

Authentic

Homemade Red

Pork Tamales

⌚ Prep: 45m 🔥 Cook: 165m ❄️ Rest: 15m ⚡ Total: 225m 🍽️ 12 servings



COOKING SEQUENCE & CHECKPOINTS

1

Cook Pork & Red Chile Adobo

⌚ 30 min

Simmer pork until tender; shred and reserve broth. Blend soaked guajillo and ancho chiles with garlic, cumin, and broth; fry sauce in 1 tbsp lard and simmer with shredded pork for 15 minutes.

✓ Checkpoint: Rich, thick red chile pork stew.

2

Whip Lard and Masa

⌚ 10 min

Beat lard for 5 minutes until fluffy and white. Alternate adding tamale flour, baking powder, salt, and warm pork broth until the dough reaches the consistency of thick cake frosting.

✓ Checkpoint: Masa dollop floats in a cup of cold water.

3

Spread and Fill Husks

⌚ 20 min

Dry soaked husks. Spread 2 tablespoons masa onto smooth side of husk, spoon 1 generous tablespoon red pork filling down the center, fold sides together and tuck bottom tail up.

✓ Checkpoint: Snug, neatly wrapped tamales.

4

Steam to Perfection

⌚ 1.3h (75m)

Stand tamales open-end up in the steamer over boiling water. Cover with leftover husks and a clean towel; steam over medium heat for 75 minutes.

✓ Checkpoint: Firm tamales that release cleanly from husks.

🛡️ **FOOD SAFETY & INTERNAL TEMPERATURE: 145°F (63°C) USDA SAFE MINIMUM FOR WHOLE-CUT BEEF AND PORK (WITH A 3-MINUTE REST)**

USDA Food Safety Minimum (≥145°F / 63°C) vs Culinary Collagen Target (195°F–205°F / 90°C–96°C): While whole-cut beef and pork are pathogen-safe at 145°F (63°C), slow-braised and roasted cuts must reach 195°F–205°F (90°C–96°C) so tough connective collagen melts into silky, fork-shreddable gelatin.

👁️ **MASTER DONENESS CHECKPOINT:**

Steamed tamale peeling cleanly and effortlessly away from the corn husk, yielding an airy, moist crumb loaded with saucy spiced pork.

🔬 **WHY IT WORKS:**

The Lard Whipping Float Test: Beating lard until it transforms into white, fluffy peaks traps micro-bubbles that expand with steam, guaranteeing fluffy tamales instead of dense, heavy bricks.

⚠️ **TROUBLESHOOTING:**

Masa clings stubbornly to the corn husk: Steam for 15 more minutes and let tamales rest on the counter for 10 minutes to set before unwrapping.

MISE EN PLACE / INGREDIENTS [12]

- ☐ **4 cups** Coarse-ground nixtamalized corn flour for tamales (**Maseca para Tamal**)
- ☐ **1.25 cups** Pure rendered pork lard, whipped light (**Armour Lard**)
- ☐ **8 units** Dried guajillo chiles, seeded and rehydrated
- ☐ **3 cups** Warm pork simmering broth
- ☐ **0.5 whole** White onion (for simmering pork)
- ☐ **1.5 tsp** Baking powder
- ☐ **3 lbs** Simmered and shredded pork shoulder
- ☐ **1 pack (30 husks)** Dried corn husks, soaked in hot water and dried (**El Guapo**)
- ☐ **3 units** Dried ancho chiles, seeded and rehydrated
- ☐ **6 cloves** Garlic cloves, peeled (divided for pork broth and red chile sauce)
- ☐ **1 tsp** Ground cumin
- ☐ **2 tbsp, divided** Kosher salt, divided (for pork broth, chile sauce, and masa)

US SUPERMARKET BRAND GUIDE

Tamale Masa Flour: Maseca Tamale Nixtamalized Corn Masa Flour

Coarser grit specifically milled to trap whipped air bubbles during steaming. • 📍 **Hispanic food aisle.**

Corn Husks: El Guapo Premium Corn Husks for Tamales

Pliable, wide husks that wrap securely without tearing. • 📍 **Hispanic section.**