



Chiles Rellenos with Vegetable Picadillo

Inspired by Aaron Sanchez for Simple Food Big Flavor

- 4 large poblano chiles
- 1 Tablespoon canola oil
- 1/2 cup finely chopped onion
- 1/2 cup finely chopped red bell pepper
- 1/2 cup corn kernels, fresh or frozen
- 4 Tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 cup diced Queso Blanco or Queso Fresco
- 2 Tablespoons cilantro pumpkin seed pesto (See Recipe Below)
- 1 (13.76 oz.) container garlic and onion crushed tomatoes
- 1 to 2 Tablespoons cilantro pumpkin seed pesto

Preheat oven to 350 degree F.

Char the pepper skins: Using a gas stove: Place burner on medium high. Place poblano chiles on burner and roast, turn occasionally with tongs, until charred all over, about 7 minutes. Remove, place in container, cover tightly with plastic wrap or tight cover; let steam for about 10 minutes. Repeat with remaining peppers.

Carefully peel peppers, rub off skins with paper towel; do not rinse. Cut a lengthwise slit in each pepper; remove; discard the seeds and veins. Keep the stem on. Set aside on baking pan or 13x9 inch oven pan. Set aside.

In 10 inch skillet, add oil. Add onion, bell pepper, and corn; cook until onion is soft, about 5 minutes. Stir in cilantro. Set aside to cool. Stir in the cheese and pesto; mix well.

Divide the filling among the chiles; bake for 10 to 12 minutes or until cheese is melting. In a small bowl, mix crushed tomatoes with cilantro pumpkin seed pesto; cook in microwave oven on high power for 1 minute or until hot.

Place sauce on each serving plate; top each with stuffed chiles, garnish with cilantro sprig. Serve warm. Serves: 4

Cilantro Pumpkin Seed Pesto

1/2 cup unsalted raw pumpkin seeds

1/4 bunch fresh cilantro

1/2 cup fresh basil leaves

1/2 cup olive oil

1 jalapeno pepper, coarse chopped with or without seeds

1 garlic clove, coarsely chopped

1/3 cup crumbled Cotija cheese or shredded Parmesan cheese

Salt and black pepper to taste

Roasting pumpkin seeds: Preheat oven to 400 degree F oven. Spread seeds in even layer on dry baking pan. Bake about 8 to 10 minutes, stirring and checking every 3 minutes until lightly browned. Remove; let cool.

Place cilantro, basil, and olive oil in food processor; puree for 2 minutes. Add hot pepper, garlic, pumpkin seeds and cheese; pulse until coarse puree. Season with salt and pepper to taste. To store pesto: Place in tight fitting container with lid; place about 1/4 inch olive oil over the surface to keep out the air. For each serving, stir oil into pesto; then replace oil if storing again. It will keep fresh about 10 days.

Cook's Note: Alternate way to char peppers: Place peppers on baking sheet; cook under the broiler about 10 minutes or until the peppers are charred, turn peppers several times.

About the Recipe: Poblano chiles have a slightly sweet and smoky flavor, very different from other peppers. Aaron Sanchez loves stuffing them because it gives the peppers a chance to be the star. I love serving them with a tomato sauce seasoned with the cilantro pumpkin seed pesto. Perfect for that Fiesta Party!