

Simmons Catfish Tamales *by Restaurant Tyler*



SERVINGS: 50 tamales

Simmons catfish and caramelized spiced vegetable tamales, finished with collard green aji verde and lime crema.

50 corn husks.
Cojita cheese crumbles.

MASA DOUGH

4.5 cups Masa Harina.
5.5 cups warm chicken stock.
1 lb. pork lard.

TAMALE FILLING

3 lbs Simmons Catfish Fillet Bites (or you may also use Simmons Catfish Fillets cut into 1 oz. pieces).
2 cups diced onions.
2 cups diced bell pepper.
1/2 cup diced jalapeño.
1/4 cup minced garlic.
1 tablespoon cumin.
1 tablespoon salt.
1 tablespoon black pepper.
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper.
1 teaspoon allspice.

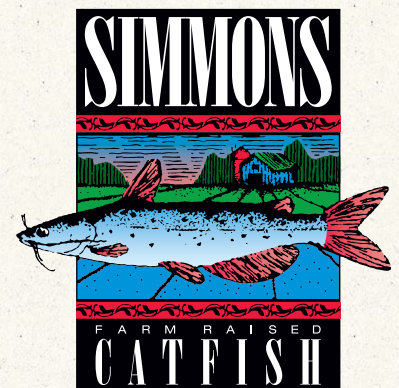
COLLARD GREEN AJI VERDE

3 cups fresh jalapeños.
2 cups cotija cheese.
2 limes juiced.
2 cups mayonnaise.
2 cups cilantro.
1 cup collard greens.
1/2 cup garlic.
1/4 cup white vinegar.
1 cup kosher salt.

LIME CREMA

3 lbs sour cream.
8 limes (juiced and zested).
1 teaspoon garlic (granulated).
1 teaspoon kosher salt.
1/2 teaspoon cumin.
1 tablespoon MS red hot sauce (or your favorite hot sauce).

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MASA DOUGH

Fold lard, stock, masa together in mixing bowl vigorously until thoroughly combined. You can use store-bought chicken base or bouillon cubes to make the chicken stock. The lard can be found at most grocery stores labeled "Manteca".

TAMALE FILLING

Caramelize vegetables and spices, then add catfish to simmer for 10 minutes.

COLLARD GREEN AJI VERDE

Mix all ingredients in a blender and blend smooth.

LIME CREMA

Combine all ingredients in a mixing bowl and combine thoroughly. Chill before serving.

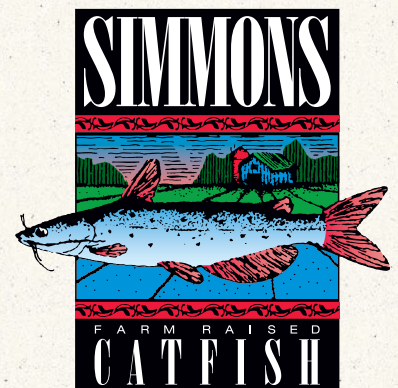
CREATING THE TAMALES

Soak 50 corn husks in warm water for 30 minutes. Spread Masa Dough evenly on a single corn husk, leaving empty space 2 inches from tapered end. Press filling in middle of dough in an even line, roll, close, and tie. Stack vertically with open end facing up in a steam pot. Steam covered for 1.5 hours. In Latin America, tamale preparation tends to be a family affair, so the more hands available to help, the better!

For the steaming process, if you don't have a pot specifically designed for tamales (one with a raised, perforated bottom so that the tamales are not sitting in the boiling water), the easiest substitution is a large pot with a colander turned upside down on the bottom, stacking the tamales on the colander without their sitting in the boiling water. If you don't have a lid for your container, cover it with plastic wrap.

When the allotted amount of steaming time has elapsed and you take out the tamales, they will still feel very soft. This is normal. They need to sit for 30 minutes or so to set before serving. We generally prepare our tamales to be finished steaming an hour before serving time. We simply take the pot off the heat and cover it. They will still be warm and perfectly set by the time everyone's ready to dig in.

Offer your Aji Verde and Lime Crema on the side and allow your guests to open their tamales and apply the sauces to taste. Have some cojita cheese crumbles on hand to sprinkle on top and slices of fresh lime for a little extra color and flavor!



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