

CODZITOS

FRIED TORTILLA ROLLS

Codz is a transliteration of the Mayan word *koots'* meaning, "to roll". With the Spanish diminutive suffix *ito* we have a word that describes these delicious "little rolls". *Tortillas* have a very short lifespan: about an hour after being cooked, they are cold, dry, stiff and unappetizing. Unable to afford waste, the frugal peoples of Mesoamerica long ago created novel ways of recycling leftover *tortillas*. The primary method was to sun dry them in the *solar*, or "kitchen garden", turning them nicely crispy. Prior to drying, the *tortillas* would be cut or formed into shapes appropriate for the intended end use. In the case of *codzitos*, leftover *tortillas* are rolled up, sometimes stuffed with shredded meats or other fillings, fried, then served with a cooked tomato *salsa* and topped with crumbled cheese.

For a truly Yucatecan touch, use grated Edam. Many local restaurants serve *codzitos* as an appetizer, but they also make a satisfying brunch dish.

10 SERVINGS

☞ PREPARE THE CODZITOS ☞

- **30 stale maize tortillas**
- **1 recipe Pollo Asado, finely shredded.** (Substitute: Shredded Cochinita Pibil, grated cheese or about 1 lb./500g filling of your choice)

- **Vegetable oil, approximately 1"** (2.5cm) deep in a heavy skillet

- **1 recipe Salsa de Jitomate II or Tomato Frito**
- **8 oz. (225 g) grated Edam cheese** (Substitute: You may also use grated Monterrey Jack, crumbled cotija, panela or other fresh Mexican cheese)
- **1/2 cup (120 ml) cilantro, finely chopped**

STEP 1 ON A HOT GRIDDLE OR COMAL, reheat 2-3 *tortillas* at a time until softened. Remove, and immediately add about 1 Tbs. (15ml) filling in a row down the middle of each *tortilla*. Finally, roll up and secure with a toothpick.

STEP 2 MEANWHILE, PREHEAT OIL to 365°F (185°C). Add *codzitos* a few at a time and fry until golden brown. Remove to drain on paper towels. When slightly cooled, remove toothpicks.

☞ SERVE ☞

STEP 3 ARRANGE CODZITOS on a serving platter. Ladle the hot tomato sauce over the *codzitos*. Sprinkle with the cheese and *cilantro* and serve immediately.