

PICADILLO EN CHILMOLE

CHOPPED PORK IN CHARRED CHILE SAUCE

The intense *recado negro* (also known as *chilmole*) owes its pungent flavor and color to charred dried chiles. The acrid smoke produced by burning the chiles is so fierce that its production within city limits is strictly controlled. Even in the *pueblos* it is usually confined to outskirts and jungle enclaves. Mayan women used to punish badly behaved children by forcing their heads over a pot of the smoking chiles. Don't worry, however: there are two versions of this delicious condiment – one *picante*, one mild. By making your own, you can control the heat to your taste.

10 SERVINGS

- 1 Tbs. (15ml) vegetable oil
- 2 1/4 lbs. (1 kg) pork, finely chopped
- 1 tsp. (5ml) salt
- 3 medium tomatoes, chopped
- 1 large red onion, chopped
- 1 Tbs. (15ml) epazote leaves, chopped

- 5 Tbs. (75ml) *recado negro**
- 1.5 cups (375 ml) water

- Warm *tortillas*
- 1 recipe *tomate tamulado*

**Available commercially packaged in Mexican groceries or ethnic foods sections of supermarkets. Called either “recado negro” or “recado para chilmole”.*

🌀 COOK THE PORK 🌀

STEP 1 HEAT OIL IN A SKILLET. Add meat and salt, and cook over medium heat until browned. Add vegetables and continue cooking until onions are translucent.

🌀 MIX THE SEASONINGS 🌀

STEP 2 MIX RECADO AND WATER and stir until dissolved. Strain into skillet containing meat through a sieve lined with cheesecloth. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer. Continue simmering until liquid has mostly evaporated and mixture has thickened, about 30 minutes. Check seasonings.

🌀 SERVE 🌀

STEP 3 SERVE AS TACOS with *tomate tamulado*.