. Use the tortilla press to flatten the ball of dough to about 1-2mm thick.
- 8) Carefully peel the tortilla off of the baking paper.
- 9) Carefully place the tortilla into a hot pan. Cook 30 seconds. Flip the tortilla over and cook 30 more seconds. Flip a second time and cook for 10 more seconds, pressing down on the tortilla with a spatula so that it puffs up slightly. You might be able to fit two or three tortillas in a pan at a time, if not you might want to use more than one frying pan.
- 10) Put cooked tortillas on a plate and cover with a tea towel to keep warm.

*If you are making these at home, you can divide the dough into 20-24 balls to make slightly larger tortillas. This should be enough for a meal for 4-6 people.