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## A wonderful weekend recipe: Chilaquiles with Tomatillo Salsa

By Susie Iventosch



Chilaquiles with Tomatillo Salsa Photo Susie Iventosch

We just spent a week in Mexico, and I discovered a breakfast dish that is absolutely delicious!

I am not sure why I've never seen or tried it before, because it's practically on every menu. But for some reason it never caught my attention until some of our friends had it on one of their breakfast excursions. The dish is called "chilaquiles" and originally it was a dish with the purpose of using leftovers, but it's become a favorite breakfast dish for locals and foreigners alike, much like shakshouka is in the Middle East.

The origin of the word chilaquiles comes from the ancient Aztec Nahuatl language "chilaquilitl" meaning chili and greens. Basically, the dish consists of corn tortilla strips fried and simmered in either red or green salsa or enchilada sauce, and topped with crema or cheese, but can also be accompanied by eggs, shredded chicken, or beans. Of course, we had to try this at home and we made it with a green tomatillo-chili salsa. There is also a similar and popular Spanish and Portuguese

dish called "migas," but this one is normally strips of corn tortilla or tostadas mixed in with eggs, cheese, onions and peppers and all scrambled together. In a future column, I plan to feature our cousin's delicious huevos rancheros, another popular Hispanic breakfast dish. His is unusual and especially tasty.

Unless you are really good at making your own tortillas, store-bought corn tortillas are perfect for this recipe. I have recently begun making my own tortillas, and I have the flour and flour-corn versions down pat. I'm still struggling a bit with the 100 percent corn tortillas, although I did use them in this recipe! They were just a bit thicker than I'd like. When I have those dialed in, I'll share the tortilla recipes, because once you try homemade tortillas, there is nothing quite like them and they are really fairly easy to make!

### RECIPES

#### Tomatillo Salsa

(Makes about 3 cups)

#### INGREDIENTS

16 tomatillos, husks removed

2 Serrano chilis, cut in half lengthwise with stems, seeds and veins removed

2 jalapeno peppers, cut in half lengthwise with stems, seeds and veins removed

1/2 cup finely chopped yellow onion

1/2 cup cilantro leaves

1 clove garlic

1 tablespoon lime juice, fresh squeezed

1 tablespoon olive oil

Salt to taste

#### DIRECTIONS

For this recipe, I combined both raw and roasted veggies. I think it gives you a great balance of the roasted and fresh flavors, which are both so good in peppers and tomatillos. So, preheat the broiler to high and take 8 of the tomatillos, 1 Serrano chili, 1 jalapeno pepper and half of the chopped onion and place on a baking sheet. Place approximately 4-5 inches under the broiler and broil for about 4 minutes per side, or until dark blisters start to form on the skins. Remove from oven and allow to cool.

Meanwhile, rinse the remaining chopped onion in cold water for a couple of minutes and then squeeze the water out. This softens the potency of the raw onion. Coarsely chop the remaining tomatillos, chilis and peppers and place them in the food processor along with the rinsed, chopped onion, garlic and cilantro leaves. Process until desired chunkiness. Add the cooled veggies and continue to process. Stir in lime juice, olive oil and salt. Can be made several days ahead of time. Store in airtight container and refrigerate until ready to use.

#### Chicken

#### INGREDIENTS

2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts

1 tablespoon olive oil

2 teaspoons chili-lime seasoning

2 tablespoons your favorite hot sauce

#### DIRECTIONS

Place chicken breast in a small casserole dish. Rub all over with olive oil and season with chili lime seasoning (Trader Joe's or Tajin both work well for this). Drizzle a little of your favorite hot sauce over the top. Bake in 350 degree oven for approximately 35 minutes, or until done. Cool and shred with two forks. Can be made a day or two ahead. Wrap and refrigerate until ready to use.

### Chilaquiles

(Serves 4 for breakfast)

#### INGREDIENTS

1/4 cup olive oil or canola oil

8 corn tortillas, cut into 1/2-inch strips

1 red onion, chopped

2 cups shredded chicken, or 8 eggs (2 per person)

2 cups Tomatillo Salsa (recipe above)

1 cup grated mixed Mexican cheese

1/2 cup Cotija cheese or feta cheese

1/2 cup plain yogurt or sour cream

4 sprigs of cilantro leaves for garnish

Extra salsa for garnish

#### DIRECTIONS

Heat oil in a large, heavy skillet such as cast iron over medium-high heat. Add tortilla strips and chopped red onion and cook until onions are beginning to caramelize and tortillas are becoming a bit crunchy and slightly browned on the edges. Pour 2 cups of the Tomatillo Salsa evenly over the top of the chips, followed by the shredded chicken. Turn heat down and cover to cook just until chicken and sauce are hot. (If using eggs instead of chicken, simply crack the eggs on top of the salsa and chips at this point, cover and cook until eggs reach desired doneness.) Sprinkle grated cheese evenly over the top and place lid back on the pan just until the cheese is melted. Remove from heat and sprinkle Cotija or feta cheese over the top and garnish with cilantro sprigs and a dollop of plain yogurt or sour cream. Serve immediately and pass the extra salsa on the side.

Buen Provecho!



Susie can be reached at [suziventosch@gmail.com](mailto:suziventosch@gmail.com). This recipe can be found on our website: [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com). If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977.

Reach the reporter at: [suziven@gmail.com](mailto:suziven@gmail.com)

[back](#)

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