

Traditional New Mexican Chile Verde

With thanks to my nephew, Ken Van Vechten, who really does know how to cook.

For each 1.5 lbs of pork shoulder roast:

- 1 large diced yellow onion
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 quart pork or chicken stock
- 1 large potato, peeled and diced
- 1 cup of green enchilada sauce
- ½ teaspoon dried Mexican oregano
- 4 Anaheim chilies, roasted/seared, peeled, and cut into strips
- 3 Poblano chilies, roasted/seared, peeled, and cut into strips
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon cayenne

Cut the pork into 1.5 inch cubes and brown in a large stockpot with olive oil. Set aside. Add onions to the stockpot and more oil, if necessary, and sauté until golden brown. Add garlic and cook for one minute. Set the onions and garlic aside with the pork.

Deglaze the stockpot with two cups of the stock and return the pork/onion/garlic to the saucepot. Add the remaining ingredients. Bring nearly to a boil then reduce heat, simmering for 60 to 90 minutes, or until pork is very tender. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Serves two to four, depending on appetites.

You can thicken the mixture, if you wish, by adding 2 tablespoons of flour (regular or Masa) to the pot about 5 minutes before simmering is completed.

Notes on preparing the chilies:

You can find descriptions of this process in most cookbooks featuring southwestern cuisine. But briefly...

Roast the chili peppers by placing them on an open gas flame, turning them frequently with tongs until all sides are charred black, about 7 to 10 minutes. (Alternately, the peppers can be roasted under a broiler, or on top of a gas or charcoal grill.) Place the blackened peppers in a plastic or paper bag, and let rest until cool enough to handle, about 15 minutes. Peel the peppers, and remove the seeds and the stems.

Use care when handling the chilies. The oils on their surfaces can burn hands and eyes in a most uncomfortable fashion. Some people recommend using gloves, but I've never had any real trouble if I just do the peeling under running water. Your mileage may vary.

From Ken Van Vechten, 2003