

SAVEUR

APRIL 21, 2015

At the Viva Taco bus in Turlock, Silvestre Valencia adds jalapeño pickling liquid to the pork braise, which tenderizes the meat and keeps it from drying out. Featured in: [On the California Taco Trail](#)

Carnitas Tacos (Michoacán-Style Braised Pork Tacos)

Carnitas, a Mexican-style pulled pork, gets tangy punch from the addition of spicy pickled jalapeño brine to the cooking liquid. The meat then gets piled high into warm taco shells.

- 3 tbsp. lard or canola oil
 - 3 lb. skinless, bone-in pork shoulder, cut into 3" pieces (have your butcher do this)
 - Kosher salt, to taste
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ cup whole milk
 - 8 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed
 - 6 canned or jarred whole pickled jalapeños
 - $\frac{1}{3}$ cup jalapeño pickling liquid, from above
 - 1 large white onion, roughly chopped
 - 2 limes, juiced
 - 2 oranges, juiced
-
- 6 tomatillos, husked and cored
 - 3 cloves garlic
 - 2 plum tomatoes, cored

- 1 canned or jarred whole pickled jalapeño, stemmed
- 3 tbsp. jalapeño pickling liquid, from above, plus more for serving
- Kosher salt, to taste
- Corn tortillas, warmed, for serving
- Roughly chopped cilantro and thinly sliced radishes, for garnish
- Orange wedges, for serving

Make the carnitas: Melt lard in an 8-qt. saucepan over medium-high. Season pork with salt; cook, turning as needed, until browned, 10–12 minutes. Add milk, garlic, jalapeños and pickling liquid, onion, and lime and orange juices; boil. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, covered, until pork is tender, about 2 hours. Let pork cool and transfer to a cutting board; chop into bite-size pieces. Strain cooking liquid and return to pan; stir in pork and keep warm.

Make the salsa and serve: Heat a 12" cast-iron skillet over medium-high; cook tomatillos, garlic, and tomatoes, turning as needed, until blackened all over, 12–15 minutes, and transfer to blender. Add jalapeño and pickling liquid, and salt; purée until smooth. Serve carnitas on tortillas with salsa; garnish with cilantro and radishes. Serve with more pickled jalapeños and the orange wedges.

Copyright © 2016 SAVEUR. A Bonnier Corporation Company. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited.
