



#### In This Month's Recipes:

- ♀ Guatemalan Etiquette, Customs & Cuisine
- ♀ Menu & Recipes

#### Guatemalan Cuisine

During the Mayan civilization, natives lived throughout Central America and grew **maize (corn) as their staple crop**. In addition, the Maya ate *amaranth*, a high protein grain.

Guatemala remained under Spanish rule from 1524 to 1821. Typical Spanish dishes, such as *enchiladas*, *guacamole*, *tamales*, and *tortillas*, began making their way into the Guatemalan diet.

Other countries and their cultures have also affected the Guatemalan diet, including the Chinese. Most Guatemalan cities and towns have at least one Chinese restaurant.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, **banana and coffee plantations were established**. Sugarcane became another successful agricultural crop by the end of World War II.

Today, **corn continues to be a staple food**. It is most often eaten in the form of a tortilla (a thin corn pancake). These are usually served warm and wrapped in cloth. Black beans (frijoles), another Mayan staple, are eaten at almost every meal. They are usually refried (volteados), mashed, or simply eaten whole (parados). Rice, eggs, and cheese are also widely consumed.

**Guatemalan coffee, which is most often exported, is considered some of the best in the world.**

--[www.foodbycountry.com](http://www.foodbycountry.com)

Because of its consistently temperate climate, Guatemala has been called the "Land of Eternal Spring." Crops such as coffee, sugar, bananas, and cocoa are grown both for consumption in Guatemala and for export.<sup>1</sup>

#### Guatemalan Etiquette

- Most Guatemalans have two surnames: their paternal name, followed by the maternal. When addressing Guatemalans, use only the first surname.<sup>2</sup>
- A soft speaking voice is considered polite in Guatemala.<sup>3</sup>
- Do not begin eating until the host says, *Buen provecho*.<sup>4</sup>
- When eating the knife remains in your right hand, and the fork remains in your left.<sup>5</sup>
- If tortillas are served, they can be used to scoop up bits of food on your plate.<sup>6</sup>



The seeds of *Amaranthus* contain about thirty percent more protein than cereals like rice, sorghum and rye.



### Menu

- **Sopa de Aguacate (Avocado Soup)**
- **Gallo Pinto con Leche de Coco (Guatemalan Rice and Beans with Coconut Milk)**
- **Chili Relleno & Chili Relleno Casserole**
- **Pollo en Leche de Coco (Guatemalan Chicken in Coconut Milk)**
- **Chicken Pepian**
- **Mexican Green Beans**
- **Papas a la Pastora (Shepherd's Potatoes)**
- **Champurradas (Guatemalan Cookies)**
- **Bunuelos**
- **Guatemalan Fair Trade Coffee**

### Guatemalan Recipes

*Our thanks to Carolyn Mayers and Mercado Global for providing the following recipes.*

*From Carolyn Mayers:*

Similar to Mexican cuisine, Guatemalan food tends to be somewhat less spicy. Feel free to vary the amount of heat to your taste. And if you need a wider variety of recipes, check out our recent "visits" to Mexico and Guatemala. Between the previously published recipes available at these links, and the new recipes that follow, you will be able to put together a fabulous meal.

- <http://diningforwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/RecipesMay2011Mexico.pdf> -try the Mexican Beef Stew.
- <http://diningforwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/OctoberFFT.pdf>
- <http://diningforwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/equilibrium-fund-fft-2.pdf>

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### Sopa de Aguacate (Avocado Soup)

Adapted from <http://www.mayaparadise.com/recipeshow.asp?ID=339>

Could not be easier and SO delicious! This recipe takes about 15 minutes, plus time to chill it down. A lovely first course. The flavor of the jalapeños shine through without being overly spicy, and it is a lovely color. You may find a blender purees better than a food processor, but use whatever you have, and enjoy!

Serves 6 or more, depending on serving size

1T vegetable oil  
1 small onion, diced  
1 – 2 jalapeños, seeded, diced  
3 medium ripe Hass avocados (the ones with the bumpy skin)  
a couple of sprigs of cilantro (optional)  
2T lemon juice  
8oz. container of lite cream cheese (I used 1/3 less fat Philadelphia brand)  
3 – 4c low-sodium, low-fat chicken stock  
Salt and ground black pepper to taste  
Additional cilantro, or parsley, minced



Heat oil in a small skillet over medium heat. Add onion and sauté for 5 minutes. Add jalapeño and sauté another 2 minutes. Remove from heat and allow to cool. Meanwhile, halve the avocados and remove the seed. Scoop the flesh into a blender or food processor (be aware you may need to do this soup in two batches if using a blender). Add cooked, cooled onion and peppers, cilantro (if using), lemon juice, cream cheese, 3c chicken stock and some salt and pepper. Puree thoroughly until completely smooth and velvety. Adjust salt and pepper. Place in refrigerator to chill. Serve cool, garnished with a sprinkle of chopped cilantro or parsley or paprika, or both. A little dollop a heavy cream swirled in would be nice, too.

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### Gallo Pinto con Leche de Coco (Guatemalan Rice and Beans with Coconut Milk)

Adapted from <http://www.goya.com/english/recipes/Guatemalan-Rice-and-Beans-with-Coconut-Milk.html?recipeCatID=6&regionID=2>

This could be a vegan main course or a substantial side dish. Guatemalan comfort food at its best! Be sure to use a good heavy pot and stir regularly – it tends to stick.

Serves 4 – 6

2T vegetable oil  
1 medium onion, diced  
1 small red sweet pepper, diced  
1 jalapeno, seeded and diced  
3 cloves garlic, minced  
1½ c long grain white rice, soaked 20 minutes and drained until dry  
1/8t dried thyme  
¼ t ground black pepper  
pinch chipotle pepper or cayenne pepper (optional)  
¼ t dried oregano  
¼ t turmeric  
½ – ¾ t salt, or more to taste  
1½ c water  
1 – 13.5 can coconut milk  
1 – 15oz. can small red beans, drained



In medium-large heavy-bottomed pot, heat oil over medium heat. Add onion and cook 5 minutes, stirring. Add peppers and cook 2 minutes. Add garlic and cook 1 minute. Add rice and cook 2 minutes, stirring constantly. Add spices (thyme through salt) and stir. Add water and coconut milk and stir well. Bring to a boil and stir in beans and return to a boil. Lower heat to low and simmer for 20 – 25 minutes, covered. Stir every 5 minutes to avoid sticking and add more water if needed to prevent it from drying out. This is more like risotto than a fluffy rice. When rice is finished cooking, stir one more time, scraping the bottom if necessary, cover and let sit for 10 minutes. Serve hot.

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### Chili Relleno Casserole

Adapted from <http://www.food.com/recipe/chile-relleno-casserole-24361> and several others.

This is a keeper. While Chili Rellenos are usually fried, stuffed peppers, as in the version Mercado shared with us, this version, while not authentic, is family friendly and easier than stuffing and frying a bunch of peppers. The original recipe called for an 8 oz. can of whole peppers (look in the Hispanic foods section of your supermarket – I was unable to find them), but since I had loads of peppers in the garden when I made this, I used those. If you do use canned peppers just make sure to cut them in half, remove

the seeds and pat them dry. Infinitely variable, you could use other sausage or even hamburger (sautéed and seasoned with a little chili powder) in this. Yum!

Serves 6 - 8

4oz. smoked chorizo (Spanish sausages) diced  
1 large onion, chopped  
2 – 4 jalapenos, halved, seeded and sliced into  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch slices  
1 large sweet pepper, halved, seeded and sliced cross-wise  
3 cloves garlic, minced  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  t dried oregano  
2 eggs plus 2 whites  
1c milk  
1/3 c flour  
just a pinch of salt  
ground black pepper  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  t baking powder  
1lb. grated cheese (either a Mexican blend or a combination of mozzarella and cheddar, or Monterey jack all work well)

Heat a large skillet over medium heat and add chorizo. Cook, stirring, about 8 minutes to render a bit of the fat. Set aside. Add onions and cook 5 minutes. Add jalapenos and sweet peppers and cook 4 minutes. Add garlic and oregano and cook 1 minute more. Remove from heat. In a medium bowl, whisk together the eggs, milk, salt, pepper and baking powder. Preheat oven to 350. Coat a 9 x 13-inch pan or near equivalent ( you could also use a smaller, taller pan and do more layers) with non-stick cooking spray. Spread a thin layer of the egg mixture on the bottom of the pan. Top with chili/onion mixture. Next sprinkle about one-fourth of the cheese over the chili/onion layer. Add the cooked chorizo, and sprinkle another one fourth of the cheese over that. Finally, pour the rest of the milk and egg mixture over all and top with remaining cheese. Bake in center of oven for about 35-45 minutes or until set and the cheese is lightly browned. Allow to sit for 10 minutes before serving. Serve hot, with your favorite salsa.

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### **Pollo en Leche de Coco (Guatemalan Chicken in Coconut Milk)**

Adapted from <http://www.goya.com/english/recipes/chicken-coconut-milk>

LOVED this recipe! Creamy and so satisfying, AND very pretty, too! We had it over rice. Tortillas would also be good. Serve with the green beans recipe that follows and you are all set!

Serves 8

1T vegetable oil  
3lb chicken parts, preferably with skin (I used thighs)  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  t annatto seeds or paprika  
1 large onion, chopped  
2 jalapenos, seeded, diced  
1 small red sweet pepper, diced  
4 cloves garlic, minced  
1T flour  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  t ground black pepper  
1t cumin  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  t ground coriander seed  
pinch turmeric  
 $\frac{1}{2} - \frac{3}{4}$  t salt  
2 – 13.5oz. cans coconut milk  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  c minced cilantro or parsley



In a large heavy pot, heat 1T vegetable oil over medium-high heat. Brown chicken parts on all sides, in batches, and set aside. Carefully drain off all but 2T of the fat remaining in the pot. Turn heat under pot to medium-low. Add annatto seeds or paprika, and cook, stirring, for one minute. Remove annatto seeds. Add onion and cook 5 minutes. Add peppers and garlic and cook 2 minutes, stirring. Add flour and spices (black pepper through salt) and cook one minute, stirring. Return chicken to pot and stir to coat with mixture. Add coconut milk and stir. Heat until bubbling, then reduce heat to a simmer. Continue cooking, partially covered, occasionally turning the chicken pieces, for 20 minutes or until nearly chicken is cooked through. Remove cover and cook another 10 minutes or so to slightly reduce sauce. Adjust seasonings. Garnish with chopped cilantro or parsley. Serve hot.

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### **Mexican Green Beans**

Adapted from <http://www.food.com/recipe/mexican-green-beans-261202>

From Guatemala's neighbor to the north, this recipe would be a great side for any of our dinners in Latin America. The flavors are simple – so versatile, this could also be served with just about any meal. And EASY!

Serves 6

1T vegetable or olive oil  
1 medium onion, chopped  
3 cloves garlic, minced  
1-1½ lbs. green beans (fresh or frozen, fresh preferred – cut into 2 – inch lengths)  
1 – 10oz can diced tomatoes with chilies (in canned vegetable row of supermarket)  
1t tomato paste  
1t oregano  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  t salt  
2T lemon juice



Heat oil a large skillet over medium heat. Add onion and cook 6 minutes. Add garlic, beans and 1T water, increase heat to medium high and cover. Cook about 5 minutes, stirring once or twice. Stir in canned tomatoes w/chilies, tomato paste and oregano. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to medium, cover and cook, covered, another 3 - 5 minutes or so, stirring occasionally. Uncover pan and cook another minute or two to thicken sauce. Sprinkle with lemon juice just before serving warm.

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### **Papas a la Pastora (Shepherd's Potatoes)**

Adapted from <http://recipes.wuzzle.org/index.php/58/1410>

Reminds me just a bit of the home fries my Dad still likes to make for us, at age 81! Another side dish you may find yourself going back to time and again. We liked it spicy but feel free to vary the heat by adjusting the amount of chipotle you add.

Serves 4 - 6

1lb. red potatoes, cut into 1-inch cubes, peeled or not, your choice  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  t salt



2T olive oil  
1 medium onion, minced  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  - 14oz. can diced tomatoes  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  t ground black pepper  
1/8 t ground chipotle pepper (more or less to taste)  
2T grated parmesan cheese

Cook potatoes salted water until tender but still firm. Drain and roughly mash them. Heat oil in medium skillet over medium heat for 6 minutes. Add tomatoes, black pepper, chipotle pepper and cook 2 minutes. Add potatoes and cook, stirring, for 5 minutes more. Sprinkle with parmesan cheese and serve warm.

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### Champurradas (Guatemalan Cookies)

Adapted from <http://breadcrumbed.wordpress.com/2011/03/03/champurrada-recipe-guatemalan-crispy-corn-cookies/> and <http://forums.adoption.com/guatemala-adoption/179458-spanish-cookie-recipe.html>



I borrowed elements from each of these two recipes. The first one is a vegan version, and I hope to try that one as written sometime. I hope you are happy with the result of this combination. They taste very much like corn if you use hasa marina as part of the flour (see recipe).

These could be used as cookies OR even like oat cakes with cheese (I suggest pepper jack) because they are similar – not too sweet and kind of like shortbread. You may add more sugar for a sweeter cookie, and I toyed with the idea of adding vanilla to make them more like a sugar cookie. Let me know what you decide to do!  
Makes about 24, 2  $\frac{1}{2}$ - to 3-inch cookies

$\frac{1}{2}$  c butter or, if you must, margarine, softened  
1/3c sugar, up to  $\frac{1}{2}$ c if you want a sweeter cookie  
1 $\frac{1}{2}$  c flour  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  c yellow hasa marina (fine corn flour), or just use more flour  
4T medium grind cornmeal  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  t baking powder  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  t salt 1 egg, lightly beaten  
1T sesame, preferably brown but any will do

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, cream together the butter and sugar until fluffy. In a separate bowl, whisk together the dry ingredients (sugar through cornmeal). Add beaten egg to butter and sugar mixture and beat well until completely combined. Add dry ingredients to butter, sugar, egg mixture and stir until a thick dough forms. Pinch off small pieces of dough and roll into about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  - inch balls. Place on cookie sheet (I lined them with parchment but non-stick would be fine, too) and carefully flatten to make them about  $\frac{1}{4}$  - inch thick and 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  - 3 – inches around. They are supposed to be fairly large. Sprinkle with sesame seeds (what is it with the word “sprinkle” this month?) and press them lightly into the dough with the back of a spoon. The edges will crack slightly – this is fine and actually makes the edges look scalloped. Bake cookies for 12 – 15 minutes, or until edges are golden brown. Cool on rack until completely cool. These will keep in an airtight container for at least a few days.



Recipes provided by Mercado Global:

### Chile Relleno

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

Serves: 4

#### Ingredients

- 4 pasilla chiles
- 1 pound queso fresco cheese
- Toothpicks
- 3 eggs
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
- 1 cup oil

#### Tomato sauce:

- 4 medium Roma tomatoes, halved
- 1 cup water
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled and chopped
- 1 tablespoon chicken broth powder
- 1/4 cup oil
- 1 teaspoon all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon chopped oregano leaves

#### Directions

1. Heat grill to medium.
2. Grill and char the chiles on both sides.
3. Once blackened put in a plastic bag for 10 minutes to sweat out any moisture. Remove from the bag, slit them down the middle and remove the seeds.
4. Stuff the peppers with the queso fresco and use toothpicks to hold them together.
5. Separate the egg yolks from the whites. Add the egg whites to a large bowl. Reserve the egg yolks.
6. Beat the egg whites with an electric beater until the whites fluff up. Add in the flour and the egg yolks and mix until completely incorporated.
7. Add the oil to a frying pan over medium heat. Dip the stuffed peppers into the batter and fry until golden brown on both sides. Remove from the oil to a serving platter.

#### Tomato sauce:

1. Add the tomatoes and water to a small pot over medium heat. Simmer the tomatoes until soft and stir in the garlic and chicken broth powder.
2. Add the 1/4 cup of oil to a frying pan, over low heat, and stir in the flour to make a roux mixture. Cook the flour until browned, then add the tomato sauce. Simmer for 5 minutes and then add the oregano.

Pour the tomato sauce over the cooked chile rellenos on the serving platter and serve. If desired, serve with rice and beans.



### Chicken Pepian

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Cook Time: 30 Minutes

Serves: 4

#### Ingredients

- 1 pound fresh tomatillos
- 1 large poblano pepper (about 2 1/2 to 3 ounces), seeded and cut into 4 pieces
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 cup raw unsalted pumpkin seeds
- 5 peppercorns
- 2 whole allspice
- 1/2 teaspoon whole cumin seed
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- Lime wedges
- 1 cup chopped fresh cilantro leaves, plus 1/4 cup for garnish
- 1 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 medium (2-inch) jalapeno pepper, seeded and roughly chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 4 (6-ounce) boneless skinless chicken breast halves, pounded to 1/2-inch thickness

#### Directions

1. Preheat the broiler.
2. Remove papery outer layer from tomatillos then rinse them in warm water to remove some of their natural stickiness.
3. Pat dry, then cut into quarters.
4. Toss tomatillos and poblano with 2 teaspoons of the oil, place on a baking sheet and broil until charred, about 10 minutes.
5. Heat a large saute pan over medium heat. Add pumpkin seeds, peppercorns, allspice, and cumin and toast until pumpkin seeds are fragrant, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer to a plate.
6. In same saute pan, heat 2 teaspoons oil over medium heat. Add onions and cook until soft and translucent, about 5 minutes, add the garlic and cook for 1 minute more.
7. Place tomatillos, poblano, onions and garlic, cilantro, chicken broth, jalapeno, toasted seeds and spices and salt in a blender and blend on high until totally smooth, about 30 seconds.
8. Heat the remaining 2 teaspoons olive oil in skillet and cook the chicken until browned on both sides and nearly cooked through, about 5 minutes per side.
9. Add pepian sauce to skillet, covering chicken pieces. Bring to a simmer and cook an additional 3 to 5 minutes, until chicken is cooked through.
10. Serve chicken topped with sauce and garnished with cilantro and lime wedges

## Dessert: Bunuelos

Prep time: 30 minutes

Cook Time : 30 Minutes

Serving: Makes 24 Bunelos ( 8 people)

### Ingredients

- 4 cups of flour
- 1 teaspoon of baking soda
- 1 teaspoon of salt
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 4 tablespoons butter
- oil (for frying)
- cinnamon-sugar mixture



### Directions:

1. In large bowl, mix flour, baking powder, salt and sugar. In smaller bowl, beat eggs and milk. Add this gradually, beating, to flour mixture.
2. Add a half a stick melted butter, beat.
3. Place dough on floured surface and knead until silky and elastic.
4. Roll into balls or ropes, and flatten with the palm of your hand.
5. Fry in hot oil, (370°), til golden.
6. Drain on paper towels.
7. Roll/toss in cinnamon/sugar mix.
8. Serve

### Sources:

<sup>1</sup> Food in Guatemala - Guatemalan Food, Guatemalan Cuisine - Traditional, Popular, Dishes, Diet, History, Common, Meals, Staple, Rice, Main, People, Types, Customs, Fruits, Country, Bread, Vegetables, Bread, Drink." *Food in Every Country*. Web. 2 Sept. 2011. <<http://www.foodbycountry.com/Germany-to-Japan/Guatemala.html>>.

<sup>2</sup> "Let's Go Travel Guides - The Leader in Budget Travel. Web. 2 Sept. 2011. <<http://www.letsgo.com/>>. [http://www.etiquettescholar.com/dining\\_etiquette/table-etiquette/ca\\_dinner\\_etiquette/guatemalan.html](http://www.etiquettescholar.com/dining_etiquette/table-etiquette/ca_dinner_etiquette/guatemalan.html).

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> "Let's Go Travel Guides - The Leader in Budget Travel. Web. 2 Sept. 2011. <<http://www.letsgo.com/>>. [http://www.etiquettescholar.com/dining\\_etiquette/table-etiquette/ca\\_dinner\\_etiquette/guatemalan.html](http://www.etiquettescholar.com/dining_etiquette/table-etiquette/ca_dinner_etiquette/guatemalan.html).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.