

Mushroom-Cactus Soup w. Roasted Tomatillos

Sopa de Hongos y Nopales

(10 to 12 servings)



Ingredients:

- 6 med Tomatillos, husked & rinsed

2 (14.5 oz) cans fire-roasted diced Tomatoes

2 Jalapeños, stem + seeds removed

8 Garlic cloves, unpeeled

1 med white Onion, cut into 3 thick slices

2 sprigs Epazote (or substitute extra Cilantro)

¼ tsp Anise seed

8 large sprigs Cilantro

8 cups Chicken broth

EVO

1 lb fresh Shiitake, stems removed, caps sliced

1 lb Nopalitos

4 dried Pasilla chiles, stemmed, seeded & cut into ¼" strips

Directions:

Lay the tomatillos on a baking sheet and set 4" inches below a very hot broiler. When blackened in spots and soft, about 5 to 6 minutes, flip and roast the other side. Cool.

On an ungreased griddle or heavy skillet set over medium heat, roast the garlic and chile. Turn the unpeeled garlic and the chile regularly until blackened in spots and soft, 10 to 15 min.

While the garlic and chile are roasting, lay the onion out on a small piece of foil, set on the griddle or skillet, and dry-roast until deeply browned and soft, about 5 minutes per side. Let garlic cool, then slip off the papery skins.

Combine all the roasted ingredients + the canned tomatoes in a food processor or blender with the epazote, anise seed, cilantro and 2 cups of the broth.

Process to a smooth puree.

In a medium-size (4-quart) pot, heat 1 tbsp of the oil over medium-high. When hot enough to make a drop of the puree sizzle sharply, add it all at once. Stir continually until darker and noticeably thicker, about 5 minutes. Add the remaining 6 cups of broth and the mushrooms, reduce the heat to medium-low and let gently simmer for 30 minutes, partially covered. Taste and season with salt, usually about a tsp (depending on the saltiness of the broth).

Spread the chile strips on a small baking sheet and toast in the oven until fragrant and lightly crisp, about 5 to 8 minutes.

Just before serving, add the cactus to the soup and bring to a boil. Ladle into warm soup bowls and sprinkle with the toasted chile.