



**Southwestern Open-Faced Dessert Tamales
with Caramel Topped Plantain Flans and Dessert “Mole” Sauce**
Salute to Chef Andrew MacLauchlan from Coyote Café for this inspirational recipe

Caramel Topped Plantain Flans

- 1 ripe (7 to 8 inch long) plantain, peeled and mashed
- 1 cup whole milk
- 1/2 cup Dulce de Leche or plain condensed milk
- 3 large eggs
- 1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 6 Tablespoons caramel sauce or as desired
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Garnish: Pinch of ground cinnamon; coarsely chopped mixed nuts as desired

Over-the-top garnish: whipped cream; edible flowers

Dessert “Mole” Sauce

2 Tablespoons unsweetened dark cocoa powder
1 Tablespoon brown sugar
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon mild chili powder
3/4 cup plant-based milk
1 Tablespoon creamy peanut butter
1-1/2 teaspoons cornstarch
1 teaspoon olive oil
1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon salt or to taste
1 teaspoon Mexican or pure vanilla extract

Sweet Open-Faced Tamales

Fresh sweet corn filling spooned onto corn husks

2 cups fresh corn kernels (from about 2 to 4 cobs)
2 to 4 fresh corn husks or as needed
1 cup masa harina (corn flour)
1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened
1/4 cup granulated sugar
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup milk or plant-based milk
Garnish: Ground cinnamon as desired

Directions for Plantain Flans:

- Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Set aside 6 lightly greased custard ramekins.
 - In a food processor, blend plantains; scrape down sides; process until mashed.
 - Add milk, Dulce de Leche or plain condensed milk, eggs, vanilla, and 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon, process until blended, about 30 seconds and smooth.
 - Coat each ramekin with about 1 Tablespoon caramel topping; fill ramekins about 3/4 full of plantain mixture. Lightly sprinkle each with ground cinnamon.
 - Wet parchment paper sheet. Place wet parchment paper in large baking pan. Place ramekins in baking pan; sprinkle cinnamon over top of custards. Cover pan with aluminum foil. Spoon hot water halfway up sides of ramekins. (be careful so no water gets into the custard).
 - Bake in water bath for about 50 minutes; test with toothpick or knife to see if it comes out clean. Uncover; cook for 5 minutes more if needed. Remove from oven; when cool enough to handle; remove ramekins to cooling rack.
 - Cool; chill in refrigerator for 1 hour or until serving.
 - **To Serve:** Loosen sides of custard; invert onto serving plates; top with coarsely chopped nuts. If desired, add a dab of whipped cream and serve with dessert mole sauce on the side.
- Serves: 6

Directions for “Mole” Sauce:

- In a small saucepan, add cocoa, sugar, cinnamon, and chili powder; stir to combine.
- Add milk, peanut butter, cornstarch, olive oil, and salt.
- Cook on medium heat while stirring until boiling and sauce is smooth and thickens.

- Stir in vanilla extract; taste and adjust seasoning as desired.
- Place sauce in small bowl; cover with waxed paper to prevent a “skin” from forming on top of the sauce. Sauce will thicken as it cools. Remove the waxed paper.
- Cover the bowl; chill in the refrigerator until serving on the side with flan or tamales.

GGNotes: You might want to try adding very mild chicken broth for the plant-based milk for a stronger mole flavor, but we preferred using milk. Also, strain your sauce if you have lumps in the mixture. Usually, stirring will eliminate this. Add more liquid if you want a thinner sauce to drizzle over the dessert.

Directions Sweet Open-Faced Tamales:

Prepare the Tamale Corn Filling:

- Remove the corn kernels from the cobs; place in food processor; set aside.
- Discard the silk and cobs; place the corn husks in warm water in a pot to soften.
- Blend the fresh corn kernels for about 20 seconds, scrape down sides of processor; process until pureed; mix with corn flour, butter, sugar, baking powder, salt, and milk for about 20 to 30 seconds to form a soft dough mixture.

Baking the Tamale Corn Filling:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
- Spoon Tamale filling into greased 8x8-inch baking dish. Cover securely with aluminum foil.
- Use a large rectangular pan that will hold an 8x8-inch glass baking dish. Wet 1 sheet parchment paper, place in bottom of large rectangular pan.
- Place the baking dish in the larger baking pan, add hot water to the outer pan until it reaches about halfway up the sides of your filled baking dish.
- Bake for about 50 minutes; remove the foil cover; continue baking for 5 minutes or toothpick comes out clean. Set aside to cool before filling the corn leaves.
- Prepare the thin tamales:
- Take several soaked corn leaves, cut into about 5-inch lengths; spoon filling into the center of the leaves forming a mini-log sized open-faced tamale. Set aside. Prepare remaining mini tamales, about 2 to 3 tamales per serving. The size is determined by the length of the tamale leaves.
- Before Serving: Sprinkle lightly with ground cinnamon.

GGNotes: Thanks to Gale Gand for sharing the technique she learned in France. You can prepare as many tamales as you want to serve, but you may need additional corn leaves.

For Serving the Complete Dessert:

- Loosen the custard sides with a flat-edged knife. Turn ramekin upside down on serving plate
- Drizzle with caramel and/or chocolate sauce or serve chocolate sauce on the side.
- Sprinkle with mixed nuts for crunch.
- Place two or three open-faced tamales on the serving plate with a swirl of “mole” dessert sauce. Sprinkle lightly with ground cinnamon

GGNotes: Lighter custard is perfect for the dessert’s elegant feel. If plantains vary in size, mash, and measure to about 1 cup consistency.

Yield: about 6 servings, depending on portion size.

Recipe Inspired by: *Chef Andrew MacLauchlan from Coyote Café*

About the Recipe: The Southwestern Open-Faced Tamale is a celebration of culinary innovation. This dish takes the iconic tamale—reimagines it as an inviting, deconstructed dessert with modern flair. The open-faced husk holds a golden ribbon of cornmeal filling, served with caramel drizzled plantain flan and spicy chocolate chili mole sauce.