

Mole Poblano de Guajolote
(Braised Turkey in Chocolate Sauce)

This dish of braised turkey in hot chocolate sauce was originally part of an Aztec feast. Wild turkeys have no resemblance to the turkeys we eat on Thanksgiving today—they are leaner and taste more gamy. The Aztecs and the Incas raised the ancestors of modern bronze turkeys as well as Muscovy ducks, the only native waterfowl that was domestically raised. Don't be daunted by this dish—the results are worth the effort. There are as many recipes for the mole sauce as there are cooks to prepare it. This one is fairly simple and traditional. **Note:** the seeds and membranes of chilies can be irritating. Handle with care.

Ingredients

6 lbs. of boneless turkey breasts and **or** dark meat

3 dried California chilies

3 dried *pasilla* chilies

2 dried *ancho* chilies

2 large tomatoes

1 medium white onion

1/2 cup raw unsalted peanuts

1/2 cup raw sesame seeds

1/3 cup raw pumpkin seeds

2 whole cloves

1/4 tsp. anise seeds

Utensils

knife and cutting board

measuring cup

measuring spoons

large soup pot

slotted spoon

strainer

plate

heavy iron frying pan

teakettle

bowl

baking pan

4 garlic cloves

aluminum foil

6 Tbs. corn oil

tongs

2 ripe bananas

paper towels

(4) 6-inch tortillas

food processor **or** blender

1 cinnamon stick

large mixing bowl

3.1 oz. Mexican chocolate

Dutch oven **or** casserole dish

1 tsp. or more salt

black pepper

24 corn tortillas.

This dish is seasoned to taste. Cover a baking pan with aluminum foil. Do not peel the onion or the garlic. Cut the onion in half. Peel the bananas and cut them on the diagonal into thick slices. Roughly chop the Mexican chocolate. Tear the tortillas into pieces. Shell the peanuts and pumpkin seeds. Cut the turkey into large pieces. Rinse off the turkey pieces and place them in the cookpot with enough water to cover them. Bring the water to a boil on the stove over high heat, then reduce the heat to low. Simmer uncovered 45 minutes.

Using a slotted spoon, remove the turkey pieces and place them on a plate. Strain the broth and save the liquid. While the turkey pieces are cooking, bring water to boil in the teakettle on the stove over high heat and preheat the oven to broil. Wipe off the chilies with a damp paper towel, then place the chilies in the dry frying pan on the stove over medium low heat. Lightly toast the chilies for 5 minutes or until they release their fragrance. Using the tongs, turn the chilies occasionally. The red California chilies will turn black and the other chilies will turn glossy and

lose some of their wrinkles. Remove the chilies from the pan and pull off the stems. Shake out the seeds and discard them along with the stems. Place the chilies in a bowl and pour boiling water from the teakettle over them, so that the chilies are completely covered by the water. Let the chilies soak 20 minutes.

While the chilies are soaking, place the tomatoes and the onion in the baking pan and place the pan in the oven. Roast the vegetables 15 minutes, turning often with a pair of tongs. The outer skins of the vegetables will turn black. Remove the vegetables from the oven and let them cool before peeling off the skins. Discard the skins and place the skinned vegetables in the bowl of the food processor. Remove the chilies from the water and discard the water. Place the chilies in the food processor with the vegetables. Purée until a thick paste is formed. Remove the paste to a large mixing bowl, but do not clean the food processor bowl. Place the peanuts, sesame seeds, and pumpkin seeds in the dry frying pan on the stove over medium low heat and toast them 3 minutes or until they turn golden. Remove the nuts from the frying pan and place them in the food processor. Next, place the whole cloves and the anise seeds in the dry frying pan and toast them over medium low heat for less than 1 minute. Remove the cloves and anise seeds from the frying pan and place them with the nuts in the food processor.

Turn the heat up to high and place the garlic cloves in the frying pan. Toast the garlic 7 minutes or until the skins have turned black. Remove the garlic from the pan, and, using the flat part of a knife blade, crush the cloves to remove the skins. Add the garlic to the food processor. Pour 3 Tbs. corn oil into the frying pan and fry the tortillas until they are crispy. Using the tongs, remove the tortillas and add them to the food processor. Add 1 Tbs. oil to the frying pan and fry the bananas until they are golden. Remove the bananas and place them in the food processor. Remove the frying pan from the stove.

Pour 1 cup broth into the food processor, and process until a loose paste is formed. Add the chili mixture and process until a smooth paste is formed. This should take several minutes. Heat 2 Tbs. corn oil in the Dutch oven on the stove over medium heat. Stir in the chili mixture and add 3 cups broth and the cinnamon stick. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to low and simmer. Add the chocolate pieces and stir until the mixture is smooth. Simmer the sauce 30 minutes to thicken. The dish can be prepared up to this point in advance and stored in the refrigerator covered in plastic wrap.

Preheat the oven to 325°F. Wrap the tortillas in aluminum foil and heat in the oven for 15 minutes. Place the turkey pieces in the sauce in the Dutch oven and simmer on the stove over low heat 10 minutes until everything is hot throughout. Add salt and pepper to taste. The dish can also be heated in a casserole dish in the oven for 30 minutes. Place a piece of turkey on a plate and generously cover with the *mole* sauce. Serve hot with warmed tortillas. *Mole Poblano de Guajolote* can be made in advance of the meal..