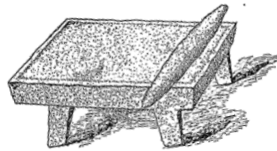


The corn tortilla has been a staple food in North American and Mesoamerican cultures since thousands of years BC. In pre-Columbian times, there was no wheat flour version, as wheat was not grown in the Americas prior to European contact.

A common domestic cooking chore was to help grind lime-soaked corn or maize into **masa** or corn dough for tortillas. To complete this task, a grinding stone or **metate** with a hand-held stone called a **mano** was used.



Source: <http://www.arizonahistoricalsociety.org/education>



For information about Howard County Farmers' Market, events at the market or demonstration garden or how to become a market vendor, contact Market Managers:

Debra Bolding
(870) 557-2352 or
Glenda Rice
(870) 845-8859

or pick up an application at the

Nashville Chamber of Commerce

107 South Main
Nashville, AR 71852
(870) 845-1262

Visit the Farmers Market page at the Chamber of Commerce website at

nashvillear.com

and check the Growing Healthy Communities Calendar of Events at the Chamber Website as well!

HOMEMADE CORN TORTILLAS

Gracie Martinez
La Estrella
Supermarket

Friday
June 15, 2012

Howard
County
Farmers'
Market



Tortilla ("little cake" in Spanish) - a thin, unleavened flat bread, made from finely ground maize, called "corn" in the U.S. In Mexico there are three colors of maize dough for making tortillas: white, yellow and blue.

Masa harina ("dough flour") is the traditional flour used to make tortillas, tamales, and other Mexican dishes. To produce masa harina, maize (field corn) is dried and treated in a solution of lime (slaked lime, calcium hydroxide, not the fruit!) and water. This loosens the hulls from the kernels and softens the corn. The soaked maize is then washed, and the wet corn is ground into a dough, called masa. This fresh masa, when dried and powdered, is the masa harina. Fresh masa is available in Mexican markets, including La Estrella Supermarket!, refrigerated and sold by the pound.

Gordita ("little fat one" in Spanish) - a corn cake made with masa harina and stuffed with meat, cheese or other fillings.



Gracie's Recipes

Basic Corn Tortillas

12 oz masa (Mexican cornmeal)
12 oz water

Mix masa and water. Pinch off enough to make a 1" round ball.

Place in corn tortilla press or roll out with a rolling pin to make 6-7" round tortillas.

Cook on a hot grill or in a fry pan just until lightly done on both sides.

Use as is, or fry in oil until crisp. Leave flat or shape into taco shells. Then top or fill with your choice of beans, meat, lettuce, tomato, onion, cheese and hot sauce.

Variation - Red Tortillas (for enchiladas) ; Cover several dry red peppers (not hot) with water and bring to a boil. Strain and use "pepper" water to mix with masa harina instead of plain water.

Gorditas

Use the basic tortilla recipe, add a dash of salt, but do not roll out as thin as tortillas. Fry in hot oil. Slice each forming a pocket and fill with your choice of cheese, beans, meat, lettuce, onions, etc.

Hot Sauce

Peppers (your choice)
Chopped tomatoes
Water
Dash salt

Put peppers, tomatoes, and salt in enough water to cover. Bring to a boil and let cook until peppers are soft. Blend in a blender.

Note: Do not substitute corn meal or regular corn flour - they are produced from different types of corn, are processed differently and are not suitable for making tortillas. Also, do not use regular wheat flour.

Nutrition Trivia

Pellagra is a disease resulting from deficiency in vitamin B3 (niacin) and occurs primarily where the diet is "maize-based". However, when Europeans first came to the New world, where corn (maize) was native and a substantial part of the diet, pellagra was not common. The reason for this is that in the production of masa, soaking the maize in lime water liberates niacin (as well as the amino acid tryptophan), making this important nutrient available. . .

When maize was brought to Europe, Africa and Asia from the New World, soaking the maize in lime water was omitted and resulted in deficiencies of niacin, significantly contributing to the disease pellagra.

