



Black Bean, Yam, and Amaranth Burrito

Serves 4 to 6

Look for amaranth seeds/grain in the bulk section of your grocery store.

Ingredients

1 cup amaranth seeds
2 yams, peeled and cut into bit-sized pieces
1-2 tbsp. olive oil
1 cup chopped onion
1-2 jalapeno peppers, minced
½ red bell pepper, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 cup of your favorite salsa
2 cups cooked black beans, drained
½ cup chopped cilantro
2 tbsp. lime juice
1 tsp. chili powder
1 tsp. cumin
salt and pepper to taste
tortillas

Garnish:

Chopped avocado
Sour cream
Salsa

Directions

Boil 2 cups of water in a medium saucepan along with a ½ teaspoon of salt and add the amaranth. Reduce the heat and simmer for 20 to 25 minutes. If amaranth is still too wet at the end of 25 minutes, increase heat and cook until dry.

Steam the yams until done, about 10 minutes.

In a large fry pan heat the oil and then add the onion, jalapeno and bell pepper. Sauté

until softened, then add the garlic and cook for one more minute. Add the steamed yams along with the rest of the ingredients, through salt and pepper. Add the cooked amaranth.

Serve rolled in tortillas with avocado, sour cream, and more of that favorite salsa that you used!

Recipe adapted from and photo credit: <http://www.oola.com/dishes/11929/17-musttry-amaranth-recipes-that-will-have-you-going-gaga-over-this-new-trendy-grain#page=4>



Mexican Chocolate Brownies (Tested)

Serves 9 large or 16 small

What makes this brownie Mexican? Usually cinnamon, and in this case we also use Ibarra Mexican chocolate, a round disk of chocolate flavored with cinnamon. It is sold in a yellow box, look for it in the ethnic food section of your grocery store. I've added a chipotle chile, which adds a nice warmth and smokiness, not actually spicy, just a bit of a slow burn at the back of your throat. If you can't find the Ibarra chocolate, just add extra cinnamon and chipotle to your favorite brownie recipe.

Ingredients

½ cup flour

½ tsp. cinnamon

¼ tsp. salt

1 ½ disks Ibarra Mexican chocolate

1 oz. unsweetened baking chocolate

6 tbsp. butter, cut into chunks

½ cup packed brown sugar

2 large eggs, beaten

1 tsp. vanilla

1 chipotle chile in adobo, finely chopped

Optional garnish: dulce de leche ice cream

Directions

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees and grease a 9x9 pan.

Stir the dry ingredients together, the flour, cinnamon, and salt and set aside.

In a double boiler over medium heat, melt the two kinds of chocolate, butter and brown sugar. When the chocolate mixture is melted it will still look a bit grainy, don't worry about that, but do make sure that everything is melted and smooth.

Remove from heat and gradually drizzle in beaten eggs, whisking all the while. Add vanilla and chipotle chile. Whisk in flour, and pour batter into prepared pan.

Bake for 20 minutes. A toothpick inserted into the middle should come out with just a few crumbs clinging.

For a special presentation top with a scoop of dulce de leche ice cream dusted with a pinch of cinnamon.

Recipe credit: Linda McElroy

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Mexican Stuffed Peppers (Tested)

Serves 8 to 10

Ingredients

1 tbsp. oil

½ cup each, diced carrot, celery, and onion

3 garlic cloves, chopped

1 pound ground meat (beef, turkey, or lamb)

1 poblano chile, roasted, peeled, and chopped (optional)

1 ¼ cups whole canned tomatoes, crushed by hand, with juices

1 ½ tsp. salt

2 tsp. chili powder

½ cup amaranth seeds
4 large or 5 small bell peppers, red or green, cut in half vertically, with seeds and membranes removed
1½ cups grated cheddar cheese

Directions

Turn oven on to 350 degrees.

Heat oil in a large skillet and sauté the diced vegetables for 5 minutes, until they begin to soften and take on a little color.

Add the ground meat and chop with a wooden spoon to break up until it is finely crumbled. If there is too much fat left in the pan go ahead and spoon some of it off.

Add the poblano chile, if using, and the crushed tomatoes, salt, and chili powder. Simmer for a couple of minutes to break down the tomatoes and reduce just a bit.

Next add the amaranth seeds and ½ cup of water. Simmer, covered, for 20 minutes. If the meat looks too soupy at this point, simmer for another couple of minutes with the lid off to reduce. Remove from heat and taste for any additional seasoning that it may need.

Place the pepper halves in an oiled baking dish large enough to accommodate all of them, and fill the shells with the meat mixture. Pour about ¼ cup water into the bottom of the dish, and drizzle the peppers with olive oil. Cover with foil and bake for 40 minutes. Remove the pan from the oven and remove the foil, top with the grated cheese. Turn up the oven to 400 degrees and place the peppers back into the oven for another 15 minutes.

Serve with the juices that have accumulated in the baking dish. Steamed rice and black beans would be a good accompaniment.

Recipe credit: Linda McElroy

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Amaranth Cakes (Tested)

Serves: Makes 20 to 24 patties

This can be served as an appetizer with a dip, or you could also top a salad with one of these cakes. I found the texture and flavor to be similar to that of falafel. Amaranth seeds can usually be found in the bulk bin section.

Ingredients

1 cup amaranth seeds
2 cups water
1 tbsp. oil
3 green onions, finely diced
3 cloves garlic, finely minced
1 jalapeno pepper, minced, seeds removed for less heat
zest of one lime, save lime to make the sauce (below)
1 tsp. cumin
¼ tsp. chipotle chili powder (optional)
¼ teaspoon sea salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 large egg, beaten
1/3 cup finely chopped cilantro (about 1 cup leaves)
¼ cup dried breadcrumbs (if necessary)

Breading

½ cup dried breadcrumbs
½ cup Parmesan cheese, finely grated

Sauce

½ cup prepared mayonnaise
1 chipotle chile, minced

1 tbsp. lime juice

Stir all ingredients together.

Instructions

Boil 2 cups of water in a medium saucepan along with a ½ teaspoon of salt and add the amaranth. Reduce the heat and simmer for 20 to 25 minutes. If amaranth is still too wet at the end of 25 minutes, increase heat and cook until dry.

Heat a small sauté pan over medium heat and add the oil, then add the onions, garlic and jalapeno. Sauté just to soften, don't let the garlic get brown. Stir this into the cooked amaranth, along with the rest of the ingredients, through the cilantro. The mix may become loose after the addition of the egg, if so add ¼ cup breadcrumbs. Let mixture cool completely.

Mix the breadcrumbs and parmesan cheese together on a large plate.

To make the patties, scoop a couple of tablespoons worth of the mixture into your hand and press the mixture into a ball of sorts. Fair warning, the batter is a bit difficult to work with. It is crumbly and wants to fall apart. Make sure it is well chilled before using and don't make the patties too thin. Gently lay the cake on the breadcrumbs and cover with more crumbs. Remove from crumbs, if the cake wants to crack just push it back together the best you can, including more crumbs if need be. Place directly in hot skillet with a couple tablespoons of oil and flatten with a spatula just a bit. Once the cake is in the hot pan you won't have any more problems with it breaking up.

Cook for a few minutes, until it is a medium brown, flip over and cook for another two minutes. Add oil as necessary between batches.

Serve hot or at room temperature with chipotle mayonnaise.

Notes: For our purposes of a potluck, these patties can be made a day ahead of time, brought to the meeting and warmed in an oven. Or if you make them just before the meeting and transported them without being refrigerated they can be served at room temperature. You just don't want to serve them cold out of the fridge.

Recipe adapted from: <http://www.tartineandapronstrings.com/2012/07/24/amaranth-patties/>

Photo credit: Linda McElroy



Recipes, Customs and Cuisine of Oaxaca, Mexico

Cuisine of Oaxaca, Land of the Seven Moles

Oaxaca is famous for its delicious and complex moles (mo-lays). These intricate sauces, made by toasting and grinding spices, seeds and chiles, are truly the hallmark of the region. Local tribes were preparing moles and raising corn, tomatoes, squash, beans, turkeys, cacao and chiles long before Cortez ever set foot in the "New" World. Mole is drizzled over meats, enchiladas and much more.

The corn dough known as masa also plays a huge role in Oaxacan cooking. It is used for tamales and a wide variety of tortillas, from thick to thin, plain to stuffed. Popular cheeses include the fresh, crumbly queso fresco; aged, firm queso añejo; and a local string variety that's formed into a flattened ball. The herbs hoja santa (which has a distinctive, anise-like flavor) and epazote (pungent, almost medicinal) are common seasonings.

The Spanish Conquistadores brought chickens, cattle, pigs (and thus the all-important lard), and spices such as canela (true cinnamon), cumin and cloves. Native cooking techniques such as steaming and dry roasting on clay griddles were joined by Spanish baking and frying.

Oaxaca is also the center of chocolate production in Mexico. The history of chocolate in Oaxaca goes back centuries. An Oaxacan hot (or cold) chocolate drink is different from what is served in the US. In Oaxaca, cacao beans are ground together with sugar and/or cinnamon, almonds and vanilla, then the paste is pressed into solid bars. Melting the bars in hot milk produces a beverage with a rich, complex taste. The traditional way of blending the milk and melted chocolate is with a molinillo. This wooden mixing tool has a long handle with a perforated bulb and loose rings at the bottom. You hold it between

your palms, rub your hands together, and the tool spins, mixing and frothing the chocolate.

Customs - Dining

- Do not begin eating until the host says, "Buen provecho!"
- Mexicans do not switch knives and forks. The knife remains in the right hand, and the fork remains in the left. When the meal is finished, the knife and fork are laid parallel to each other across the right side of the plate.
- When not holding utensils, your hands are expected to be visible above the table: this means you do not keep them in your lap; instead, rest your wrists on top of the table (never your elbows).
- Any salad will usually be served after the main course.
- The most honored position is at the head of the table, with the most important guest seated immediately to the right of the host (women to the right of the host, and men to the right of the hostess). If there is a hosting couple, one will be at each end of the table.

Source: www.vivaoaxacafolkart.com

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