

Bolinho Mandioca

From Nelson's Kitchen
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From the book *Dona Benta: Comer Bem*.

Ingredients:

- Yucca Root
- Canola Oil
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon of baking powder
- Salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Water

Ingredients (optional for flavouring, use a selection):

- Bacon
- Onion
- Parmesan Cheese
- Fresh herbs (chives, parsley, basil, rosemary, sage, thyme)

Procedure:

1. Peel the yucca

- Fill your sink with hot tap water and soak the yucca root in warm water for a few minutes to loosen the skin.
- Trim the ends of each yucca root with a chefs knife.
- With a pointed paring knife peel the yucca starting at the top.
- Cut the yucca into 3 to 4 inch long segments.
- Stand each segment up and cut in half lengthwise.
- Cut each half in half again.
- Remove the center string from each segment.
- Remove any brown, black, stringy or woody parts.
- At this point you may submerge the peeled yucca in fresh water so that all the pieces of yucca are covered by water, and put in the freezer, or you may proceed to cook it.

2. Cook the yucca

- If you froze the yucca, drop the frozen yucca with the surrounding water in a pot of fresh water and set it to boil.

- Otherwise drop the peeled yucca in the water and bring to a boil. Do not add any seasoning or salt to the water.
- Boil for 40-60 minutes until the yucca becomes soft. If it becomes mushy you got a very good yucca.
- Alternatively, specially from frozen yucca, put the yucca in a pressure cooker, bring up to pressure, and cook under pressure for 15 minutes. Put the pressure cooker under running cold water and carefully move the pressure valve to release the steam.
- Turn off the fire, add salt to the water and let it stand for 5 to 10 minutes.
- Drain the cooked yucca in a colander.
- Often the boiled yucca is served as a side dish to meat dishes as is.

3. Mashing the Yucca

- Let the yucca cool off completely (you may cook it the day before and keep it in the fridge).
- Remove the hard string from the center of the pieces of yucca, as well as any hard bits that might be at the end of the cut pieces after they were cooked.
- In a large dish, using a fork, mash up the cooked yucca. You want two cups of mashed up yucca.

4. Preparing the batter

- Add two eggs, baking powder, black pepper and flavourings (see below) to the batter and mix very well.

5. Frying the Bolinhos

- Heat up pure canola oil in a deep fryer. Add enough oil for the bolinhos to float in the oil.
- Using two Tablespoons, shape the bolinhos and drop in the hot oil.
- Cook until they are light golden brown.
- You will cook them in several batches

6. Flavouring 1: Crisp Bacon

- Cook the bacon in a sautee pan making sure to not over brown them.
- After they are crisp, let it drain on paper towels.
- Cut into small pieces and add to the batter.

7. Flavouring 2: Fresh herbs

- Add two tablespoons of grated parmesan cheese and chop a selection of fresh herbs:
 - Option 1: chives, parsley, and basil
 - Option 2: Rosemary and sage
 - Option 3: two tablespoons of finely chopped onions and thyme.
- Serve the bolinhos warm as an appetizer.