

SPOTLIGHT COUNTRY OF THE MONTH

Guatemala



We have new ELLs joining us at Edison who are from Guatemala. Guatemala is located in Central America, south of Mexico. It is home to volcanoes, rainforests and ancient Mayan sites.

Capital City: Guatemala City

Language: Spanish

Foods: In Guatemala, corn, beans, rice, pork, beef, chicken, cheese, and tortillas form the backbone of most Guatemalan dishes. Meat stews (caldos) and soups (sopas) are easily the most popular foods among locals.

Official Bird: Resplendent quetzals



Nickname: "La tierra de la eterna primavera"
(The Land of the Eternal Spring)

Population: 17.11 million (2021)



Recipe of the Month-*Pepián de Pollo* Guatemalan Spiced Chicken Stew



Ingredients

- 1 Whole Chicken 4-5 pounds, cut into serving pieces
- 5 cups Water or more as needed
- 2 tsp Salt or to taste
- 5 Fresh Tomatoes Roma
- 1 Chile Pasa (Pasilla) dried, seeds and stem removed
- 1 Chile Guaque (Guajillo) seeds and stem removed dried
- 1 White Onion medium
- 1/2 cup Sesame Seeds
- 1/2 cup Shelled Pumpkin Seeds pepitas
- 1 inch Cinnamon Stick
- 1/4 tsp Dried Achiote
- 1/2 cup Cilantro
- 2 Corn Tortillas or pieces of French bread
- vegetables (optional) pre-cooked green beans, chayote and potato

Instructions

1. Cut the chicken into serving-sized pieces and simmer it in 5 cups of water (just enough to cover the chicken) with salt for 30 minutes. Skim off and discard any gray scum that may form while cooking. Drain and reserve the broth for the sauce.
2. Meanwhile, toast the cinnamon stick, pumpkin seeds and sesame seeds separately in the dry skillet (no oil) until browned but not burned. The pumpkin seeds will pop when they're fully toasted.
3. Dry roast (toast) two corn tortillas (or two pieces of crusty French bread) in the same dry skillet, remove from the pan, pour a small amount of water over to moisten and set aside.
4. Char the Roma tomatoes, chiles (seeds and stem removed) and onion over a dry skillet (with no oil) in batches until very well browned.
5. Process the toasted seeds and cinnamon stick in a spice grinder or food processor until they are a very fine powder. You'll need to pulse several times to get the mixture fine enough.
6. Add the charred tomatoes, chiles and onion to the food processor. You don't need to peel the tomatoes or onions as you want the charred skins included in the sauce.
7. If you processed the seed mixture in a spice grinder, add it to the food processor now. Add the achiote, cilantro and a half teaspoon of salt. Process for several minutes until very smooth.
8. Add the toasted corn tortillas (or French bread) and four cups of reserved chicken broth to the tomato, spice and seed mixture and process until very smooth.
9. Pour the sauce into the pot, bring to a low boil. Add the chicken. Simmer over a low heat for 15 minutes or longer until the sauce is very thick and a deep red color. Add more water if you prefer a thinner consistency.
10. Add any chopped, pre-cooked vegetables (if using, see note below) at this time.
11. Serve with a sprinkling of toasted sesame seeds and with white rice and wedges of fresh avocado on the side.