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## POZOLE, a dish to remember

In this article I would like to talk about a dish that is very representative of Mexican food, which has many different varieties according to the place of origin. This is a very complete dish that forms part of the most important celebrations in Mexico, like weddings and other rituals.

Its existence dates from pre-hispanic times, it's a dish that was eaten during the time of the Aztecs and only on special occasions and the high priest where the only ones that ate it.

It is said that the Aztecs ate the pozole prepared with human meat during their ceremonies, and it is believed that the human meat came from the warriors that were sacrificed during the adoration to the sun rituals.

When the Aztecs were conquered by the Spanish, they considered these anthropophagic practices as savage and antichristian and substituted the human meat for pork which had a similar texture and flavor. Even though there was a change of its principal ingredient and the initial symbol of the dish, the indigens still consumed it with its changes and adaptations, and it was not considered a dish which was exclusive to the priests in their ceremonies.

What did remain a constant in the pozole since the pre-Hispanic times is the white corn cachuazintle (hominy) which because of its white color had a significant symbolism for the Aztec culture with its world vision.

In the Aztec culture, white was associated with the North Pole, specifically a goddess called Iztacmizcoatl, named the serpent of the clouds. It was represented with white hair and beard, and also symbolized the Milky Way. The white color also symbolized for the Mexicans the first color of the lights that came over the horizon in the morning before the red sunrise of dusk. It also signifies the soul which resuscitates after the night sleep and the warrior in his flight on high, and it is for this reason that the warriors sacrificed in the fights with the Aztecs were painted white to symbolize this precise destiny.

The ancient pozole, which combined the corn that was the basis of this culture, combined with the human meat, had a very deep significance

for the Aztecs. It signified the ritual where the unification of the constant and permanent duality of the Nahua mysticism: heaven and earth, beginning and end, night and day, these contraries were an inherent part of their philosophy, rituals and arts. We can clearly see this represented with their main god Quetzalcoatl, the plumed serpent which on one side was a reptile on earth, and on the other side flew to the sky, a clear symbol of this permanent duality of the Aztec culture.

By eating pozole, the Aztecs participated in a ritual that symbolized the rite of creation.

### GREEN POZOLE WITH HOMINY AND CHICKEN

The green pozole is prepared in the region of Guerrero on the west coast of Mexico

#### Ingredients

- 1 white onion cut in cubes
- 5 mashed pieces of garlic
- 4 chicken breasts cut in small cubes
- 15 green tomatoes
- 1 bunch of cilantro
- 2 heads of lettuce
- 4 poblano chilies take seeds out
- 3 ripe avocados
- Hominy corn (fresh or canned). 2 cans or 1 pound, fresh
- 2 chayote squash peeled and cut in small cubes
- 1 lb. of tender corn
- 1 lb. of carrots cut in small cubes
- 1 lb. of green beans
- Agua
- Salt, pepper, chicken bouillon to taste

#### PREPARATION

Fry the onion and garlic in a large pot, add the chicken and lightly fry. Add enough water to cover the chicken, trying to leave fill like half of the pot. Let boil.

Meantime the chicken is cooking, blend the green tomatoes, avocado, lettuce, cilantro and poblano chilies in the blender to form a green sauce that will give color to the pozole. Add this to the chicken and cook together.

While the sauce and chicken are cooking, cut

and add the other vegetables, the corn, carrots, chayotes and green beans. Add to the chicken mixture and cook together on a medium flame until the flavors mix and the vegetables are cooked.

Season with salt, pepper and chicken bouillon to taste. ♦

