

Homemade Corn Tortillas

SERVES 18 to 20 tortillas



WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS

Alex Stupak of Empellón says you can't make fresh corn tortillas from whole nixtamalized field corn at home without a specialized, expensive stone mill. And he's right. You can't make the supersoft, impossibly pliable, ethereal tortillas he serves at his NYC restaurants. You can, however, make delicious corn tortillas at home. Our method produces moist, flexible corn tortillas that actually taste like corn (sorry, store-bought tortillas). Oh, and they're really fun to make.

INGREDIENTS

- ☐ **6½** cups plus ½ cup water, divided
- ☐ **2¼** cups (14 ounces) dried field corn
- ☐ **¾** teaspoons pickling lime
- ☐ **1** teaspoon salt
- ☐ ½ teaspoon vegetable oil, plus more as needed

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

Per Serving (Serves 19)

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

***** Dried field corn, also known as dent corn, can be found in smaller quantities at well-stocked Latin markets and in large quantities online. Pickling lime, also known as slaked lime and Cal, is food-grade calcium hydroxide. It is used in home canning and can be found wherever canning supplies are sold or online.

The cooked tortillas turn moist and flexible while steaming together in the moistened dish towel as you cook them off individually. Once all of the tortillas are cooked, they should then be served right away. The dough can be made through step 4 and refrigerated for up to three days. In step 5, the tortillas can be pressed all at once, stacked between 7-inch-square sheets of parchment or wax paper, and then cooked in succession.

Calories 19; Fat 0 g; Saturated 0 g; Trans 0 g; Monounsaturated 0 g; Polyunsaturated 0 g; Cholesterol 0 mg; Sodium 129 mg; Carbs 4 g; Fiber 0 g; Sugars 1 g; Protein 1 g

1 In large saucepan, combine 6½ cups water and corn and bring to boil over high heat. Reduce heat to low and simmer until corn has softened slightly, about 10 minutes. Remove saucepan from heat and whisk in pickling lime until dissolved and corn turns yellow-orange, about 30 seconds. Cover and let sit at room temperature for at least 12 hours or up to 24 hours.

2 Adjust oven to rack to middle position and heat oven to 200 degrees F/93 degrees C. Drain corn in colander. Place colander in large bowl and fill with water. Massage corn in water for 30 seconds, then lift colander and discard water in bowl. Repeat massaging 2 times with fresh water. Transfer rinsed corn to food processor and process until coarsely ground, about 2 minutes, scraping down sides of bowl as needed. With processor running, add ½ cup water and salt and continue to process until smooth paste forms, about 8 minutes, scraping down sides of bowl as needed (mixture will register 115 to 130 degrees F/46 to 54 degrees C).

3 Press dough into thin layer over entire surface of rimmed baking sheet. Bake until top is slightly dried out and no longer sticky, about 18 minutes. Transfer dough to large bowl and fold and knead until smooth, about 1 minute.

4 Test the dough: Pinch off 1 tablespoon of test dough and press on counter into ¼-inch-thick round. If dough cracks around edges, it needs more water. Knead in water, 2 teaspoons at a time, until test dough shows very few cracks. If test dough sticks to your hands, it needs to dry out more. Spread dough back onto sheet and bake 10 minutes longer. Test dough again and repeat baking as necessary to achieve dough with very few cracks. (See photos below.)

5 Trim all 4 sides off 1 gallon-size heavy-duty zipper-lock bag to create two 7-inch-square sheets of plastic. Divide dough into 20 equal portions and roll into smooth 1¼-inch balls; cover balls tightly with plastic wrap. Heat ½ teaspoon oil in 10 or 12-inch cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat until just smoking. Using paper towel, wipe out skillet, leaving thin film of oil on bottom. Meanwhile, place 1 ball in center of 1 plastic sheet. Top with second sheet and press slightly to form ½-inch-thick disk. Transfer to tortilla press or use flat-bottomed pan or skillet to press into 5½- to 6-inch round. Carefully peel off top sheet of plastic. Invert tortilla onto palm of your hand and peel off second sheet of plastic. (See photos below.)

6 Invert tortilla onto skillet and cook, without moving it, until tortilla moves freely when shaken, 10 to 15 seconds. Flip tortilla and cook for 15 seconds. Flip again and cook until tortilla puffs slightly, about 30 seconds. Flip once more and cook until second side turns spotty brown, about 30 seconds. Place cooked tortilla between layers of clean folded moistened dish towel. Repeat pressing and cooking remaining dough balls, repeating oiling step as needed to prevent sticking, and stacking tortillas in dish towel as they are finished. Serve.