

## *Birthday Carnitas with Two Salsas*

### **INGREDIENTS**

1 skin-on, boneless pork shoulder (3 to 4 pounds/1.4 to 1.8 kg)  
3 to 4 teaspoons Diamond Crystal kosher salt (1 teaspoon per pound of meat. If you are using Morton's halve this amount)  
2 teaspoons Mexican oregano  
1 ½ teaspoons ground cumin  
2 teaspoons [chile powder](#), such as the Rancho Gordo brand  
¼ cup (59 ml) freshly squeezed orange juice, from 1 orange  
1 medium yellow onion, cut into eighths  
4 to 5 cloves garlic, smashed with the back of a knife, skin removed  
Flaky salt, for serving

*Serve with the salsas, tortillas, thinly sliced red onion, jalapeños, sour cream, avocado and whatever else you like to put on your tacos.*

### **METHOD**

Allow the pork to come to room temperature before roasting, about 1 hour.

Meanwhile, in a small bowl, stir together the salt, oregano, cumin and chile powder. Evenly season the pork with the salt and spice mixture. Place the pork in a Dutch oven, fat side up.

Preheat the oven to 300°F (about 150°C). Pour the orange juice and scatter the onion and garlic around the pork. Cover the pot and roast until the meat is devastatingly tender and easily falls apart, 4 to 5 hours, checking on occasion to make sure the bottom isn't drying out and adding a bit of liquid if needed. Water is fine.

When the meat is ready, remove the lid and turn the oven to 500°F (260°C). Cook, watching carefully so that it doesn't burn, until the fat on the pork starts to turn crisp and golden.

Allow the pork to cool slightly and use tongs or forks to shred the meat. Finish with a few pinches of flaky salt. Serve in the Dutch oven on the table for ease.

## *Salsa Verde*

### **INGREDIENTS**

1 ½ pounds (680 g) fresh tomatillos, husks removed, rinsed to remove stickiness, and cut in half if large  
2 small jalapeño peppers, cut lengthwise, seeds and stems removed  
1 small white or yellow onion, halved  
½ cup (20 g) loosely packed fresh cilantro (both leaves and tender stems)  
Kosher salt

### **METHOD**

Place the oven rack 1 to 2 inches (2.5 to 5 cm) below the heat source and set the oven to broil.

On a large sheet pan, spread out the tomatillos, jalapeños, and the onion, cut side down, in a single layer. Broil, turning the vegetables once or twice, until the tomatillos begin to release their liquid and everything becomes slightly charred, 5 to 7 minutes. Allow to cool.

Transfer the mixture, along with any liquid that's been released, to a food processor or blender and add the cilantro and a good pinch of salt. Pulse until the salsa is smooth. Transfer to a serving bowl, taste, and adjust seasoning with salt to taste.

## *Salsa Roja*

### **INGREDIENTS**

¾ (340 g) pound Roma tomatoes  
2 jalapeño chiles  
2 chiles de árbol or other small dried hot red chile  
2 garlic cloves, peeled  
½ roughly chopped small, white onion  
Kosher salt to taste  
1 cup (40g) cilantro, both leaves and tender stems

### **METHOD**

Heat a heavy medium frying pan over medium-high heat until hot. Add the tomatoes and jalapeños and cook until blistered and charred on all sides, turning as needed, 10 to 12 minutes. Add chiles de árbol and cook, turning, just until fragrant, about 10 seconds.

Transfer tomatoes to a food processor. Let chiles cool and then discard stems. Add the chiles to the food processor along with the garlic, onion and a very generous pinch of kosher salt. Pulse

together until smooth, add the cilantro and pulse again. Taste and adjust seasonings with salt as needed.

\*I adapted this recipe by Barbara Mozqueda from *Sunset* magazine.

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