

NAVAJO TACOS AND GREEN CHILE STEW



Navajo Tacos and Green Chile Stew

I'm all about food memories! The kind of memories that evoke a moment in time through just one bite of a remembered dish. In the instant the food touches your taste buds, your mind flashes back to that special moment in time. Memories flood your mind, some in a good ways, others maybe not so much.

This story leads to one of my most happy food memories.

When I was in Elementary school my older brother began dating an American Indian girl. After a few months of dating, our families got to know each other and soon became very close friends. As a result, my family became involved with the Lone Feather Indian Counsel in Colorado Springs, CO. Our involvement began by going to monthly meetings where our parents helped with media promotions, fundraising for the Indian College Fund and event planning. The Council sold Navajo Tacos, Chile and *Posole* to raise money for the College Fund, at mini Pow Wows throughout the year, culminating in an extravagant Pow Wow in the summer. American Indians from around the Country would travel to Colorado to compete for cash prizes and to see the crowning of the years newest Indian Princess.

The Lone Feather Indian Counsel was made up of American Indians from Colorado, Taos New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Nebraska however, other regions were represented. My father is one quarter *Cree Indian*, which makes me one eighth Cree, however, you wouldn't know it to look at me with my light colored skin and blue eyes.



Photos were taken during a mini Pow Wow in Manitou Springs, Colorado, 1971



At the end of the meetings, the Elder drummers would play and sing traditional music while the families gathered to dance. The women would wrap hand made shawls around their shoulders and the men would don traditional headdress; merging in a cacophony of movement and joy. It was a truly cultural experience to be a part of the organization and see "real" American Indians, living life and learning to understand the American Indian culture in such a personal way. All of us, living normal everyday lives in normal everyday homes but experiencing traditions long past.

As time past, I began to discern the different melodies of each song and learn the history of their long sung stories. The rhythmic beat of the drums and the strong clear voices of the elders, remain in my mind to this day.

Intertwined, with the smell of Indian Fry Bread, piping hot *Pasole*, fancy dancers pounding the floor, and the anticipation building at who would become the next Indian Princess...all moments I can remember as if it were yesterday.



Frybread has a significant role in Native American cultures. It is often served both at home and at gatherings. The way it is served varies from region to region and different tribes have different recipes. It can be found in its many ways at state fairs and pow wows, but what is served to the paying public may be different than what is served in private homes and in the context of tribal family relations. Source Wikipedia

Green Chili Navajo Tacos

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This Fry Bread recipe comes from a close family friend, Ann Fineran, a Pine Ridge Sioux, from South Dakota. She was the last of her lineage.

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[Ingredients](#)

1. FOR THE GREEN CHILI STEW
2. 3-4 boneless pork chops cubed

3. 1 small yellow onion diced
4. 1 cup roasted green chilies (preferably fresh roasted)
5. 2 tablespoons fresh minced garlic
6. 2 tablespoons canola oil
7. 1 can chopped tomatoes with liquid
8. 3 cups water
9. 1 14 ounce can Ranch Style Beans
10. 3-4 tablespoons chicken base concentrate (to taste)
11. salt and pepper to taste
12. FOR THE FRY BREAD
13. 2 cups flour
14. 1 tablespoon baking powder
15. 1 teaspoon salt
16. 1 cup 2% or whole milk
17. canola oil for frying, about 4 cups

Instructions

1. Cube pork chops, season with salt and pepper, chop onion
2. Heat heavy bottom sauce pan on medium high
3. Add oil and saute onions until translucent
4. Add meat and saute till browned
5. Add remaining ingredients and bring to a boil
6. Reduce heat to low and simmer for 2-3 hours
7. FOR THE FRY BREAD
8. Heat oil on medium high in a cast iron skillet
9. Combine dry ingredients in a medium mixing bowl
10. blend together with a wooden spoon
11. add milk and stir until dough forms a ball
12. place dough on a floured surface and knead for 5 minutes or until dough is shiny
13. return dough to bowl and rest for 5 minutes
14. cut dough in half, then quarters, finally cutting the quarters in half.
15. roll dough thinly with a floured rolling pin
16. cook in hot oil until golden brown, turning several times
17. drain on paper towels

Notes

1. Garnish, 1 head lettuce, 2 cups shredded cheese, sour cream, honey
2. Assemble Navajo Tacos and serve
3. Serves 6

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