

Dunked Tortas

In this edition, we are emphasizing the theme of real estate, houses and homes. I would like to begin with the thought surrounding the importance that the concept of home has in the act of eating. When we say that we ate something homemade, it means that it is generally delicious and comforting, it gives us a feeling of wellbeing and peace. Homemade food is that which we take with us when we move to another country, that which we remember and miss and that which we try to duplicate when we want to recreate the flavor of the food that our mother or father prepared.

Homemade cooking smells and tastes delicious, and it has a special flavor that is particular to the person who prepared it. Every house has its specialty, and every country has dishes that are easily duplicated at home.

If you interview a group of immigrants from any country and ask them what is it that you miss most from your country, I assure you that nice out of 10 will answer with homemade food or the food from their town or country.

There is something very powerful between the union of the country and home with food. Food is the aspect of culture that can really be part of our body and remains marked in our sensory memory, not only on a taste, smell or visual level, but also on an affective level because the lovely moments that you lived at the time while eating are the ones that mark and make our memories so important.

There is a dish that is typical in the state of Jalisco, Mexico that you often hear about on the streets and in the houses, which if you went to Jalisco and didn't eat a "torta ahogada," it would be as if you never went.

The torta in Mexico is not sweet, which is different from other Latin-American countries. In Mexico, the sweet torta is called a cake.

The torta is a type of sandwich made from a salty bread called the bolillo. The torta ahogada or drowned/dunked torta is made with a bread named birote, that is hard on the outside and doughy on the inside. The birote is characteristic of this region. Its consistency is crunchy on the outside and less permeable than a normal bolillo, and its inside is firmer with a lightly sour flavor due to longer fermentation. This allows it to be dunked in different salsas without losing its consistency.

The birote is spread with mashed refried beans and filled with pork, and then dunked in Chile de arbol sauce, which is flavored with vinegar, cumin and garlic all in a tomato sauce, garnished with onion slices soaked in lime.

This sandwich combines Spanish ingredients, such as bread and pork with foods from Mexico, such as the chile de arbol and tomato. The birote, the bread that is used to prepare these tortas, is not prepared in any other part of the world due to the conditions of altitude, temperature and climate in Guadalajara.

Ingredients

- tomato sauce
- 12 tomatoes
- 3 cloves
- 3 cloves of garlic
- 1-2 pinches of dried oregano
- salt to taste
- hot sauce
- 3 oz. chile de arbol
- 2 cloves of garlic
- ½ tsp. of cumin
- 1 tsp. of white vinegar
- tortas (sandwiches)
- 10 bolillos or birotas
- 1 big can of refried beans
- 1 lb. of shredded pork or chicken
- 2 sliced onions marinated in lime juice

Tomato Sauce

Boil the tomatoes in a pot, and add the cloves. Once it has boiled, take off the flame, and blend it with the garlic, oregano and salt. Strain and set aside.

Hot Sauce

Boil the chilies and blend with salt, garlic and cumin. Strain and set aside. Cut open the bolillos on one side without cutting it open completely. Spread the beans on the bread, add the shredded pork or chicken, dip it in the tomato sauce and add the hot sauce to taste. If you want the torta completely drowned with the sauce, then put it all the way in the chili sauce. Add the marinated onion slices marinated in lime sauce. ♦

