

Venezuelan Reina

Pepiada Arepas

Prep: 20m

Cook: 35m

Rest: 5m

Total: 60m

4 servings



Video ref: Chef James Tahhan

MISE EN PLACE / INGREDIENTS

[14]

- ☐ 2 cups Pre-cooked white cornmeal (Harina P.A.N. White)
- ☐ 4 cups Water (for poaching the chicken breast)
- ☐ 0.5 whole White onion, halved (for poaching broth)
- ☐ 1 leaf Dried bay leaf (for poaching broth)
- ☐ 3 tbsp Real mayonnaise (Hellmann's)
- ☐ 0.25 cup Fresh cilantro, finely chopped
- ☐ 1.5 tsp Kosher salt, divided
- ☐ 2.5 cups Lukewarm water (for hydrating the arepa dough)
- ☐ 1 lb (about 2 cups shredded) Boneless, skinless chicken breasts (poached and shredded)
- ☐ 2 cloves Garlic cloves, smashed (for poaching broth)
- ☐ 2 whole Ripe Hass avocados
- ☐ 1 tbsp Fresh lime juice
- ☐ 1 tbsp Neutral vegetable oil (for greasing the griddle)
- ☐ 0.5 tsp Freshly ground black pepper

US SUPERMARKET BRAND GUIDE

Cornmeal: Harina P.A.N. Precooked Cornmeal
Standard for authentic arepa dough. • 📍 Hispanic section.

COOKING SEQUENCE & CHECKPOINTS

1

Poach Chicken Breast & Hydrate Dough

15 min

Simmer the chicken breast in 4 cups water with halved onion, smashed garlic, bay leaf, and 1/2 tsp salt for 12–15 minutes until the thickest part reaches $\geq 165^{\circ}\text{F}$ (74°C) on an instant-read thermometer. Transfer the cooked breast to a plate to cool. Meanwhile, dissolve 1/2 tsp salt in 2.5 cups lukewarm water, slowly mix in Harina P.A.N., knead 3 minutes until smooth, and let the dough rest 5 minutes to hydrate.

✓ Checkpoint: Poached chicken breast resting on a plate ($\geq 165^{\circ}\text{F}$ / 74°C) and smooth hydrated arepa dough.

2

Griddle Arepas While Chicken Cools

20 min

While the poached chicken breast cools on the plate for 15–20 minutes, shape the hydrated dough into 4 plump discs (3/4-inch thick). Brush a hot cast-iron griddle or budare with neutral oil and cook over medium-low heat for 7–8 minutes per side (plus 4–5 minutes covered on low) until deeply golden, blistered, and hollow-sounding when tapped (200°F / 93°C core).

✓ Checkpoint: Hollow-sounding puffed golden arepas and chicken breast cooled to room temperature.

3

Shred Cooled Chicken & Mix Salad

15 min

Once the chicken breast has cooled sufficiently (so it will not warm or separate the mayonnaise), shred it into fine strands. In a bowl, mash 1 ripe avocado with mayonnaise, fresh lime juice, remaining 1/2 tsp salt, and black pepper. Fold in the cooled shredded chicken, chopped cilantro, and the second avocado cut into small cubes.

✓ Checkpoint: Cool, creamy pale-green chicken-avocado salad.

4

Split & Stuff Warm Arepas

5 min

Slice the warm griddled arepas open along one edge like pita pockets and stuff generously with the cool, creamy Reina Pepiada avocado-chicken salad.

✓ Checkpoint: Steaming crisp arepas generously stuffed with cool creamy filling.

FOOD SAFETY & INTERNAL TEMPERATURE: SAFETY $\geq 165^{\circ}\text{F}$ (74°C) POULTRY | TEXTURE TARGET: 200°F (93°C) STEAMED AREPA CRUMB CORE

USDA Mandatory Poultry Minimum: Poach chicken breast to $\geq 165^{\circ}\text{F}$ (74°C) internal temperature; cool chicken before tossing with mayonnaise and refrigerate unused filling at $\leq 40^{\circ}\text{F}$ (4°C).

MASTER DONESS CHECKPOINT:

Crisp crust sounding hollow when tapped, filled with chilled creamy chicken salad.

WHY IT WORKS:

Cast-Iron Budare Crust & Steamed Core: Griddling hydrated Harina P.A.N. discs over medium-low cast-iron heat for 7–8 minutes per side forms a crisp, blistered shell while steaming the interior crumb to 200°F (93°C).

TROUBLESHOOTING:

Cracked dough: Splash warm water and knead.