

Thorns and Pulp

THE CHAYOTE

A Mesoamerican Plant

Recipe book

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Translation Key

Name	Possibly	Translation
tesmole		Veracruzana style stew
epazote	<i>Dysphania ambrosioides</i>	Mexican Tea
Bobitos	Slang	
Chilacayote	<i>Cucurbita ficifolia (related to Chayote)</i>	Figleaf gourd
molcajete		stone mortar
chile cuaresmeño		Jalapeño Pepper
chilatole	atole flavored with ground broiled tomatoes and chiles	
Jitomates guajes	Roma Tomatoes	
Erizos		*Thorny variety of Chayote
Puchero		Beef stew pot
quelites		Wild Greens (on internet)
Pipian	pureed greens w/ ground seeds sauce from <i>Cucurbita argyrosperma</i>	
Tlanepa	<i>Piper auritum</i>	
salsa macha	A sauce made with dried chilies, nuts, seeds, and olive oil.	
Guajillo chili	<i>Capsicum annuum</i>	dried mirasol chili

quintoniles "a type of Amaranth"

Ancho chile *Capsicum annuum var. annuum 'Poblano'* dried poblano

** Erizos are small thorny chayote and were originally indicated for flavor. If not available, feel free to use smooth mature chayote.*

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The final edition was done by David Ojeda Yáñez.

Presentation:

The idea of creating a recipe book that talks about different ways of consuming chayote came up during a research project on this Mesoamerican plant, it was performed here in the System of Regional Centers of the Chapingo Autonomous University, coordinated by Artemio Cruz León.

The results obtained have been disseminated through publications, forums, conferences, and a temporary museum exhibit with the title of “Thorns and Pulp... Chayote Mesoamerican Plant” housed at the National Museum of Agriculture, UACH. As a compliment of said exhibit, it was thought to compile a list of culinary samples and demonstrate how to prepare Chayote using its fruit, root, lianas and leaves of the plant in a variety of dishes, soups, stews, desserts, and medicine.

The information and recipes shown here were obtained from three sources: reviewing already published recipe books, some recipes provided by friends or colleagues and interviewing women from the central area of Veracruz State in the study area of the Eastern Regional Center of Huatusco (CRUO), where the Reference Research was done.

The interviews were conducted in various environments and we collected a variety of rural and urban ways, not only in places of traditional production like vegetable gardens, but also from commercial spaces. We attempted to also cover various climatic zones, from dry tropics to temperate.

Together with Bernardo Bersitain, a researcher of the Eastern Regional Center of Huatusco (CRUO), a workflow plan was created, and interviews were scheduled in municipalities of Huatusco, Orizaba, Zongolica, Ixtazoquitlán and Actopan. Communities visited: Tlavitecpan, Tepecingo, Tuxpanguillo, Cuatlalpan, Zoquitla, Ayahualulco and Paso de la Milpa.

There were also interviews in the cities of Huatusco, Orizaba and Zongolica.

Many people interviewed have a relation with the informants of the original research. They were told that this time it was about “getting in the kitchen” and teaching us the ways they use to prepare different types of chayote (pale-skinned, smooth, thorny, tough, black, watery, etc.) As well as using the different parts of the plant.

The different flavors are due to the diversity of the chayote fruit, and the addition of numerous condiments and odorous herbs used, combined with the creativity and secrets (such as covering the pot to avoid the chayote losing its green colour, not start cooking them in cold water but in boiling water, use certain types of chillies, grinding them with a metate) that each chef has.

Obviously, the experience was rich (besides delicious) not only for the recipes acquired but also the opportunity of meeting such warm people that brought us knowledge, hospitality, and generosity. In addition, it was possible to gather different ways of plant cultivation, detecting differences among fruits, getting more knowledge on the production of chayote, and enjoying a treed region, rainy and cloudy, with a night without rain illuminated by lighting bugs.

We trust that the users of this recipe book will not have to “give birth to chayotes” when having guests over for a bite, but instead be able to stew them in many delicious ways.

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Introduction

Chayote, *Sicyos edulis* N. J. Jacquin, syn, *Sechium edule* (Jacq.) Sw., Cucurbitaceae, has been cultivated since ancient times. Most researchers agree that Mesoamerica is where it originated and where it was domesticated. Some authors point to Mexico as the place of origin of the plant. It is in here and particularly in the central area of Veracruz State, where it is most diverse, including wild types.

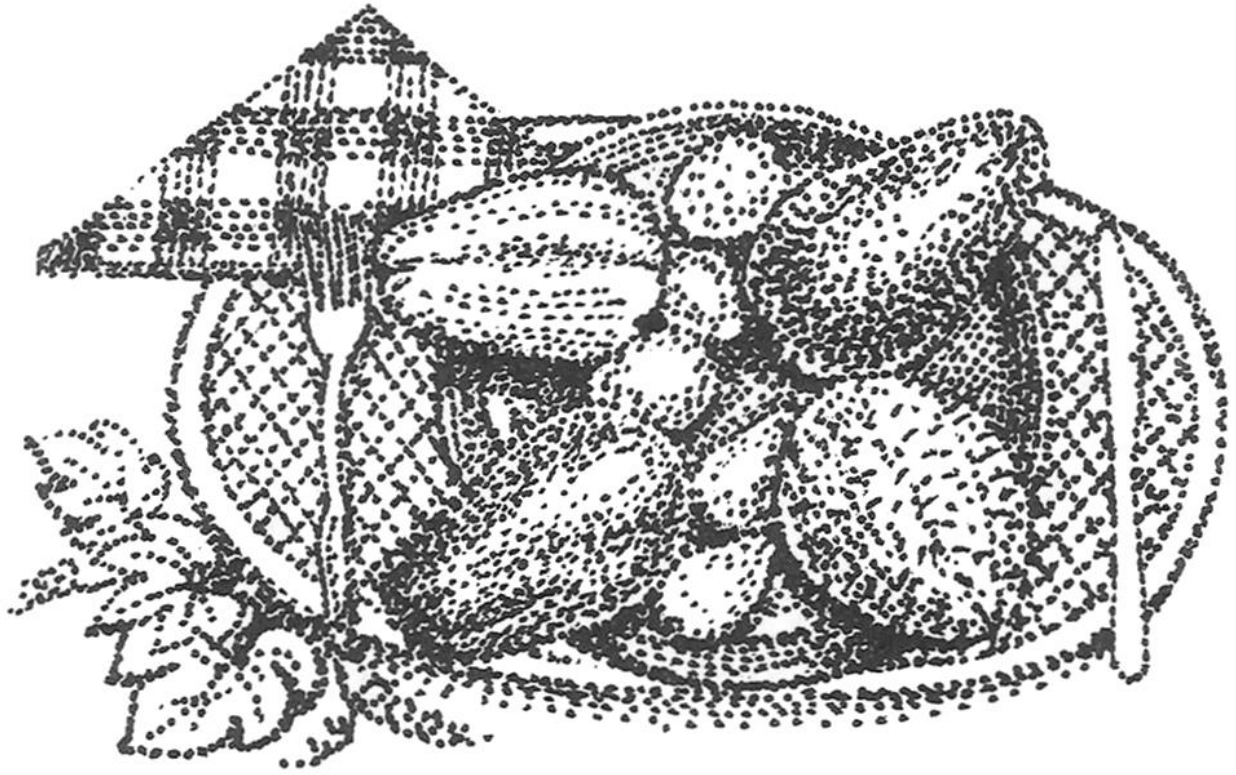
It is a vegetable of wide distribution, that is cultivated in altitudes from sea level up to 2,800 MSL (9,486 feet above sea level) and in a diversity of climates. It has a high productive capacity of 300 Kg of fruit per cycle and its species is distinguished for the fact that all its parts are consumable: fruit, roots, leaves and shoots. It also has with different functions as food, medicine, ceremonial, ornament, and forage.

The present recipe book makes emphasis on the use of chayote as food and a bit of medicinal use.

Recipes are presented by sections: salads, soups, stews, desserts, and drinks. Each recipe shows a number that corresponds to a name in the list of informants. Recipes without numbers were taken from existing books.

There is no doubt that there are many more ways of preparation. Only a limited number of recipes are presented here in comparison with the wide variety of taste that can be found in Mexico. Which possesses one of the worlds most delicious cuisine.

It is certain that this culinary art is due to its environmental diversity, culture of the people and of course creativity and imagination of the population. Bon appétit!



SALADS

Salads

Erizos (Baby Thorny Chayote) in Salad

Ingredients:

3 large erizos (Baby Thorny Chayote)

3 carrots

3 potatoes

10 green beans

Some mayonnaise

1/2 Nestle cream

Salt

Preparation:

Cut all vegetables in fine cubes and cook separately. When soft drain and put them in a bowl. Add mayonnaise, cream, and mix them together w/ salt to taste.

Erizo (Baby Thorny Chayote) Pickled**Ingredients:**

4 erizos (Baby chayotes with thorns)

1/2 large onion or a medium large sliced

1 teaspoon oregano and black pepper

1 teaspoon cooking oil

Salt

1/2 cup vinegar

1/2 cup grated cheese (Optional)

Preparation:

First peel and cut chayotes in fine cubes. Cook them w/ boiling water and salt. Then drain and put them in a salad bowl.

Put the onion in oil, salt, oregano, and black pepper in a pan. When onions soften, add chayotes, and vinegar mix then cover for 15 minutes. Grated cheese can be added. Served chilled.

Chayote Root Salad**Ingredients:**

3/4 or 1 Kg chayote root

1 small can Serrano chillies in vinegar

1 onion in slices

Preparation:

Peel chayote root and cut it in slices then put to boil in water and salt. Then drain it and put it in a salad bowl w/ slices of onion and chillies in vinegar.

Erizos (Baby Thorny Chayotes) with Mayonnaise

Ingredients:

4 or 5 chayotes

Mayonnaise to taste

Preparation:

Cook chayotes, peel them and cut them in fine cubes and put them in a salad bowl, add mayonnaise to taste. Serve it chilled.

Chayote Salad

Ingredients:

4 chayotes (Smooth surface)

1 tablespoon onion cut finely.

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 tablespoon cooking vinegar

1 pinch ground black pepper

Salt

Preparation:

Put chayotes to cook, whole and unpeeled, place enough water to cover them. Once softened (Try to click them w/ a wooden pin to assure they are soft), take them out, and peel them while they are hot. Cut them along in a half, removed their seeds including the little net around them. Cut the flesh in fine cubes and put them in a salad bowl, mix them w/ onion, oil, vinegar, black pepper, and salt to taste. Serve them chilled.

Chayote Salad

Ingredients:

4 chayotes without thorns, medium size

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 tablespoon vinegar

1 pinch ground black pepper

1 pinch dried coarsely ground oregano.

1/2 teaspoon salt

Preparation:

With a pressure cooker put chayotes to cook w/ 2 cups of water for 15 minutes. Then cool cooker w/ water from tap, uncover it and take chayotes out. Allow some time to cool as to grab them easily with your hands, then peel them and cut them along in the half; remove their seeds including the little net around them (Save seed as they are delicious but throw away the little net)

Cut chayotes in fine cubes about 2 cm in size and put them in a salad bowl. Place oil, vinegar, black pepper, oregano, and salt in the container; shake well allowing all ingredients to mix, bath chayotes w/ this dressing.

Chayote Salad

Ingredients:

2 chayotes medium size

6 tablespoons of mayonnaise

1 tablespoon cooking oil

Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation:

Wash chayotes and put them to cook in boiling water. Peel and cut them in medium size pieces. Please hot oil on the chayotes w/ salt and pepper and steam them all together for 5 minutes.

Serve them w/ mayonnaise; this can be prepared in house: lemon juice, 1 egg, 1/2 teaspoon sugar, salt, and pepper to taste. Using a blender adding oil in the process adding drops of water if needed to light it.

Chayotes with Yogurt

Ingredients:

4 chayotes without thorns large size

1/2 cup of natural Yogurt

Salt and ground white pepper

Preparation:

Put a cup of water in a pressure cooker and cook the unpeeled chayotes for 10 minutes, cool the cooker putting it under the water tap and uncover it. Take chayotes out and let them to cool. Peel the chayotes w/ a potato peeler, cut them along the half, remove their seeds including the little net around them. Cut the chayotes in fine cubes and put them in bowl. Add the yogurt, salt and pepper and use it to bath the chayotes. Serve it with fish.

Chayote Root Salad

Ingredients:

3/4 Kg Chayote root

2 tablespoons mayonnaise

150 gr cheese to grate

Preparation:

Peel the root and slice it, put to cook with water and salt. Then drain it and put it in a bowl w/ mayonnaise and cheese.

Chayote Salad

Ingredients:

3 or 4 chayotes medium size

oil

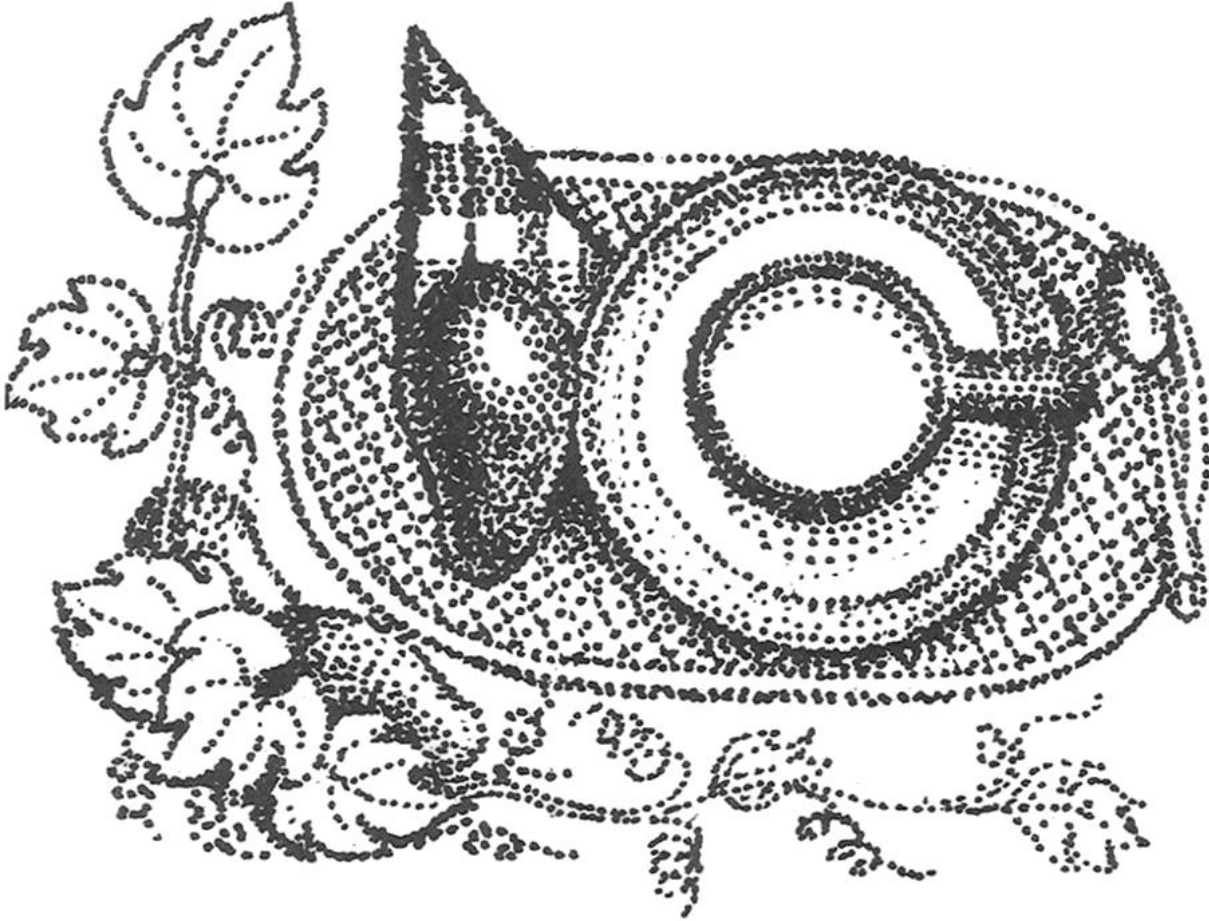
salt

Vinegar

A pinch of oregano

Preparation:

Cook the chayotes and cut them in fine cubes. Prepare a vinaigrette with the rest of ingredients. Serve chilled and accompany with a main dish.



SOUPS

Cream of Chayote

Ingredients:

2 baby chayotes

1/2 litre of milk

2 tablespoons of butter

Preparation:

Boil the unpeeled chayotes, blend them while adding milk, strain it and fry it in butter.

Boiled Shoots in Broth

Ingredients:

A handful of baby shoots

1 tablespoon of butter

1/2 onion

1 garlic (a tooth)

Preparation:

Unravel the shoots and cut them in long pieces. Fry them in butter w/ onion, garlic, and salt. Add boiling water and serve in broth when cooked.

Cream of Chayote

Ingredients: (6 portions)

4 chayotes cooked and peeled

1/2 onion cut in small pieces

2 tablespoons of margarine

2 teaspoons of chicken stock powder

1 litre of milk

1 tablespoon of flour

Preparation:

Cook onions in margarine, then blend them together along with chayote cut in small pieces, chicken broth, milk, and flour. Once blended place it on medium heat and leave to boil until it has the consistence of cream, it can be accompanied w/ little cubes of panned fried bread.

Chayote Cream

Ingredients:

6 baby chayotes

1 Piece of Onion

2 tablespoons butter

1 tablespoon flour

1 cup milk

Chicken broth, salt and pepper

Preparation:

Cook chayotes w/ water and salt. Peel chayotes, take out the fibre in the middle and then put it in the blender, adding the onion.

Fry the flour in butter and when it is golden in colour add the blended chayote together w/ the chicken broth. Boil it for few minutes and add salt. Turn off the heat.

Chayote Soup

Ingredients:

3 baby chayotes

1 tomato

1 garlic (A tooth)

1 piece of Onion

Preparation:

Peel chayotes and cut them in fine cubes. Fry them in hot oil with low heat. Add roasted tomato grounded w/ onion and garlic. Fry it well and add chicken broth in the process. It can be served with little cubes of fresh cheese.



STEWES

Stews

Boiled chayote root

Ingredients:

3/4 Kg chayote root

Cilantro (few small branches)

100 gr Serrano chili or chile cuaresmeño

Preparation:

Peel chayote root and cook in a pan with boiling water. Separately, fry chilies in a frying pan and then grind them in a molcajete with cilantro, garlic, and salt. Drain the water, then slice the chayote root and serve with sauce.

Chayotes (Erizos) Stuffed with Ground Beef

Ingredients:

6 large thorny chayotes (Erizos)

1/4 ground beef or chicken to taste

2 tomatoes peeled and cut

1 tablespoon of cut onion

1 tablespoon cut parsley

Salt and pepper to taste

Oil (The necessary amount)

Preparation:

Fry the beef with onions, tomatoes, and parsley adding salt and pepper, cut the chayotes already boiled and cut them in halves and take their pulp and add it to the beef. Mix all together and wait for it to season. Then turn off the heat and stuff the halves of chayote with beef mix. Garnish it with lettuce and tomato slices.

Layered Chayote Root

Ingredients:

3/4 Kg chayote root

3 eggs

1 cup flour

Salt and pepper

Preparation:

Peel the chayote root, slice it, and cook it in boiling water with salt, then drain it. Cover each slice with flour and after with egg white. So first batter the white of egg and then add the egg yolk battered with salt and pepper. Serve it dry or with tomato broth.

Green Mole Tripe with Chayotes

Ingredients:

1 Kg cooked tripe cut in fine cubes (beef or chicken)

1/2 Kg baby chayotes

Green mole:

1 Kg green tomato (with shell)

8 or 10 green chilies

Chayote leaves and shoots (Several)

Squash shoots (Several)

2 leaves of tlanepa (hierba santa)

Epazote (*Dysphania ambrosioides*) and cilantro to taste

Salt and oil or butter

Preparation:

Cook the tripe in a pan and separately grind the raw ingredients for mole. Season it in oil or butter. Add tripe with peeled and cut chayotes in fine cubes. Cook them in low heat.

Erizos (Thorny Chayotes) in Chileatole (thick soup)

Ingredients:

3 or 4 Thorny chayotes (Erizos)

Dried chipotle chili

Epazote (*Dysphania ambrosioides*) or hierba santa (tlanepa)

Some tortillas dough

Salt and cooking oil

Preparation:

Peel chayotes and cut them in fine cubes and stew w/ chili sauce that has been wet and grounded previously, then fry them in oil.

Let the tortillas dough dissolve in water, strained it, and add to the stew. Add epazote (*Dysphania ambrosioides*) to add consistence.

Erizos (Thorny Chayotes) in Spices

Ingredients:

3 or 4 Erizos (Chayotes w/ thorns)

3 or 4 Roma Tomatoes

1/2 onion

2 garlic (2 teeth)

Oregano to taste

Cooking oil

Preparation:

Peel Erizos (chayotes with thorns), cut them in fine cubes and put them in a pan with water and salt and bring to a boil. Grind the Roma Tomatoes w/ onion and garlic, then stew them in hot oil, when well seasoned add the strained chayotes, flavor them with oregano and let them stew until the chayotes are soft.

Steamed Erizos (Thorny chayotes)

Ingredients:

3 or 4 Erizos (Thorny chayotes)

1/2 onion (cut)

Oregano

Garlic

Cumin

Cooking oil

Preparation:

Peel the chayotes and cut them in fine cubes and rinse them. Put them in a pan with hot oil to fry. When done, cover them, add salt, onion, and oregano. Lower the heat and stew.

In the mortar and pestle (Molcajete) grind the garlic, cumin and add to the pan (optional).

Stewed Baby chayote Shoots

Ingredients:

1 bunch of chayote shoots
4 or 5 Roma Tomatoes
1 little branch of cilantro
1 garlic (1 tooth)
1/2 large onion
Salt and cooking oil

Preparation:

Unravel the shoots and put them to boil in water w/ salt. Strain them and cut them in little pieces. Separately, grind the rest of ingredients (except the onion) and put them in the blender, once done fry it in hot oil.

Add the shoots and onion slices. Serve with rice and beans.

Chayote Root in Tasmole

Ingredients:

1 Kg chayote root
6 dried Serrano chilies
1 leaf of hierba santa (tlanepa)
Salt

Preparation:

Peel and cut the chayote root and cook in boiling water with salt, separately keep some raw. This part will be grinded with Serrano pepper and be added to the boiling portion with a tlanepa (Hierba santa) leaf.

Chayote Root Layered in Tortillas

Ingredients:

1 Kg chayote root
1/4 Kg cheese
1 cup flour
2 or 3 battered eggs to layer

Salt

Cooking oil

Preparation:

Peel chayote root and cut into slices, cook with boiling water, and salt and strain them, take a slice, and add cheese and cover it with another slice (sandwich the cheese between the chayote slices), flour them and layer the slices with egg. Serve it with tomatoes broth, without broth or in adobo (marinade).

Adobo (marinade)

Ingredients:

3 large chilies

2 Tomatoes

Cumin, claws, pepper, garlic, onion, and salt

Cooking oil

Adobo Preparation:

Strip the chili peppers and boil the tomatoes. Then all the ingredients are blended and fried in oil

Steamed Erizos (Thorny chayotes)

Ingredients:

5 or 6 erizos (Thorny chayotes)

1/2 bar of butter

1/2 Onion cut in fine squares

1/4 Kg string cheese

Preparation:

Peel the erizos (Thorny Chanyotes), cut and wash them. Fry them with butter, adding onion, steering them to avoid sticking. Cook them in low heat in their own juices. Put on string cheese when cooked and turn off the heat and serve when cheese melting.

It can be accompanied with Macha sauce

Ingredients for sauce:

3 or 4 garlic (Teeth)

Few Serrano chilies or dried

Salt

Cooking oil

Preparation:

Fry chilies with a little oil using low heat, steering them not to burn. When fried grind them in a molcajete with garlic and salt.

Chayotes in White Sauce

Ingredients:

2 Regular size chayotes

50 gr butter

35 gr flour

3/4 litre milk (CONASUPO)

1 tablespoon cut parsley

Salt and pepper

Preparation:

Cook chayotes w/ boiling water and salt, peel and cut them in fine cubes.

Fry the flour w/ butter and before it becomes a golden colour, season it with salt and pepper, add little cut cubes of chayote and let it boil until it gets consistent. Then place in a deep dish, garnish with cut parsley, and serve it hot.

Stuffed Chayotes

Ingredients:

2 loaf of bread (hard)

6 small chayotes

2 eggs

75 gr aged cheese

1 cup milk cream

Preparation:

Grind the bread and put chayotes to cook. When cooked, cut them in halves and hollow them out carefully. The paste taken out from chayotes is mixed with cut boiled eggs along with half of the milk cream and bread, back fill the halves of chayotes and garnish with remaining bread and cheese, then add remaining milk cream. Put it in the oven at 350°C. Serve hot when golden coloured.

Erizos (Thorny Chayote) with Eggs

Ingredients:

2 erizos (Thorny chayotes) medium size

4 eggs

1/2 onion (diced)

Salt and cooking oil

Preparation:

Peel the erizos (Thorny chayotes), cut them in fine cubes and cook them in boiling water and salt. Drain them and fry them in hot oil and onion and add the eggs.

Erizo (Thorny chayotes) in Tesmole

Ingredients:

4 erizos (Thorny chayotes)

1 Serrano dried chili

5 Roma Tomatoes

6 or 7 green tomatoes (w/ skin)

Salt, garlic and cooking oil

Preparation:

Peel the erizos (Thorny chayotes), cut them in fine cubes and cook them in a small amount of boiling water and salt. Separately fry the chili and grind them together with tomatoes (Green and Roma) and salt. Fry everything in oil and add it to the chayotes.

Beef Broth with Erizos

Ingredients:

1 Kg beef w/ bones

2 hard chayotes

3 potatoes

2 carrots

1/2 onion

1 garlic (A tooth)

Preparation:

Bring to boil the beef, onion, and garlic, when almost cooked add all vegetables peeled and cut to taste.

Chayote Root with Eggs

Ingredients:

1/2 Kg of chayote root

4 or 5 eggs

1/2 onion

Salt and cooking oil

Preparation:

Peel the chayote root, cut it and place in a pot, bring to boil in water and salt. Drain it and fry it in hot oil with onion and add the eggs.

Stuffed Chayotes

Ingredients:

6 chayotes medium size

100 gr cooked ham

100 gr grated manchego cheese

1/2 bar butter

A pinch ground white pepper

Salt

Preparation:

Cook whole chayotes with enough water so they are covered for half an hour. Once they are cooked (Possible to find out using a pick), bring them to cool, cut them along the half, take away the seed including the little net around them. Also take away the pulp with a spoon and cut it.

Cut the ham and mix it with the pulp, half of the grated cheese, butter pepper and salt. Do it while the pulp is still hot, so the butter will melt. Refill the chayotes halves with this mix, then cover them with cheese. Turn on the oven at 150°. Put the stuffed chayotes in an oily baking tray, place it in the oven until cheese melting or about 15 minutes before putting them on the table. It should be served once out the oven.

Chayotes with Epazote (*Dysphania ambrosioides*)

Ingredients:

5 chayotes

2 garlic (2 Teeth)

2 Tomatoes

1 branch of epazote (*Dysphania ambrosioides*)

1 piece of onion

Chili and salt

Preparation:

Cook the chayotes using not too much water until they are soft, peel them and cut them in fine cubes. Roast the chili and tomatoes, then blend them with garlic and onion and fry them until seasoned. Add half cup of water, salt, the of epazote (*Dysphania ambrosioides*) and the chayotes. Boil for 5 minutes. Accompanying with hot tortillas.

Baked Chayotes

Ingredients:

3 large chayotes

3 tablespoons ground bread

1 tablespoon cut onion
1/4 cup grated cheese
3 tablespoons margarine
1 pinch sugar
1 pinch ground cinnamon
Salt

Preparation:

Cook chayotes with water and salt, drain them, cut them to the half carefully not to break them, take away the pulp, cut it and mix it with salt, onion, and grated cheese. Fill in chayote shells with the pulp. Place the halves of chayote in an oily ovenproof mold , put half a cube of margarine, spread it with ground bread, cinnamon, and sugar, put them in the oven at high heat until the bread gets golden colour.

Stuffed Chayotes

Ingredients:

6 large chayotes
1 cup milk cream
3 eggs
150 gr almonds
50 gr butter
1/2 cup grated bread
Salt, pepper and ground nutmeg

Preparation:

Cook unpeeled chayotes in water and salt, cut them along in halves, drain them carefully not to break their shell. Take away the pulp cut in small pieces and mix it with butter, cream, peeled and grounded almonds, salt, pepper and nutmeg, battered eggs, mix it all well and with this fill the shell of chayotes, spread the grated bread over and place it in the oven until they get a golden colour. Serve it right after is out of the oven.

Chayotes with Almonds

Ingredients:

4 large chayotes
60 gr almonds

150 gr butter

1/2 litre milk

Some sugar

2 chili (Poblanos)

200 gr grated aged cheese

Salt to taste

Preparation:

Cook chayotes and before they are soft peel them and cut them in large pieces, fry them in butter, adding hot milk while letting them boil until soften; roast the almonds then grind them, mix it with butter, sugar, a bit of milk and add to the chayotes.

Roast the peppers, peel them, cut them into strips and use them to garnish the chayotes when served.

Chayotes with Tuna

Ingredients:

6 baby chayotes

1 can of tuna

1 cup of cream

1/2 cup grated bread

1/2 cup grated cheese

Salt to taste

Preparation:

Cook chayotes in water with a bit of salt. Peel them and cut them in fine cubes taking away the fibrous part where the seed is.

In an ovenproof mold put a layer of chayotes, cheese, grated bread, tuna, and cream, continue until finished. Place in the oven for just a moment to toast. It may also be done in a pan using low heat.

Bobitos

Ingredients:

4 baby chayotes

3 garlic (3 teeth)

Salt to taste

Cooking oil

Preparation:

Fry the garlic in oil using very low heat not to burn. Add peeled chayotes cut in fine cubes; cover the pan and let it cook in very low heat to absorb all juices. Do not forget to add salt to taste.

Baked Chayotes

Ingredients:

3 large thick skinned chayotes

3 tablespoons grated bread

1 tablespoon cut onion

1/4 cup grated cheese

Butter

Pinch of cinnamon

A bit of sugar

A bit of salt

Preparation:

Cut chayotes in halves and cook them with water and salt.

Drain them, take away the pulp carefully not to break the shells, cut the pulp and add salt, onion, and cheese. Fill the shells with the prepared pulp. Add some butter, spread it with grated bread, cinnamon, and sugar. Put it in the oven at low heat until brown.

Little White Chayotes with Milk Cream

Ingredients:

10 little white chayotes

1/2 cup of milk cream

3 tablespoons ground bread

50 gr cheese

50 gr butter

Preparation:

Cut chayotes in halves and cook them with steam, when cooked, take away the pulp with a spoon carefully not to break the shell. Mix the pulp with milk cream. Season it with salt and pepper, refill the little chayotes and spread them with grated bread and grated cheese; put little pieces of butter and put it in the oven to brown. Serve them hot.

Chayotes with Epazote (*Dysphania ambrosioides*)

Ingredients:

5 chayotes

2 Tomatoes

1 piece of onion

2 garlic (2 teeth)

1 branch of epazote (*Dysphania ambrosioides*)

Chili

Salt

Preparation:

Cook chayotes in small amount of water until tender. Peel them and cut them in fine cubes. Roast the tomatoes and chili and blend them with garlic and onion.

Fry it until seasoned. Add a half cup of water, salt, branch of epazote and chayotes. Boil it for 5 minutes.

Accompanying with hot tortillas.

Chayotes au Gratin

Ingredients:

4 green chayotes (cooked, peeled and sliced)

2 tablespoons wheat flour

100 gr grated Gruyere cheese

2 cup evaporated milk

3 tablespoons butter

Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation:

Put chayotes to cook in boiling water with salt. Once cooked and cool, peel them and cut them in thin slices. Place chayote in an ovenproof porcelain plate greased with a lot of butter, spread them with cheese, salt, flour and pepper, bathing it with milk. Put some butter on top. Put it in the oven at 350° until brown.

Chayotes with Butter

Ingredients:

3 large chayotes (cooked, peeled and cut)

4 tablespoons butter

1 tablespoon finely cut

1 tablespoon parsley finely cut

Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation:

Put butter in a pan to melt put the onion to seasoned. Once it is transparent add the chayotes and parsley. Season it with salt and pepper, cover it and let to boil in steam for 15 minutes to parboil.

Stuffed Chayotes

Ingredients:

8 medium size chayotes

100 gr ground pork

100 gr ground beef

10 gr bacon finely cut

1 tablespoon onion finely cut

4 tablespoons butter

2 tablespoons grated bread

1 coarsely ground garlic (1 tooth)

1 tablespoon oat

Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation:

Put the whole chayotes to cook, once cooked cut them in halves and take away the pulp carefully not to break the shells. These are place in an ovenproof porcelain plate greased with a lot of butter. Put a spoon of butter in a pan to season bacon and onion, when transparent add pork and beef previously mixed with oat and garlic, when the meat is seasoned, add the chayote pulp already cut in fine cubes; season with salt, pepper a little more. With this, stuff the chayote shells. Bread the chayote with grated bread and put little pieces of butter on top. Put it in the hot oven until brown.

Stuffed Chayotes

Ingredients:

8 cooked chayotes

1 cup of bread soaked in milk

100 gr raisins

1/2 cup of butter

Battered eggs with yolk

2 tablespoons ground bread

Enough granulated sugar

Preparation:

Chayotes already cooked are cut in halves, take away the pulp carefully not to break the shells. These are placed in an ovenproof porcelain plate ready to be stuffed.

Put the soaked bread in a container with the chayote pulp, add sugar, melted butter and fry the raisins and eggs. Mix everything and stuff the chayote shells, cover it with the grated bread and putting little pieces of butter on top. Place it inside the oven until brown.

Stuffed Chayotes with Ham

Ingredients:

2 medium size chayotes

150 gr ham

1 branch of epazote (*Dysphania ambrosioides*)

2 or 3 battered eggs to layer

1 cup flour

Cooking oil and salt

Preparation:

Peel chayotes and cut them in thick slices and bring them to boil in water with salt. Then drain them, take a slice, and put a piece of ham and a leaf of epazote on top, cover it with another slice keeping them together using a little stick. Cover them with flour and battered egg as layers. Fry the tortillas in hot oil. They can be eaten like this or in tomato broth. It is possible to use cheese instead of ham for the stuffing.

Steamed Baby Chayotes

Ingredients:

5 chayotes

1/2 onion

100 gr grated cheese

Oregano

Epazote (*Dysphania ambrosioides*)

Enough oil

Preparation:

Dice the chayotes. Fry them in oil and in low the heat stew them in their juices. To serve them add grated cheese. Season them with salt and oregano or epazote.

Chayotes in Beef Stew

Ingredients:

1 Kg beef

1/2 Kg Tomatoes

50 gr dried Serrano chili

3 Guajillo chilies

Garlic, onion, salt and a branch of epazote (*Dysphania ambrosioides*)

4 little chayotes

1/4 Kg green beans

2 corns (elotes)

Salt

Cooking oil

Preparation:

Boil beef, garlic, onion, and salt. Cook vegetable separately, peeled and cut in large pieces. May bring all together when quite tender. Boil the tomatoes. Fry and grind the chilies. When they are seasoned add them to the beef with a branch of epazote.

Puchero

Ingredients:

1 Kg beef

2 chayotes

2 bunches green beans

3 carrots

1/2 medium size cabbage

2 squashes

2 potatoes

2 cut corns

Garlic, onion and salt

Cilantro

Preparation:

First cook the beef, with salt, and garlic. When it is half cooked, add all vegetables peeled, washed, and cut to size. Serve it hot.

Pork with Quelites and Erizos

Ingredients:

- 1 kg pork
- 1 onion
- Garlic (a tooth)
- 2 erizos (Thorny Chayote)
- 3 chilies
- 1/2 Kg Tomatoes
- 1 bunch of white quelites or quintoniles
- Cumin

Preparation:

Bring to boil pork, salt, and onion. When cooked fry it with erizos, peeled and cut in fine cubes. Cut the tomatoes, onion, garlic, and chilies. Place all in the pan with the pork. When the tomato is fried, wash the quelites and add to the pan, when half cooked add broth from the pork with ground cumin.

Chilacayote with Erizo and Shoots

Ingredients:

- 3 small baby chilacayotes
- 3 small baby erizos
- 1 handful of erizo shoots
- 1 piece of onion
- 1 epazote (*Dysphania ambrosioides*) branch

Preparation:

Cut chilacayotes and chayotes in small slits with the shell on. Cook the shoots in a pan with a small amount of boiling water. Add the slits with onion and epazote.

Shoots of Erizos with Eggs

Ingredients:

1 bunch of baby shoots

3 or 4 eggs

1 small onion

Salt and oil

Preparation:

Wash the shoots and bring them to boil with water and salt, drain them and fry onion in a pan and add the shoots. Batter the eggs and mix it all. Season it with salt and serve.

Baby Erizos in Pipian or sesame seed

Ingredients:

5 erizos

3 chilies (guajillo) or dried Serrano

1/2 cup of pipian or sesame seed

Preparation:

Peel the erizos, cut them and boil. When cooked drain them with a strainer. Roast pipian or sesame seed and grind them together with chilies that are already boiled in water. Fry everything in hot oil. Add the erizos with a branch of epazote (*Dysphania ambrosioides*).

Baked Erizos

Ingredients:

6 erizos

1/2 chicken breast boiled and shredded

3 Tomatoes

1/2 onion

Salt

Chili to taste

1 bar of margarine

Preparation:

Cook the unpeeled erizos, make sure they are not overcooked, drain them, cut them in halves and take away the pulp. Keep the shells. Fry the cut onion, green chilies, and diced tomatoes. Add shredded chicken breast and pulp to the latter. Then refill the shells with all of these and put it in the oven to warm.

Erizos in Adobo with Pork

2 medium size erizos

1 Kg pork

4 Tomatoes roasted

1/8 Kg Ancho chilies roasted and deveined

1/2 onion roasted

Salt and oil

1 small package of crackers

1 garlic (a tooth)

1 pinch of cinnamon

1 pinch of cumin

Preparation:

In a pan bring to boil pork, then add peeled and cut erizos in fine cubes. Separately put tomatoes to boil, chilies and onion. Grind them with the crackers and garlic. Add pork and erizos. Season it with salt, cinnamon, and cumin.

Stuffed chayotes**Ingredients:**

1 Kg small chayotes

3 yolks cooked

50 gr butter

50 gr ground bread

Salt

Preparation:

Put the chayotes in whole to cook in boiling water and salt, pull out the chayotes cut them in along their halves, take away the seed and the pulp. Mix the pulp with the yolks, melted butter and ground bread. With this material refill the shells, batter them with grated bread and put it in the oven to brown.

Dried Chayote Root**Ingredients:**

1 Kg chayote root

Some lard to fry

1 onion

Chili to taste

2 eggs

Salt

1 branch of epazote (*Dysphania ambrosioides*)

Preparation:

Wash the root, cut it in small pieces and bring them to boil in water and salt. Drain it. In a pan heat the lard, fry the cut onion and chili with the branch of epazote. Add chayote root and the eggs.

Baked Chayote Root**Ingredients:**

1 Kg chayote root

1/4 Kg Chihuahua cheese

1/4 Kg ham in thick slices

1/4 litre of sour cream

Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation:

Peel and cook the chayote root in water and salt. Drain it and slice it. Place the slices it in an ovenproof dish and add pieces of ham and cheese on top. Bath it with cream, spread with pepper and put it in the oven to toast.

Chayotes with Garlic

Ingredients:

1/2 Kg chayotes peeled and cut in fine cubes

10 teeth of garlic cut

1 chili "gordo" (alamperio) cut

3 tablespoons oil or lard

Salt

Preparation:

Put the oil or lard to heat and fry the garlic and chili and add the fine cubes of chayote, salt and mix it well, then cover it to cook at steam.

Chayotes in White Sauce

Ingredients:

1 Kg of chayotes

2 cups white sauce

1 tablespoons of butter

Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation:

Bring water with salt to boil in a pan, add the finely cut and peeled chayotes. When cooked drain them.

Ingredients of white sauce:

2 tablespoons of butter

1 tablespoon wheat flour

3 cups of milk

Salt, pepper and nutmeg to taste

Preparation:

Melt some butter in a pan and brown the flour. Then keep adding milk little by little while steering it. Season it with the spices and add the chayotes, remaining butter and let it boil for a few minutes.

Chayotes in Garlic

Ingredients:

3 teeth of garlic

1 Kg chayotes

Oregano

Salt

Grated bread

Oil

Preparation:

Bring the chayotes to boil and cut them in fine cubes. Use the molcajete to grind the garlic, salt, and oregano, adding a small amount of water and incorporated these items with the chayotes. Heat oil in pan and place chayotes on it. Once seasoned spread them with grated bread.

Serve accompanying meat or just adding rice.

Baked Chayotes with Cheese

Ingredients:

6 medium size chayotes

200 gr manchego cheese

1/4 Kg cream

Salt to taste

Preparation:

Cook the chayotes. Cut them in halves. Hollow them out and stuff them with cheese. Bath them with cream and bake them until the cheese gratin.

Baked Chayotes

Ingredients:

4 large chayotes

1 cup of wheat germ or ground bread

1 teaspoon of ginger

1 cup of Tomatoes

2 eggs

50 gr butter or 4 tablespoons of oil

2 tablespoons of cut onion

2 tablespoons of parsley

Salt to taste

Preparation:

Once the chayotes are cooked, cut them in fine cubes. Separately mix fresh oil, tomatoes, parsley, and salt as well as the scramble eggs. Grease the tray to put into the oven and place in all the ingredients, mixing them perfectly; batter it with half a cup of germ and put it in the oven very hot for 20 minutes. It may be possible to put 100 gr of grated cheese instead of the eggs.

Chayotes with Chards

Ingredients:

2 regular size chayotes

1 regular size onion

1 tablespoon of garlic

2 tablespoons of cilantro or parsley

3 tablespoons of cut chards

1 small bell pepper

4 tablespoons of oil

1 little branch of mint

Preparation:

Once the chayotes are cooked, peel them, and cut them in fine cubes. In oil put to season garlic, onion, and pepper in slits, add a cup of water. Once boiling starts add the chards. When fried add chayotes, mint, parsley, and salt to taste. Let it season a bit more.

Chayotes with Sour Cream

Ingredients:

2 large chayotes

2 tablespoons of cut parsley

150 gr sour cream

Salt to taste

Preparation:

Cook, peel, and cut the chayote in fine cubes, spread them with salt and then put the sour cream. Now spread the cut parsley or oregano.

Chayotes in Croquette**Ingredients:**

3 large chayotes

1 cup of germ or grated bread

1 cut tooth of garlic

1 egg

2 teaspoons of cut onion

A few leaves of mint

Preparation:

Cook the chayotes, crush them like potatoes and add the rest of the ingredients. Take portions at any size and to taste and fry them and serve everything with the croquettes.

Chayotes with Mushrooms**Ingredients:**

2 chayote regular size

2 tablespoons of cut onion

4 tablespoons of oil

1/2 Kg Tomatoes

1/2 Kg mushrooms

1 teaspoon garlic

1 pinch of cumin

Preparation:

Cook the chayotes, peel them and cut them in fine cubes. Put to fry in oil, garlic, onion and cut tomatoes. Add chayotes and mushrooms sliced. Let season it for a while.

Breaded Chayotes

Ingredients:

1 Kg chayotes

1 pinch white pepper

2 eggs

Grated wheat bread whole grain flour

Preparation:

Sliced the chayotes when cooked. Dip the chayotes in the eggs previously battered and seasoned with pepper and salt. Take the slices and turn them on both sides in a plate with grated bread. Fry them with very hot oil.

Chayotes with Tomato

Ingredients:

3 chayotes regular size

3 tablespoons of cut onion

1 green pepper

1 branch of mint

3 cups of cut tomatoes

1 teaspoon of garlic

4 tablespoons of oil

1 teaspoon of oregano

Preparation:

Fry with oil the onion, garlic and cut pepper, then add tomato. Season it with salt and oregano and add the chayotes previously cooked and cut. Let it cook at low heat for a few minutes.

Chayotes with butter

Ingredients:

3 chayotes

Butter

Preparation:

Cook the chayotes. Once cooked cut them in small sizes and place butter on top. Serve it with slits of tomato and slits of avocado.

Stuffed Chayotes

Ingredients:

6 or 8 small chayotes

4 tablespoons of oil

2 tablespoons of cut onion

Salt to taste

2 cups of grated carrot or cut in very small pieces

50 gr cheese or cottage cheese

2 tablespoons of parsley

1 tablespoon of oregano

Preparation:

Cook the chayotes and hollow them out. Fry onion with oil and carrot, add parsley and remove from the heat, add cheese and salt and with this paste stuff the chayotes. Serve them with tomato sauce, guacamole, or onion salad. It may be put it in the oven with the skin, already cooked and stuffed.

Stuffed Chayotes with Meat

Ingredients:

3 or 4 Chayotes medium size

400 gr ground meat

1 onion medium size cut in little squares

1 tooth of garlic finely cut

3 eggs

1 pinch of salt and pepper to taste

1 little bag of parmesan cheese

Preparation:

Cook the chayotes, cut in halves and hollow them out. Fry the onion, meat, and garlic in a pan. Add the pulp from the chayotes. Batter the eggs and add everything from the pan. This is the material to stuff the chayotes. Put it in an ovenproof pan. Batter it with the cheese and put it in the oven to brown.

Chayote Aztec Pie

Ingredients:

3 medium size chayotes

10 corn tortillas

3 Poblano peppers roasted and deveined

1/2 Kg Manchego cheese or Chihuahua cheese

1/4 litre cream

1/2 cup of milk

3 corns sliced

1 medium onion

1 tooth of garlic

1/2 little bar of butter

1/2 Kg of squash flower

Salt

1 teaspoon of chicken stock (powder)

Pepper

Preparation:

Blend the cream, roasted chilies, milk, and salt. Soak the corn tortillas with this mix. Fry onion, garlic and the peeled and thinly sliced chayotes in butter. Add corn and the diced squash flower. Add salt, pepper, and chicken stock. Cover the pan until the chayotes are soft. In a greased ovenproof pan start layering the soaked tortilla and fried chayote along with successive layers of cheese until finished. Add more cheese and bake for 15 minutes at medium heat until all ingredients are hot, and the cheese is toasted.

Chayote Pudding

Ingredients:

3 chayotes (medium size)
3 Tomatoes (chopped)
1 cut red pepper
1 onion medium size
1 tooth of garlic
200 gr Manchego cheese (grated)
Pepper and cumin
4 eggs

Preparation:

Cook the chayotes. Peel them and cut them in fine cubes. In a pan fry the rest of ingredients. Add the chayotes. Batter the eggs and add everything from the pan and add cheese. Put everything in an ovenproof pan and bake it for a few minutes.

Stuffed Chayotes

Ingredients:

6 chayotes medium size
2 cans of tuna
1/4 Kg Tomatoes peeled and cut
1/2 cut onion

1 tooth of garlic

Some little branches of cilantro cut

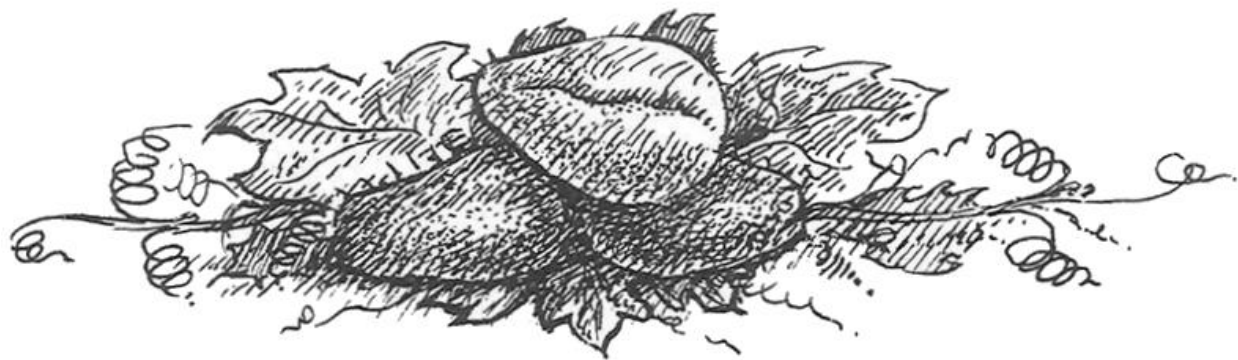
Salt

Cooking oil

Butter and mayonnaise to taste

Preparation:

Peel the raw chayotes and cook them whole. Drain them and cut them in halves, hollow them out, remove the pulp and the seed. In a pan fry the onion, garlic, and tomatoes, add what was taken out from the chayotes, cilantro and at last the tuna. With this material stuff the chayotes halves and placed them in a greased ovenproof pan. Put mayonnaise to each chayote and bake them for 10 or 15 minutes.



DESSERTS

Desserts

Erizo Dessert

(Thorny chayotes are required)

Ingredients:

10 erizos cooked and peeled

4 eggs (yolks only)

1 can of condensed milk

Sugar to taste

2 teaspoons of ground cinnamon

1 package of grated bread

1 little bar of butter

Preparation:

Crush the pulp of the erizos and mix it with all the ingredients (except butter and the grated bread) to create a dough. Depending on the consistency of the dough is, keep adding grated bread until it reaches a consistency of paste. Add melted butter to the dough, keeping only enough to grease to add to an oven mold which is covered in flour. Spread grated bread Over the paste and put it in the oven for 15 minutes at moderated heat.

Stuffed Erizo with Milk Cream

(Small and White erizos are required)

Ingredients:

6 white chayotes

For the milk cream:

1 litre of milk

1 small bag of vanilla atole

Sugar to taste

1 or 2 egg's yolk

Raisins to garnish

Preparation:

Bring chayotes to boil with its skin on. When cooked, drain them, cut them in halves and hollow them out. The pulp is mixed with the milk cream which is prepared by bringing to boil a litre of milk with sugar to taste. When it is boiling add the small bag of atole previously dissolved in a small amount of water or cold milk. Batter the yolks and are add. Stuff the chayotes shells and garnish with raisins. Serve fried as a dessert.

Erizos in Candy

Ingredients:

6 Ripe erizos

1/2 little bar of butter

1 cup of sugar

1 tablespoon of cinnamon (powder)

Nestle milk (Optional)

Preparation:

Wash the erizos and bring them to boil with the skin on. Once cooked, cut them in halves and take away the pulp carefully. Reserve the shells. Fry the pulp with butter and add sugar and cinnamon. Stuff the shells. Put them in the oven, if preferred, drizzle condensed milk on it. Serve it hot as a dessert.

Stuffed Chayotes

Ingredients:

6 chayotes large size and hard shell

1 cup of cream milk

2 tablespoons sugar

Grated bread, cinnamon, and butter to taste

Preparation:

Cook chayotes in water and salt, cut them in halves. Remove the pulp, careful not to damage the shells. Knead the pulp well and add cream milk, sugar, and a bit of ground cinnamon.

Refill the shells with the chayote pulp. Cover them with grated bread, spread them with sugar, cinnamon, and a little bit of butter. Put them in the oven at low heat to brown.

Chayote Marmalade

Ingredients:

1 Kg chayote pulp

1 Kg sugar

Preparation:

Bring chayotes to boil and peel them once cooked. Add lemon juice to the pulp.

Place dough in moderated heat and preferably in a copper saucepan non striated, stir constantly with a wooden spatula until you start seeing the bottom of the saucepan, this is the best moment to add sugar. Take enough dough and put in another container, mixing it well with sugar and adding it to the rest of dough. The traditional practice of adding sugar is not recommended as it give the product a dark colour which should be avoided.

Candy of Chayote

Ingredients:

1 Kg small white chayotes

1 can sweet condensate milk

1 bar of unsalted butter

1/4 Kg cheese any kind, except cream cheese

Cinnamon to taste

Preparation:

Boil the entire chayotes in water. Once cooked, cut them in halves carefully as not to break the shells. Take away the pulp with a spoon and separate it from the seed and its surrounding net; mix pulp with the rest of the ingredients and refill the halves with all prepared materials. Put it in the oven to toast.

Cold Chayote Dessert

Ingredients:

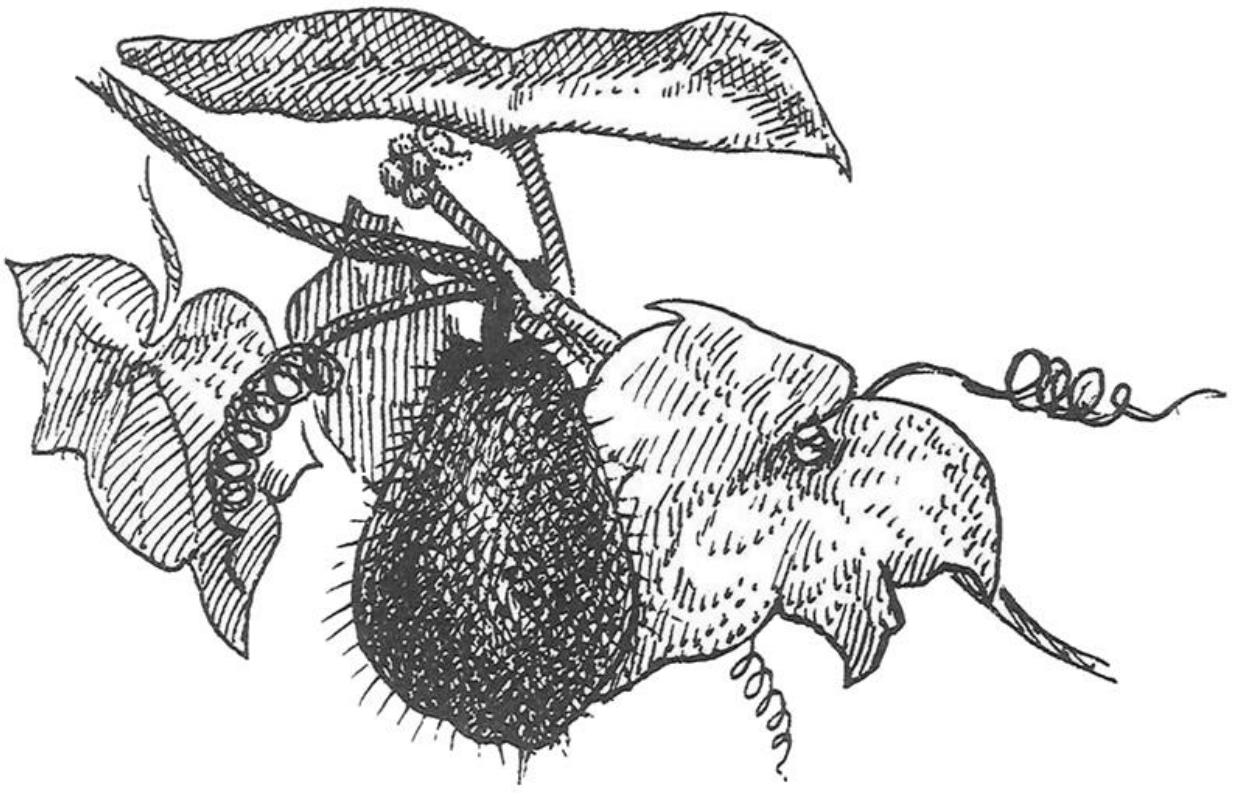
3 chayotes regular size

2 lemons

Sugar to taste

Preparation:

Once boiled put chayotes in the fridge to cool down. Peel and cut in fine cubes and add lemon and sugar to taste. Serve them very cold.



DRINKS

Chayote Water

Ingredients:

1 litre of boiling water

2 lemons

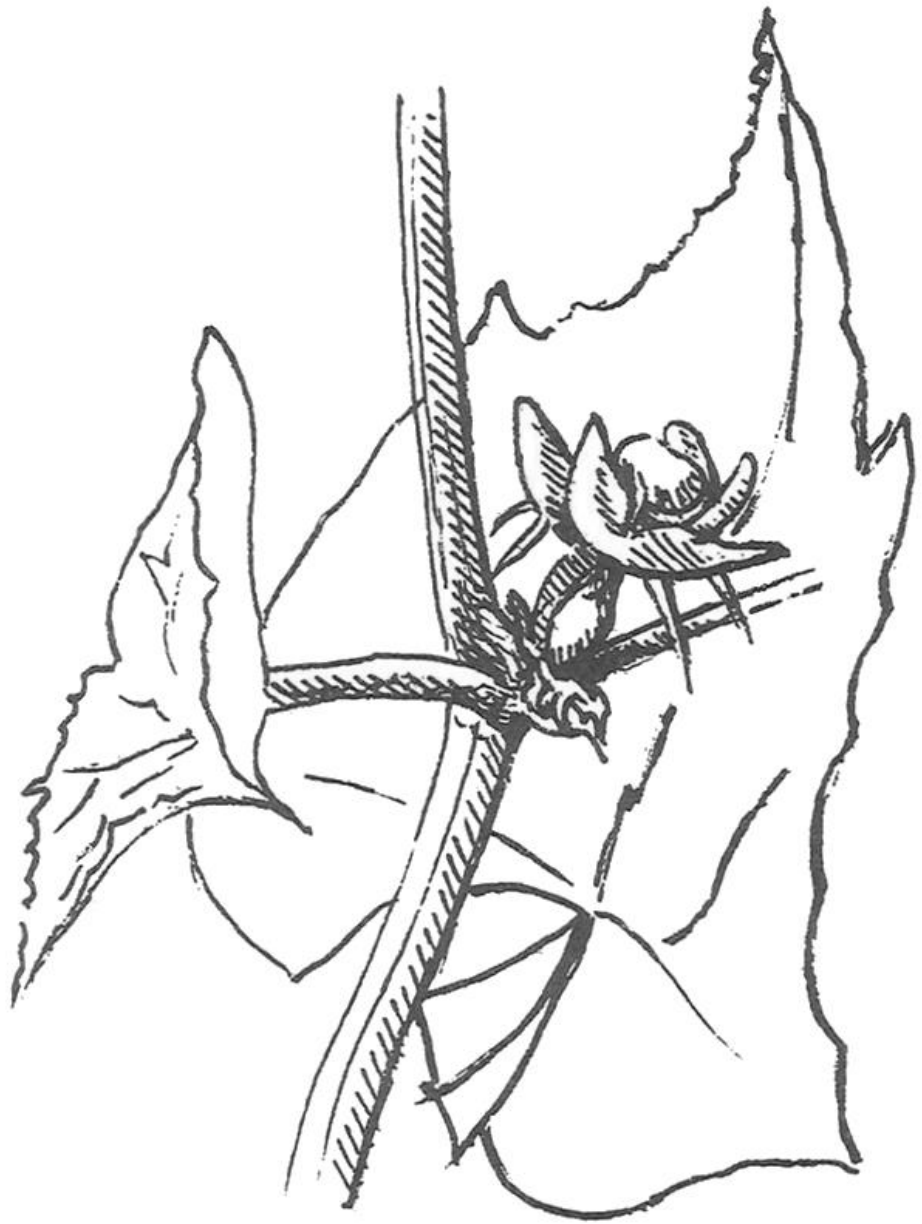
1/2 chayote

Sugar and ice to taste

Preparation:

Blend the raw chayote with shell, strain it and add lemon juice. Put sugar to taste and serve it with ice.

*This recipe was awarded in the Chayote Culinary Contest organized by the Botanical Garden, UNAM and was given to us by its author. We regret that we forgot her name.



MEDICAL USES

Medicinal Uses

Medicinal recipes

Several authors have reported that chayote is a blood pressure regulator (lowering) and an antirenoptic. Local knowledge says that it has healing properties (like stopping bleeding from small injuries) and that it is good for varicose veins. It also has curative properties for diabetes and arteriosclerosis. People consulted by MC. Eric Estrada Lugo in the Huasteca Hidalguense were assured that boiled tendrils are good to prevent abortions. Some of these medical uses have not been scientifically confirmed.

For varicose veins:

Cut slices of fruit and place them on the varicose vein for a while.

For healing:

Cut the ripe fruit and put its sap on the injury.

For arteriosclerosis and pressure:

Boil the leaves and drink the water with no sugar.

For the kidney:

Boil the fruit, leaves and shoots and drink without adding sugar and while fasting.

In the community of Tepecingo, Huatusco, Veracruz(8) the informant provided a recipe to heal the "burn", an illness caused when children's cloths have been washed together with dirty cloths from menstruation or childbirth.

Symptoms from the illness: intense crying, scratching of the nose and skin marks. As well as loss of appetite and diarrhoea. They crave eggs and meat only.

Preparation:

Grind black erizos leaves, and large and small Mexican elderberries (*Sambucus nigra*). Add bog water. Separately bring to boil Rose of Jericho (*Selaginella lepidophylla*), which is lava from river rocks. Mix everything together and rub on the child after they are bathed with new soap. The child skin will look green. Then rub the child with alcohol compounded with thunder's powder (It is a yellow cake that comes out in the bagasse of the mills).

Informant List

- 1- Barracada de Jiménez Sofía – Paso de la Milpa, Actopan, Ver.
- 2- Castillejos Peral Patricia – Chapingo, Mex.
- 3- Cerón Arroyo Ursula – Rincón de Barrientos, Ixtazoquitlan, Ver.
- 4- Cortés Fuentes Alma Delia – Ayahualulco, Ver.
- 5- Beristain Charo – Huatusco, Ver.
- 6- Delgado Tello Silviana – Zongolica, Ver.
- 7- Fernal de Escamilla Olivia – Chocaman, Ver.
- 8- Flores de Quirasco Eufrosina - Tlavitecpan, Huatusco, Ver.
- 9- Flores González Graciela – Chapingo, Mex.
- 10- Godos González Teresa – Ayahualulco, Ver.
- 11- Gómez Hernández Teodoro – Chapingo, Mex.
- 12- González Micaela – Chapingo, Mex.
- 13- Hernández Socorro – Ixhuacan, Ver.
- 14- Jiménez Guadalupe – Paso de la Milpa, Actopan, Ver.
- 15- Luna Margarita – Tlavitecpan, Huatusco, Ver.
- 16- Marín Imelda – Huatusco, Ver.
- 17- Mendoza García Rubicelia – Ayahualulco, Ver.
- 18- Montiel Catalina – Cuaultitlan, Ixtazoquitlan, Ver.
- 19- Muñoz Balladares Consuelo – Chapingo, Mex.
- 20- Prado Flores Ofelia – Chocaman, Ver.
- 21- Rebolledo de Escalante Petra – Jalapa, Ver.
- 22- Valdivia Eloisa – Chapingo, Mex.
- 23- Xotlanihua Tzitzihua Teresa – Tuxpanguillo, Ixtazoquitlan, Ver.
- 24- Zapata Ernestina – Tepecingo, Huatusco, Ver.

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