

Dr. Joseph L. Rabinowitz 's (José's) Mexican Recipes For Family

These recipes that José originated or learned from his years of growing up and living in Mexico can vary each time you apply them. Quantities and proportions are approximate; as a good cook knows, it's tasting and sampling as you prepare, as well as experience and personal preference and a kind of sixth sense that finally determine how the end product will turn out. And though it can turn out somewhat differently each time you make it, every one should be interesting and probably worth treasuring!

If you like, you can make a whole banquet for company (or family) with the following of these recipes. Start by serving the Guacamole with Fritos as a starter before going to the table. Then at the table and for the first course, begin with either Tortilla Soup or Gazpacho.

Next comes a choice of one of four main dishes (Mole with Mexican Rice, Stuffed Peppers, Mexican Casserole, or Paella). As a vegetable or accompaniment you can serve either Mexican Rice or Corn Pudding if you wish.

Finally for dessert offer either Fried Bananas or Flan. The Sangria can be the beverage served throughout the meal.)

José found that the Spanish recipes are served often in parts of Mexico and as such their preparation is a bit different from that done in Spain.

RECIPES:

I) José's Guacamole

II) Tortilla Soup

III) José's Mole

IV) Mexican Rice

V) Stuffed Peppers (*His mother Rachel learned some of these variations from the Indians around the village of Pachuca in Mexico*)

VI) Casserole

VII) José's Corn Pudding

VIII) Fried Bananas

IX) Flan

For Extra Measure, Some of José's Spanish-based Mexican Recipes:

X) Gazpacho

XI) Paella

XII) Sangria

I) JOSE'S GUACAMOLE

Ingredients:

1 ripe avocado
½ tomato
1 medium size onion
salt
pepper
coriander
cumin
lemon juice
Tabasco sauce

- 1) Cut a ripe avocado in half lengthwise.**
- 2) Scoop out the pulp and set the seed aside.**
- 3) Mash the pulp with a fork (never use a blender, as you want the avocado to be chunky).**
- 4) Season to taste with salt, pepper, coriander, cumin, lemon juice, and a bit of Tabasco sauce (depending on how spicy you like it).**
- 5) Dice half a tomato and half an onion finely.**
- 6) Stir into the avocado pulp and mix well.**
- 7) Place mixture into a serving bowl and set the avocado seed into the middle (This is a family secret: helps prevent the mixture from turning brown and also looks decorative).**
- 8) Serve with fritos to dip.**

II) TORTILLA SOUP:

Ingredients:

Lamb stock

1 small can of crushed tomatoes (small amount)

Coriander

Cumin

Salt

Ginger (a very small amount)

Tabasco sauce to taste

Tortillas cut into strips

Mix and bring to a boil the first seven ingredients.

Pour into serving bowls and top with lots of tortilla strips.

III) JOSE'S MOLE:

Ingredients:

**Turkey stock
3-6 fried onions
2 squares of bitter chocolate
1 can of tomato paste
2 tablespoons of peanut butter
bread crumbs
curry powder
coriander
garlic powder
tomato juice
salt
pine nuts
Optional: jam**

The above ingredients mixed and cooked together form the basis of José's mole. It varies with each making, depending on the quantities and proportions decided upon each time. Using jam in small amounts cuts into the bitterness often preferred in Mexico, but is extremely popular when served to American guests. José served it mainly as a topping for cooked beef, although it was extremely well received on chicken, turkey, and on Mexican Rice as well.

IV) MEXICAN RICE: *(Decorative as well as tasty: The chopped tomatoes and green peppers, in addition to the slightly tinted white rice, give the mixture the colors of the Mexican flag).*

Ingredients:

1 to 2 cups of rice (Minute Rice is fine for quick cooking)

Salt & pepper to taste

Optional: Spices like coriander, cumin, or any Mexican spice you like

Butter or margarine or oil for frying

Saffron (or small amount of catsup or tomato juice)

2 large onions

1 very large tomato

2 green peppers

Optional: A small amount of cooked or canned corn niblets

may be added at the last minute for extra color and variety if desired.

a) Bring a very large pot of lightly salted boiling water to a heavy boil. (You can also add black pepper and other Mexican spices if you like). Pour in some saffron for color (or in a pinch you can use some catsup or a little tomato juice for this purpose.)

b) On a cutting board finely chop two large onions.

c) In a large frying pan melt ½ stick of butter or margarine (you can use oil instead). Pour into the pan the chopped onions and cook till lightly brown. Then throw onions into the pot of boiling water and allow to return to a boil.

d) Finely chop a large tomato and 1 or 2 large green peppers (stem and seeds removed). Pour these into the frying pan (add more butter or oil if needed) and fry till peppers are somewhat cooked. Pour mixture into the boiling water and again return this to a heavy boil.

e) Add more shortening to the frying pan and slowly pour into it 1 to 2 cups of rice (Minute Rice is fine). Stir constantly so all the rice cooks and gets completely coated with the butter.

f) CAREFULLY AND GRADUALLY pour the rice into the heavily boiling water. It will sizzle, pop and maybe splash as the rice goes in. Continue stirring constantly as the rice goes in until the rice is completely mixed with the other ingredients.

g) Stir till all the water is absorbed by the rice mixture.

h) Then turn off the flame and let the mixture sit for about five or ten minutes. It should now be ready to serve, or else to reheat later.

V) MEXICAN STUFFED PEPPERS

A) Original Fancy Recipe

(This version takes time and effort, since the thin skin of each pepper must be carefully removed so that the flour and the egg mixture can stick to the pepper. In Mexico, with fresh peppers, this can happen more easily than with the peppers usually available in the U.S. But if successful, the results are impressive and worth a try.)

Ingredients:

6 green peppers
Meat Mixture
Cheese Mixture
Egg mixture

Put 6 washed green peppers in oven for a few minutes till slightly soft. Then take out and leave for 10 minutes in a towel.* (During this time you can prepare the meat and/or cheese mixtures.) Then, before stuffing, carefully peel off the skin from the outside of each pepper.

Meanwhile prepare the meat or cheese stuffing mixture, whichever you decide to use. (They are variations of the same basic recipe.)

Meat Mixture:

1 lb of hamburger for 6 peppers

Prepare meat by mixing it with salt, black pepper, chopped green pimento stuffed olives, chopped walnuts, raisins, cinnamon, coriander, and white wine.

Vary the quantities and proportions to your taste, but don't chop the walnuts too fine – large chunks make a tastier filling.) After thorough mixing, fry the whole mixture till the meat is half done (not too dry).

Cheese Mixture:

Substitute ¼ lb. dry cottage cheese and 1 package of cream cheese for the meat in the Meat Mixture recipe above. Mix the cheese with the same above ingredients (olives, walnuts, raisins, etc.) There is no need to cook this. You can use it in place of the meat mixture to stuff the peppers if you wish.

Egg Mixture:

Beat egg whites to a meringue, then mix with yolks and a tiny bit of salt, and have ready for dipping the stuffed peppers into it before frying.

Uncover the peppers from the towel, peel the thin skin off, slit each pepper slightly at the side, carefully remove the seeds inside the pepper, and then stuff with either the meat or the cheese mixture.

*I have also tried dipping the peppers into boiling water for a minute or so to loosen the skin for peeling. Sometimes this works, but you have to be careful not to soften the peppers too much so they still hold their shape.

Roll each pepper in flour.

Then dip the flour-covered peppers into the egg mixture.

Now fry the whole stuffed peppers in a pan of heated oil, Keep turning them quickly until each egg-covered pepper is lightly browned and puffed up on all sides. Serve one whole pepper per person.

B) Mexican Stuffed Peppers - Simplified Variation

(If you don't want to bother with peeling the skin off the peppers, there is another version that is also quite tasty and quite eye-appealing):

Skip both the flour dipping and the egg mixture entirely. Instead, slice the peppers in half lengthwise to stuff. Lay the peppers on a serving platter with the cut side facing up. In this case make sure the meat mixture has been cooked thoroughly before stuffing it into the pepper-half. Top each stuffed half-pepper with a red maraschino cherry cut in two and placed on top of the stuffing for decoration.

VI) CASSEROLE:

Ingredients:

1 ¼ cups crushed tortilla chips
1 pound shredded cooked chicken meat from a small roasted chicken
1 can (15 ½ ounces) garbanzo beans, drained
1 can (15 ½ ounces) kidney beans, drained
1 can (15 ½ ounces) corn kernels, drained
1 can (8 ounces) tomato sauce
1 cup prepared salsa
1 cup chopped red onion
1 green bell pepper cut into ¼ inch slice
¼ cup chopped cilantro leaves
1 tablespoon minced garlic
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
6 ounces grated Monterey Jack cheese
6 ounces grated sharp Cheddar cheese

For Garnishes:

2 cups diced (1/4 inch) ripe tomatoes
1 cup sour cream
1/2 cup chopped cilantro leaves
Preheat oven to 350 degrees

- 1) Grease a 13 x 9 inch baking dish**
- 2) Scatter crushed tortilla chips on the bottom**
- 3) Combine all the rest of ingredients except for the cheeses in a bowl**
- 4) Place half the mixture in the baking dish**
- 5) In a separate bowl combine the cheeses**
- 6) Sprinkle half the cheeses over the mixture in the baking dish**
- 7) Cover with the remaining half of the chicken and bean mix**
- 8) Top with the remaining cheese mix**
- 9) Bake for 30 minutes. Let stand for 5 minutes before serving**
- 10) Serve the garnishes in bowls and let guests top their portions with chopped tomatoes, sour cream, and a sprinkle of cilantro leaves.**

(Makes 8 servings.)

VII) JOSE'S CORN PUDDING:

Ingredients:

**1 can condensed milk
1 can creamed corn
¼ teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons corn starch
2 cubes Mexican brown sugar**

**Mix all the above ingredients in a buttered
casserole.**

Microwave at high for 10 minutes

VIII) FRIED BANANAS:

Ingredients:

6 bananas
3 tablespoons brown sugar
3 tablespoons butter
1 tablespoon brandy

- 1) Peel the bananas, then cut in half lengthwise
- 2) Melt butter in a frying pan and carefully sauté the bananas on both sides
- 3) Add the sugar
- 4) When caramel has formed, pour the brandy over the bananas

IX) FLAN:

Ingredients:

**6 eggs
6 extra egg yolks (the secret ingredient)
¼ teaspoon salt
¾ cup sugar
1 tablespoon vanilla
4 cups milk
2 -3 extra tablespoons of sugar**

- 1) Beat the first 5 ingredients in a large bowl until well mixed**
- 2) Scald the 4 cups of milk over medium heat. Then let cool.**
- 3) Once well cooled, pour the milk into the egg mixture.**
- 4) Put the extra 2-3 tablespoons of sugar into a skillet on the stove**
- 5) Stir constantly until melted into a light brown syrup**
- 6) Pour the syrup into the bottom of a large glass casserole, tilting so the sugar covers the bottom**
- 7) Let stand a couple minutes till you are sure the syrup has hardened on the bottom of the casserole**
- 8) Carefully pour the egg-milk mixture into the casserole on top of the hardened syrup**
- 9) Place the casserole into a pan of hot water. The water should be about 1 to 2 inches high in the pan so that the casserole sits in it**
- 10) Bake on the lower rack of a 350 degree oven for 65 minutes or until a knife inserted into the center of the mixture comes out clean.**
- 11) Remove the casserole from the pan of hot water and cool**
- 12) Chill at least 8 hours or over night**
- 13) To serve, run a knife around the edge of the mold to the depth of the caramel quickly in hot water**
- 14) Then place the dish or platter it will be served on over the mold**

15) Reverse quickly so the mold comes out resting on the serving platter with the caramel topping on top

(Makes 10 – 12 servings)

X) GAZPACHO:

Ingredients:

- 1 minced clove of garlic**
- 1 2/3 cups (14 1/2 ounce can) of solid packed tomatoes**
- 2 cups (1 medium) peeled chopped cucumber**
- 1/2 cup minced green pepper**
- 1/2 cup minced onion**
- 2 cups tomato juice**
- 2 tablespoons salad oil**
- 3 tablespoons vinegar**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper**
- 1/8 teaspoon Tabasco sauce**

- 1) Place first 5 ingredients in blender.**
- 2) Cover and blend until mixture is almost smooth**

- 3) Pour into pitcher and add remaining ingredients**
- 4) Chill**

- 5) Serve in individual cups or bowls.**
- 6) Serve with separate bowls of chopped peeled tomatoes, chopped green pepper, chopped cucumber, and crisp croutons**

XI) PAELLA:

Ingredients:

- ¼ cup olive oil**
- 1 two-pound frying chicken, cut into small pieces**
- Water**
- 1 can (10 ounces) condensed chicken broth**
- 2 tablespoons chopped onion**
- 1 ½ teaspoons salt**
- ¼ teaspoon pepper**
- 1/8 teaspoon powdered saffron**
- 2 cloves garlic finely chopped**
- ½ pound chorizo (or sweet Italian sausage links
cut into thick slices**
- 1 ½ cups cooked rice**
- 12 small clams**
- 1 pound medium shrimp, shelled and deveined**
- 1 cup partially thawed frozen peas**
- 1 whole pimento cut into strips**

- 1) Pour oil into skillet and heat**
- 2) Brown chicken parts in hot oil**

- 3) Add enough water to broth to make 3 cups liquid**
- 4) Pour 1 cup liquid into frying pan**

- 5) Stir in onion, salt, pepper, saffron, and garlic**
- 6) Add sausage**
- 7) Cover frying pan and simmer 25 minutes**

- 8) Sprinkle rice over chicken mixture**
- 9) Pour in remaining 2 cups of broth**

- 10) Arrange shrimp and scrubbed clams over mixture**
- 11) Sprinkle with peas**
- 12) Cover and simmer until rice is cooked and liquid
absorbed –about 25 minutes**

- 13) Garnish with pimento strips**
- 14) Serve directly from cooking pan**

(Makes 4 to 6 servings)

XII) SANGRIA:

Ingredients:

**1 bottle Spanish red wine
Juice of 1 lemon
¼ cup sugar
1 bottle full of apricot juice and orange juice
Sliced fruit (2-3 nectarines, 1 big unpeeled
seedless orange)*
Ice cubes**

- 1) Mix lemon juice, sugar, and fruit slices**
- 2) Place in a pitcher**
- 3) Let stand for at least ½ hour**

- 4) Pour in wine and fruit juices**
- 5) Stir to dissolve sugar thoroughly and to mix**

- 6) Pour into goblets over ice cubes**

***Other fruits, among them apricots, may be added and/or substituted if desired.**