

Tortilla Soup (Best International)

Servings: 4

Source: *Best International Cookbook* p. 16

Ingredients

- 2 (about 1½ lbs) bone-in, skin-on split chicken breasts or 4 bone-in chicken thighs, skinned and trimmed
- 8 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 very large, approx 1 lb. white onion, root end trimmed, quartered, and peeled (divided)
- 4 medium garlic cloves, peeled and chopped (divided)
- 2 large sprigs fresh epazote, or 8 to 10 sprigs fresh cilantro plus 1 sprig fresh oregano
- salt
- 8 6" corn tortillas, cut into ½" wide strips
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 medium tomatoes, cored and quartered
- ½ medium jalapeno chile, seeds and ribs removed
- 1½ - 4 tsp minced chipotle chile in adobo sauce
- 1 lime, cut into wedges
- 1 ripe avocado, halved, pitted and diced
- 8 oz queso anejo, crumbled or Monterey Jack cheese, diced fine
- Cilantro leaves
- Minced jalapeno chili
- Mexican crema or sour cream

Method

1. Bring the chicken, broth, 2 onion quarters, 2 garlic cloves, epazote (or cilantro and oregano), and ½ tsp salt to a boil over medium-high heat in a large saucepan. Reduce the heat to low, cover and simmer until the chicken is just cooked through, about 20 minutes. Using tongs, transfer the chicken to a large plate. Pour the broth through a fine-mesh strainer, discarding the solids. When the chicken is cool enough to handle, shred into bite-sized pieces, discarding the bones.
2. Meanwhile, adjust an oven rack to the middle position and heat the oven to 425 degrees. Toss the tortilla strips with 1 tbsp oil, spread them out over a rimmed baking sheet and bake, stirring occasionally, until crisp and dark golden, about 14 minutes. Season with salt and transfer to a paper-towel lined plate.
3. Puree the tomatoes, 2 remaining onion quarters, 2 remaining garlic cloves, jalapeño, 1½ tsp of the chipotle, and ¼ tsp salt in a food processor until smooth. Heat the remaining 1 tablespoon oil in a large saucepan over high heat until shimmering. Add the pureed mixture and cook, stirring frequently, until the mixture has darkened in color, about 10 minutes. Stir in the strained broth and bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to low and simmer to blend the flavors, about 15 minutes. (Up to this point, the soup can be cooled and refrigerated for up to 4 days. Return to a simmer before continuing).

4. Stir in the remaining chipotle to taste. Add the shredded chicken and simmer until heated through, about 5 minutes. Place some tortilla strips in the bottom of individual bowls, ladle the soup over the top, and serve, passing the garnishes separately.

Notes

Corrected, 2026-07-26, per America's Test Kitchen's Sopa de Tortilla.