

Mini Tamale Pies

Ingredients:

For the crust:

- 1 1/2 cups masa harina
- 1/2 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil

For the filling:

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 medium yellow onion, small dice (about 1 cup)
- 2 medium garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano leaves
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 (15-ounce) can crushed tomatoes
- 1/2 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt, plus more as needed
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, plus more as needed

To assemble:

- 1 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese (about 3 ounces)
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1 tablespoon coarsely chopped fresh cilantro

Directions:

For the crust:

1. Heat the oven to 350°F and arrange a rack in the middle.
2. Place all of the ingredients in a medium bowl and mix well with your hands until combined (the dough should hold together when squeezed in your hand).
3. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and set aside.

For the filling:

1. Heat the oil in a large frying pan over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add the beef, season with salt and pepper, and break the meat into small pieces with a spoon. Cook, stirring occasionally, until browned and cooked through, about 4 minutes. Remove with a slotted spoon to a medium bowl and set aside.
2. Reduce the heat to medium and add the onion and garlic. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion softens, about 4 minutes.
3. Add the vinegar and stir to combine, scraping up any browned bits from the bottom of the pan. Sprinkle in the paprika, oregano, cumin, and cayenne and stir until incorporated. Cook until the spices are fragrant, about 1 minute.
4. Return the beef to the pan, add the tomatoes, broth, and measured salt and pepper, and stir to combine. Cook until the mixture simmers, about 3 minutes. Reduce the heat to low and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the sauce thickens slightly, about 7 minutes more. Remove the pan from the heat, taste, and season with additional salt and pepper as needed; set aside.

To assemble:

1. Remove the plastic wrap from the bowl of masa. Divide the masa evenly among the wells of a 12-well muffin pan (about 1 rounded tablespoon per well). Using your fingers, press the masa evenly into a thin layer on the bottom and up the sides of each well (the mixture may feel dry to the touch).
2. Evenly divide the filling among the masa-lined wells.
3. Bake for 20 minutes. Remove the pan from the oven and evenly sprinkle the shredded cheese over the filling. Return the pan to the oven and bake until the cheese is melted and the filling is bubbling, about 10 minutes more.
4. Remove the pan to a wire rack and let it cool for 5 minutes. Run a small knife around the perimeter of each well to loosen and remove the pies. Top each tamale pie with a dollop of sour cream, sprinkle with cilantro, and serve.

Yield: 12 servings