

Living

living@thenews.com.mx



CACAHUAZINTLE



PORK



LIMES



ONION



LETTUCE



GARLIC



RADISH

DZOLE ROJO, MICHOACÁN STYLE

ELDS 10-12 LARGE SERVINGS

1 kilo prepared cacahuazintle (available at any mercado, or packaged at the supermarket)

1 small pig's head (about 2 kg), scrubbed and halved, or 3 medium pigs' feet (about 1 kg total), well scrubbed and split lengthwise

50 grams meaty pork neck bones

50 grams lean boneless pork shoulder, in a single piece

1 large onion, finely chopped

12 large garlic cloves, peeled and minced

12 large dried chiles anchos (about 60 grams total)

12 large dried chiles guajillos (about 50 grams total)

1/2 cup to taste (about a tablespoon)

FOR THE CONDIMENTS:

1 medium-sized head of cabbage, cored and very thinly sliced (Iceberg lettuce can be substituted for the cabbage)

50 radishes, thinly sliced

1/2 cup onion, finely chopped

1/3 cup dried oregano

4 limes, cut in halves

20 tostadas, preferably home fried

1 pound Chile piquin, available in the market, where moles and spices are sold

Put the meats, bones, cacahuazintle, onion and garlic into a pot with 7 liters of water. Cook until tender – the corn will start to “blossom” – that is, to open up at one end.

Toast the chiles, a few at a time, on a comal or griddle, pressing down with a spatula (20 seconds or less on each side should be sufficient – be careful not to burn them or they will be bitter).

Remove the stems, cores and seeds, and submerge chilies in a bowl of hot water. Soak for 20-30 minutes. Drain, place in a blender jar and add 1/2 cup water; blend until smooth. Strain through a medium-mesh sieve into the simmering soup and mix well.

Generously season with salt and let simmer for an hour or so.

Finishing the soup:

Remove the meats from the broth and when cool enough to handle, cut off the usable meat from the bones and chop into 1-2 cm pieces, shredding the shoulder pieces.

Just before serving, season the soup with salt to taste. Add the meat to the pot and let simmer a few minutes to reheat.

Serve in pozoleros, deep soup bowls, with all the accompaniments set up on the table so that each diner can help himself. The tostadas are a crunchy accompaniment to enjoy between big spoonfuls of the soup.

Micholas Gilman is author of "Good Food in Mexico City: A Guide to Street Food, Fiestas and Fine Dining, available at all major bookstores in Mexico City, at Linnéa's, Mexico City, at Linnéa's, Mexico City, at Linnéa's, Mexico City, at Linnéa's, Mexico City. Visit his site at www.micholasgilman.com



CHILE PIQUIN



CHILE GUAJILLO



CHILE ANCHO



OREGANO

POZOLES

MEXICO'S COMFORT FOOD



WHERE TO EAT

If you would rather have someone else deal with the pig parts for you, there are many excellent pozolerías around town. These are a few of my favorites.

POZOLERÍA LA CASA DE TOÑO

Sabino 144,

Colonia Santa María La Ribera

Tel: 2630-1084

Open Monday-Saturday

9 a.m. - 11 p.m., Sunday until 10 p.m.

Two blocks west of the main plaza

of Santa María La Ribera is the

extraordinary Casa de Toño, a

pozolería set in a 19th-century

mansion. Thick, red pozole with all

the garnishes is the house specialty,

although sopas, tostadas and other

antojitos are also offered. At \$34

pesos for a “grande,” this is a bargain

meal. Lovely rooms decorated

with murals and original mosaic

floors create a pleasant, old-time

atmosphere.

POZOLERÍA TIZKA

Calle Zacatecas 59,

between Córdoba and Mérida

Colonia Roma

Open daily noon-10 p.m.

I used to live upstairs from this

bustling place in the heart of La

Roma, so I ate here a lot. They

specialize in hearty and delicious

pozole verde from the state of

Guerrero. It is similar to the red kind,

but instead of red chilies, ground

pumpkin seeds provide the thick,

green soup base, which has a nutty,

earthy flavor. The tostadas here

are especially fresh and crisp, and

redolent of corn flavor. Also offered

is pozole blanco in a simple clear

broth. There is often live guitar

music at comida time.

DOÑA YOLI

Calle San Ildefonso 42,

near Calle Argentina (go up

the staircase at the back of the

building)

Open Monday-Saturday,

2 p.m.-6 p.m.

MERCADO DE COMIDAS

Calle Higuera 6,

Coyoacán center

Open approximately

2 p.m.-11 p.m. daily

This garage-like space, a block from

Coyoacán's central plaza, is open

late. Most people stop here for a

rich pozole at the stand right in the

center. The deep-fried quesadillas

sold here are fresh and delicious.

Other good options are:

EL BUEN POZOLES

Avenida Coyoacán 354 - Loc. B

Near the corner of Mier y Pesado

Colonia del Valle

Tel: 1054-4922

This restaurant, founded by the

González Gamboa family in 1991,

has nine branches in Mexico City

and will soon open another in San

Antonio.

EL GUERRERENSE

Chichimecas 436

(Manzana 34, Lote 12)

Colonia Ajusco

Open Friday - Sunday

11 a.m.-9 p.m.

The best-kept secret, this place is

very close to Ciudad Universitaria.

Be careful when you select the size:

the small is the size of a large dish,

the medium, the size of a small clay

pot and the large is the entire pot!

This delicious, very Mexican dish is often eaten at home on special occasions or in pozolerías, restaurants, markets and street stalls. There are three varieties to choose from – white, red or green – each with its own ingredients and form of preparation.

BY NICHOLAS GILMAN
Special to The News

Two shy campesinas, attired in homemade cotton dresses with rebozos draped over their shoulders, waited patiently at the counter of the carnicería. When their turn came they asked for “una cabeza, por favor” (“a head, please”).

The butcher looked at them quizzically (as did I) and asked what sort of head they needed. Their answer produced a huge, grinning pig's head, which made even them laugh. “What will you do with it,” I queried? “Pozole, of course!” they replied.

Pozole, (pronounced poh-SOH-lay), is a quintessential Mexican comfort food – a soup fit for a king. Basically, it's a hearty meat broth, laced with chili and augmented with hominy (known as cacahuazintle in Mexico).

The hominy is prepared by a process called nixtamalización, that is, soaked in lime, as for corn tortillas, which softens the kernels. It is sometimes eaten at home, often for festive occasions – my friend Daniel reported celebrating Fiesta Patria, the evening of Sept. 15, at the home of his in-laws with a big family pozole. But more often it is enjoyed at pozolerías, res-

taurants devoted to this sumptuous dish, or market and street stalls.

The word pozole comes from the Náhuatl p zontli or posolli, meaning to boil or bubble, and variations of it are made all over Mexico.

A similar thick soup was mentioned in chronicles of the early Spanish missionary Fr Bernardino de Sahagún. He reported Moctezuma eating pozole that contained thigh meat from a sacrificed warrior in a ceremony honoring the god of war and death, Huitzilopochtli.

Today's version is usually made with pork (a pig's head gives the best flavor, although sim meat and bones will do) and garnished with shredded lettuce, radishes, onion, oregano and perhaps chicharrón (pork skin), tostadas and more chili the “garnishes” can sometimes fill half the bowl.

There are many kinds of pozole in Mexico, though the state of Jalisco is home to the most mous variety, pozole blanco. In Guerrero, green pozole is common, thickened with pumpkin seed I much prefer the third version, the rich chili-pozole rojo, associated with Michoacán.

Rick Bayless, the tireless chef, restaurateur and host of the PBS series, “Mexico, One Plate at a Time,” is author of “Authentic Mexico from which I adapt the following recipe for Pozole Rojo (for home cooks lucky enough to side in Mexico):



Inside the kitchen of El Buen Pozole the chef makes a pot of the hearty soup.