MARGARITA CARRILLO ARRONTE

THE MEXICAN VEGETARIAN COOKBOOK



PHAIDON

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INTRODUCTION

Over the years, I have come to realize that my best experiences in the kitchen have been those moments of communion with family, friends and colleagues. Sharing my passion with those closest to me, thanks to the common thread that is Mexican cuisine, has been extremely comforting throughout my career. I had the fortune of being the youngest daughter of a great family, where women, all cooks and artists of the stove, taught me that one cooks not only with technique and discipline but also with heart.

This is our Mexican cuisine, so full of stories, myths and traditions; a fertile field of work that gives you many satisfactions, because it is always done with a purpose of celebration or coexistence. In every region of our vast country, cooking is done to share. Not only out of necessity, but as an important part of our identity as Mexicans, we carry taste memories on the palate wherever life takes us. In Mexico, cooking is completely communal, it is planted in community, it is harvested in community, it is cooked in community and it is enjoyed in community.

When I received the invitation for this new project from Phaidon, to make a vegetarian book, I saw the opportunity to show the deep vegetarian roots that traditional Mexican cuisine has. The further back we go in the history of the region, the more vegetarian are the roots of its cuisine. Let's start by recognizing three fundamental traits: that the domestication of corn, by the ancient inhabitants of Mesoamerica (Mexico today) began more than eight thousand years ago, and that, on the other hand, there was no type of livestock available, they had only domesticated certain farmyard animals in small quantities, such as: rabbits, hairless dogs and turkeys. Finally, it is logical to recognize that the great natural biodiversity (fifth in the world) of the vast Mesoamerican lands is manifested in the large amount of its endemic ingredients: fruits, vegetables, legumes, seeds, edible flowers, etc.

That is why I saw an opportunity in the theme of this book, to make known to the world that Mexican cuisine is not what many people think: that it is a greasy, unhealthy, unbalanced, ordinary cuisine, little varied or with excess sugar. This is absolutely false and it only shows a total ignorance of its true culinary wealth and culture. On the contrary, mexican cuisine is one of the most varied and sophisticated in the world, so much so that in 2010, it was included in the list of Cultural and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO, given that it unifies the diversity that characterizes the Mexican nation, as well as its antiquity, originality and authenticity.

It seems like a coincidence but I think it was fate that this book began its gestation in such a significant year for Mexico. Since we are commemorating three historical anniversaries of great importance and the tenth anniversary of its inclusion in the list

HUEVOS AHOGADOS

DROWNED EGGS

REGION: ALL MEXICO
COOKING TIME: 15 MINUTES
PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES
SERVES 6 |DF|

6 large, ripe tomatoes, dry-roasted
½ small onion, quartered and dry-roasted
2 garlic cloves, dry-roasted
1 tablespoon corn oil
1 sprig epazote, leaves chopped
4¼ cups (1¾ pints/1 liter) concentrated vegetable stock
12 eggs
1 cup (5½ oz/155 g) cooked peas
sea salt and black pepper

To serve
2½ cups (1 lb 2oz/500 g) Refried Beans (page 258)
corn tortillas (see page 358 for homemade)

In a food processor or blender, blend the tomatoes, onion, and garlic. Heat the oil in a large pan, add the blended sauce and season with the epazote, and salt and pepper to taste. Cook for 10 minutes, stirring, over medium heat.

Meanwhile, bring the stock to a boil in a separate pan.

Taste and check seasoning then lower the heat and add the eggs one at a time, taking care not to break the yolks. Season with salt.

Pour in the boiling stock and simmer for 3 minutes, then turn off the heat. Add the peas, cover and let rest for 3 minutes so that the whites set but not the yolks.

Serve two eggs per bowl, 'drowned' in sauce, with refried beans and warm tortillas on the side.

HUEVOS AL ALBAÑIL

MASON EGGS

REGION: MEXICO CITY
COOKING TIME: 10 MINUTES
PREPARATION TIME: 25 MINUTES
SERVES 6

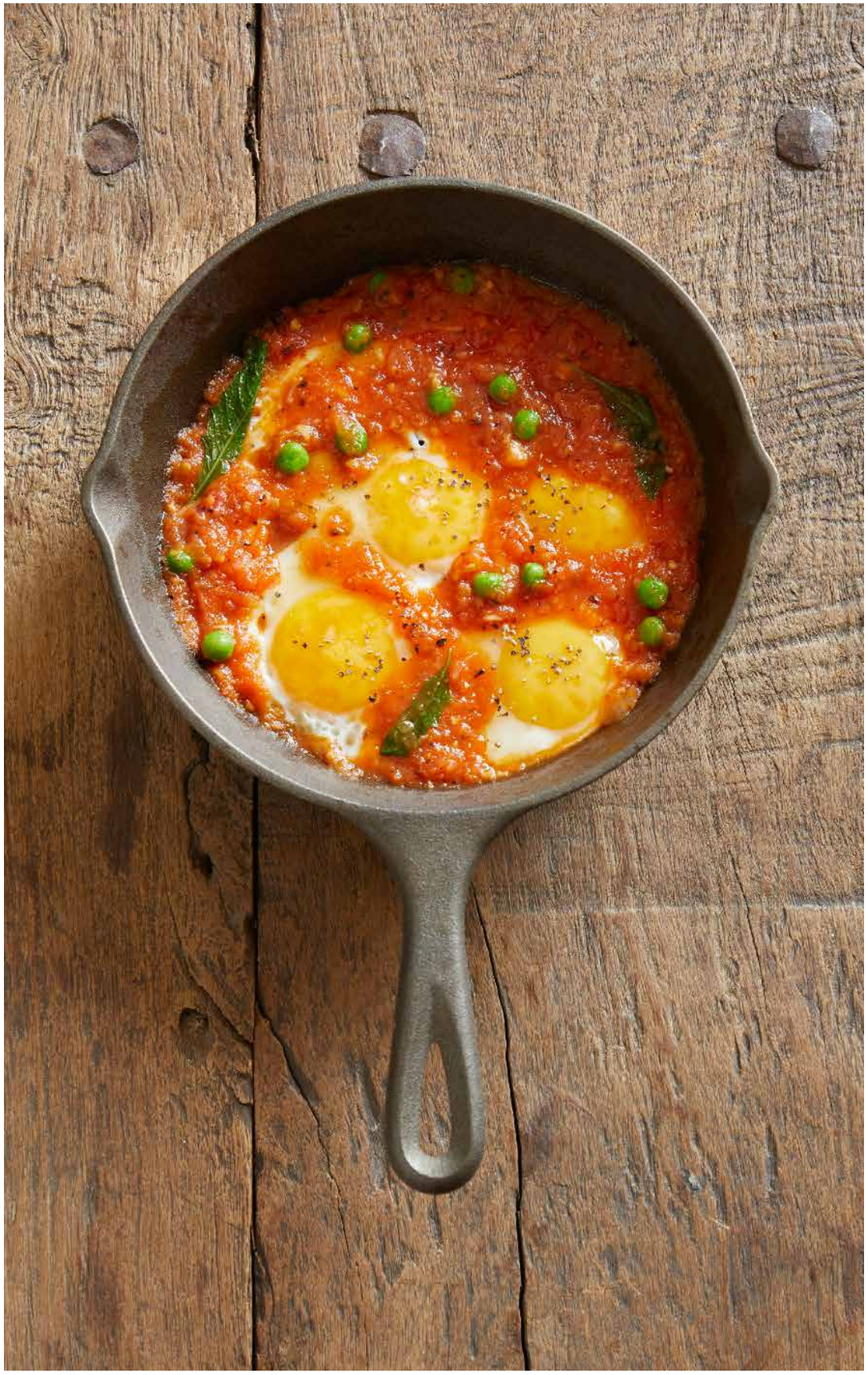
12 eggs, lightly whisked
1 tablespoon butter
sea salt

For the sauce
3 large, ripe tomatoes, dry-roasted
¼ onion, dry-roasted
1 garlic clove, dry-roasted
2 árbol chiles, dry-roasted
2 tablespoons corn oil
1 sprig epazote, leaves chopped

To serve
Refried Beans (page 258)
corn or wheat tortillas (see page 358 for homemade)
fresh or feta cheese, grated

For the sauce, blend the tomatoes, onion, garlic, chiles, and 1 cup (9 fl oz/250 ml) water in a food processor or blender. Pass the mixture through a strainer (sieve). Heat the oil in a pan, and add the sauce and epazote. Cook for 5–10 minutes until thick, then season with salt to taste.

Season the whisked eggs with a pinch of salt. Cook with the butter in a pan, stirring constantly, until cooked but not dry. Add the sauce and cook for a few minutes, then serve in a hot bowl with refried beans, tortillas, and grated cheese.



DROWNED EGGS

CEVICHE VEGETARIANO

VEGETARIAN CEVICHE

REGION: MEXICAN CARIBBEAN
PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES
SERVES 4 |DF| | V | |30|

1 red onion, thinly sliced
1 red bell pepper, dry-roasted, peeled, and cut into small dice
1 green bell pepper, dry-roasted, peeled, and cut into small dice
1 yellow bell pepper, dry-roasted, peeled, and cut into small dice
5 oz/150 g mushrooms, cleaned and thinly sliced
⅓ cup (2¾ fl oz/80 ml) lemon juice
5 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon finely chopped flat-leaf parsley
1 small garlic clove, minced
6 oz/180 g kalamata olives, pitted and halved
sea salt and black pepper
totopos or tortilla chips, to serve

Mix all the ingredients together in a non-reactive bowl, seasoning with salt and pepper to taste. Refrigerate until serving.

Serve with totopos or tortilla chips.

CHILEAJO

CHILEAJO

REGION: OAXACA
COOKING TIME: 40 MINUTES
PREPARATION TIME: 30 MINUTES, PLUS 4 HOURS CHILLING
SERVES 6–8 |GF|

1 lb 2 oz/500 g medium potatoes, peeled and cut into ½-inch (1.5-cm) dice
7 oz/200 g young green beans, cut into 1¼-inch (3-cm) pieces
1 cup (5½ oz/155 g) fresh peas
2 medium carrots, peeled and sliced ½ inch (1 cm) thick
½ small cauliflower, broken into florets
3½ oz/100 g guajillo chiles, seeded and soaked in hot water until soft
1 cinnamon stick, 1¼ inches (3 cm) long
10 garlic cloves, roughly chopped
1 teaspoon dried and ground thyme
6 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
sea salt
14 corn tortillas (see page 358 for homemade), to serve
tortilla chips (optional), to serve

For the topping
6 oz/180 g grated fresh or aged cheese (or use feta)
1 medium onion, sliced thinly into half moons
1½ teaspoons dried oregano

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil and have a bowl ready with ice water. Boil the diced potatoes for 10 minutes until tender, then remove with a slotted spoon and immerse immediately in the ice water to stop the cooking. Once cool, drain in a colander and set aside. Cook the green beans, peas, carrots, and cauliflower in the same way (separately) in the boiling water, so until each is tender but not mushy.

Put the chiles, cinnamon, garlic, thyme, vinegar, and 1 cup (9 fl oz/250 ml) water (use the chile soaking water, topping it up if necessary) into a blender or food processor, and blend to a smooth purée for 3 minutes. Pass through a strainer (sieve) and add salt to taste.

In a large bowl, mix the cooked vegetables with the strained purée, adding more salt if needed. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap (clingfilm) and refrigerate for at least 4 hours, preferably overnight.

To serve, mix the grated cheese with the onion slices and oregano. Season with salt if needed. Heat the corn tortillas and make tacos with the vegetable mix, and serve the tacos with the cheese topping. You can also serve the chileajo with tortilla chips.



VEGETARIAN CEVICHE

TEMPEH O TOFU EN SALSA POBLANO

TEMPEH OR TOFU IN POBLANO SAUCE

2 tablespoons butter
1¾ lb/800 g tempeh or firm tofu

For the sauce
7 oz/200g fresh corn kernels
3 sprigs flat-leaf parsley
½ leek, white part only, sliced
1 poblano chile, seeded
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 tablespoons butter
½ onion, grated
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 tablespoon all-purpose (plain) flour
1 cup (4 fl oz/120 ml) plant-based milk, hot
pinch of baking soda (bicarbonate of soda)
¼ teaspoon ground allspice
½ cup (4 fl oz/120 ml) heavy (double) cream
sea salt

To garnish
2 poblano chiles, dry-roasted, peeled, and cut into diamonds
4 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

REGION: CENTRAL MEXICO
COOKING TIME: 60 MINUTES
PREPARATION TIME: 30 MINUTES
SERVES 4

For the sauce, put the corn kernels in a saucepan with the parsley, leek, and ½ teaspoon salt. Add water to cover the ingredients by 1 inch (2.5 cm) and cook for 20 minutes over medium heat until the kernels are cooked. Drain, reserving the cooking water, and transfer to a blender, reserving half the corn kernels. Add the chile and 1 cup (9 fl oz/250 ml) of the reserved cooking water and blend to a smooth purée. Set aside.

In a small saucepan, heat the oil and the butter and add the onion and garlic and sauté until golden. Add the flour and cook, stirring, until lightly browned. Add the blended mixture and whisk to combine. Cook for a few minutes and, when it starts to bubble, pour in the hot milk and baking soda (bicarbonate of soda), whisking to combine. Add the allspice and salt to taste, then stir in the cream. Simmer for 20 minutes until it thickens. Check the seasoning.

Melt the butter in a non-stick frying pan or skillet and fry the tempeh or tofu slices until lightly browned.

Serve the tempeh or tofu with sauce ladled over, garnished with the reserved corn kernels, poblano chile strips, and grated Parmesan. Serve with some extra sauce on the side.

QUESO CORAZÓN EN SALSA VERDE

HEART CHEESE IN GREEN SAUCE

16 tomatillos, husks removed, dry-roasted
3 garlic cloves, dry-roasted
1 white onion, dry-roasted
1¬–2 dry morita or chipotle chiles, dry-roasted, seeded, and soaked in hot water until soft
1 lb 5 oz/600 g fresh heart-shaped cheese, or fresh cheese shaped with a 1-inch (2.5-cm) heart cutter
sea salt

To serve
8 tablespoons corn tortilla strips
bunch of chives, cut into 1-inch (2.5-cm) lengths
6 tomato skins, fried

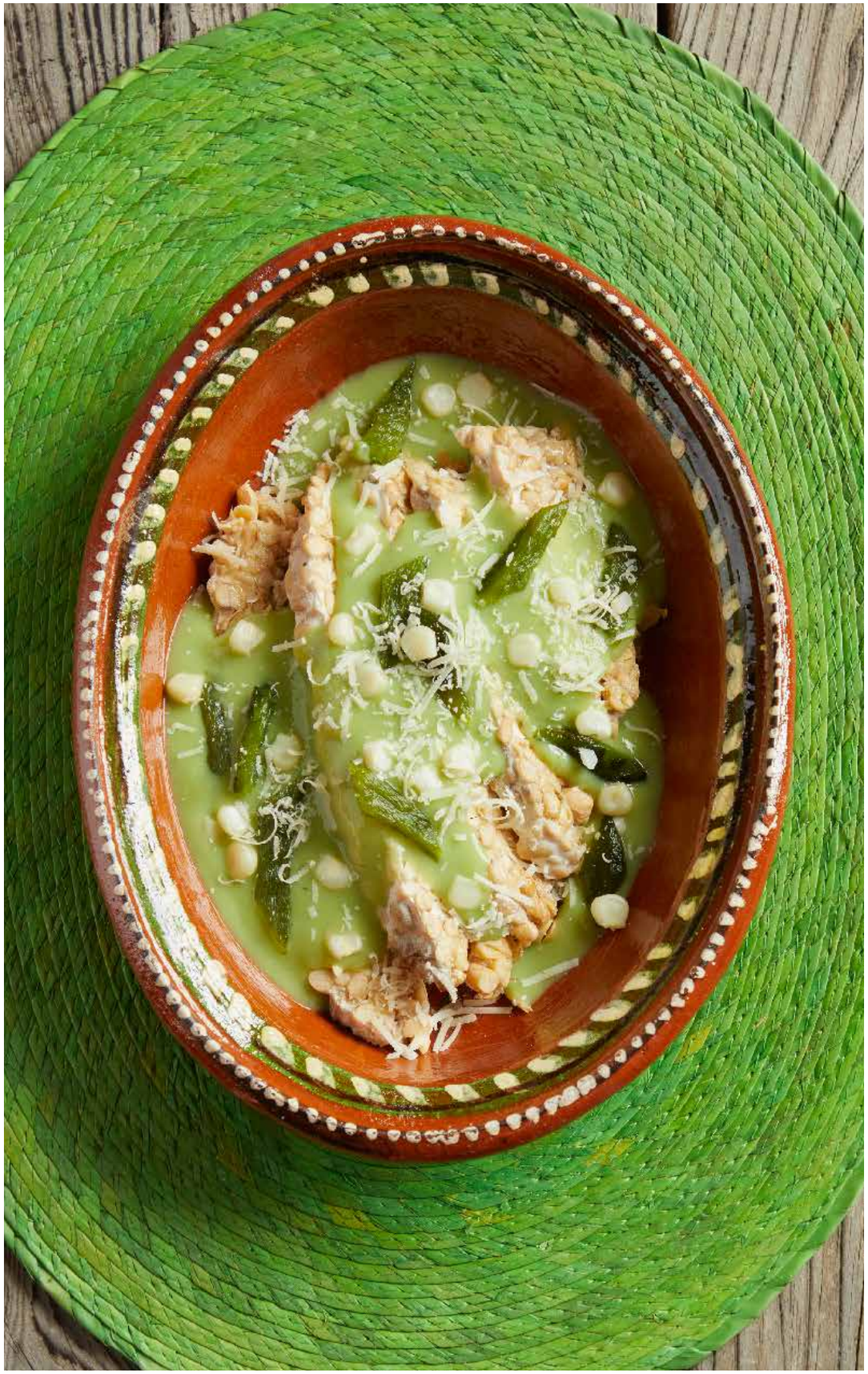
REGION: BAJA CALIFORNIA
COOKING TIME: 10 MINUTES
PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES
SERVES 6 |GF| |30|

Put the tomatillos, garlic, onion, and chiles with their soaking liquid in a food processor or blender, and blend to a smooth sauce. Pour into a saucepan, bring to a boil and cook for 7 minutes. Season with salt to taste and set aside.

Heat a non-stick frying pan or skillet over high heat and toast the fresh cheese hearts on both sides.

To serve, add a ladleful of sauce to each plate, place a slice of heart-shaped cheese in the center, and garnish with tortilla strips, chives, and fried tomato skin.

CHEF'S TIP: In Los Cabos, Baja California, they make a regional, delicious tender fresh heart-shaped cheese, called 'queso corazón'.



TEMPEH OR TOFU IN POBLANO SAUCE

TACOS DE POBRE CON CASCARA DE PAPA

POOR TACOS WITH POTATO PEELINGS

corn oil, for shallow-frying
peelings from 2¼ lb/1 kg cleaned, raw potatoes
1 large white onion, halved and thinly sliced
2–3 serrano chiles, cut into thin strips
8–12 corn or wheat tortillas (see page 358 for homemade)
sea salt
chili sauce or salsa of your choice, to serve

REGION: ALL MEXICO
COOKING TIME: 15 MINUTES
PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES
SERVES 4 |GF| |DF| | V | |30|

Heat enough oil for shallow-frying in a frying pan or skillet and sauté the potato peelings. When they are almost golden, add the onion and chile and sauté until the onion is translucent. Season with salt to taste. Spoon onto a plate lined with paper towels, to absorb excess oil.

Heat the tortillas and serve as tacos with the potato peeling filling, with chili sauce or salsa on the side.

CHEF'S TIP: You can prepare these tacos and arrange them inside a basket like tacos de canasta.

TORTA DE PAPA AL HORNO

BAKED POTATO CAKE

2¼ lb/1 kg white potatoes, unpeeled
¼ cup (2 oz/60 g) unsalted butter, diced, at room temperature, plus extra for greasing
3 eggs, beaten
1¾ oz/50 g cotija, añejo or feta cheese, grated
4 tablespoons sugar
sea salt and black pepper

REGION: NORTH MEXICO
COOKING TIME: 20 MINUTES
PREPARATION TIME: 30 MINUTES
SERVES 4–6 |GF| | 5 |

Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C/Gas Mark 4).

Wash the potatoes and cook in a steamer until soft. Peel and mash them, then stir in the diced butter until it melts. Mix in the eggs, grated cheese, half of the sugar, and salt and pepper to taste.

Spread the mixture in a buttered ovenproof dish, using a spatula to make an even layer. Sprinkle the remaining sugar over the top and bake for 25 minutes until golden.

Slice and serve hot.

CHEF'S TIP: You can also bake this in individual ramekins or in a cake pan (tin).



POOR TACOS WITH POTATO PEELINGS

TARTA TATIN DE MANGO

MANGO TARTE TATIN

REGION: ALL MEXICO
COOKING TIME: 30 MINUTES
PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES, PLUS CHILLING
MAKES 1 TART

¾ cup (5 oz/150 g) superfine (caster) sugar
4 large mangoes
¼ cup (2 oz/60 g) melted butter

For the pastry
¾ cup minus 2 teaspoons (5½ oz/160 g) unsalted butter, at room temperature
2 cups (9 oz/260 g) all-purpose (plain) flour
1 egg yolk
5 tablespoons/45 g confectioners' (icing) sugar
pinch of salt
2 tablespoons ice water

In a mixing bowl, rub the butter into the flour with your fingertips until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Add the yolk, confectioners' (icing) sugar, and salt, and rub in again to incorporate. Add the ice water a tablespoon at a time until you have a uniform but not sticky ball. Flatten with your hands, cover in plastic wrap (clingfilm), and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Remove the pastry from the refrigerator and, using a rolling pin, roll out to a circle ¼ inch (5 mm) thick. Cover and refrigerate.

Preheat the oven 400°F (200°C/Gas Mark 6) and place a round ovenproof dish, 8½ inches (22 cm) diameter, inside to warm up for 5–8 minutes.

For the caramel, heat the sugar with ⅓ cup (3 fl oz/80 ml) water in a non-stick pan until it turns an amber caramel color. Pour the caramel immediately into the warmed ovenproof dish and swirl it carefully to cover the entire bottom.

Place a mango with the stem down on a cutting board. Slice down the length of the mango, just to the outside of the center so that your knife slices parallel to the long, flat seed. Cup one mango half skin-side down in your palm. Carefully slice lengthwise, to remove the mango half completely, and remove the skin. Repeat on the other side of the center so that you have two side chunks and a flat pit piece, then repeat with the remaining mangoes.

Place the mango pieces over the caramel, forming a pattern of your choice, then coat them with the melted butter. Cover with the rolled out pastry and crimp its edges to form a thick ring around the tart. Prick the pastry with a fork and bake for 30 minutes or until the crust is golden. Remove the tart from the oven and let cool a little before inverting onto a serving dish.

Serve warm or at room temperature, with a scoop of vanilla ice cream or whipped cream.



MANGO TARTE TATIN










MEXICAN FOOD IS ENJOYING AN EXPLOSION IN POPULARITY. THE SAME CAN BE SAID OF VEGETARIAN CUISINE. THE AUTHOR OF THE BESTSELLING **MEXICO: THE COOKBOOK** BRINGS BOTH THESE FOOD TRENDS TOGETHER IN A VOLUME OF ALMOST 400 ALL-NEW, PLANT-BASED RECIPES. REGIONAL MEXICAN CUISINE IS TRADITIONALLY BASED ON A WIDE RANGE OF VEGETARIAN INGREDIENTS—PULSES, VEGETABLES, FRUITS, AND OF COURSE, CHILES AND SPICES. WITH COLORFUL PHOTOGRAPHY AND DESIGN, **THE MEXICAN VEGETARIAN COOKBOOK** WILL BE EQUALLY AS ICONIC AS ITS PREDECESSOR **MEXICO: THE COOKBOOK**.

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