

Yuca con Mojo

By Von Diaz

YIELD 6 servings

TIME 45 minutes

Yuca is among the most commonly eaten viandas — the local word for starchy fruits and vegetables, such as plantain and taro — in Puerto Rico. It is the root of the cassava, an extraordinarily resilient plant that was the principal food of the Indigenous Taínos of the island. Among its many preparations, this is my favorite: boiled yuca doused in a garlicky citrus mojo dressing, my grandmother's recipe. She never wrote it down, but my mother had it deep in her memory, and we cooked it together for this version you see here. The mojo will keep for several weeks in the fridge, and is also delicious on crispy fried tostones (<https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1020516-tostones-fried-green-plantains>), roasted vegetables and fish.

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE YUCA:

2 pounds yuca (see Note)

¼ cup kosher salt

FOR THE MOJO:

1 cup olive oil

1 large white onion, sliced into thin circles

5 large garlic cloves, minced

1 teaspoon whole black peppercorns

2 dried bay leaves

½ teaspoon kosher salt

¼ cup white vinegar

PREPARATION

Step 1

Fill a large pot with water and bring to a boil over high heat.

Step 2

Prepare the yuca: Fill a large bowl with water. Peel the yuca with a sharp peeler or paring knife, then chop it into 2-inch pieces, tossing them in the bowl of water as you go to avoid discoloration.

Step 3

Make the mojo: Bring olive oil to a simmer in a deep skillet over medium heat. Add onion, garlic, peppercorns, bay leaves and 1/2 teaspoon salt, stirring well to incorporate. Cook until the onions are translucent and soft, stirring often and being careful not to let the onions brown, about 5 to 7 minutes. Remove from heat and add vinegar, and add salt to taste.

Step 4

Once water is at a rolling boil, add 1/4 cup salt, then carefully add yuca. Boil for 20 to 30 minutes, until a sharp knife goes through easily, careful not to let yuca overcook and become mushy.

Step 5

Drain yuca and transfer to a serving dish. Pour over warm mojo and serve.

Tip

Fresh yuca can be found at most Hispanic groceries, and at international farmers' markets. They are sealed in wax, and when selecting look out for cracks or signs of mold. You can break off the end to inspect and ensure the flesh is white. Once peeled, inspect closely for black spots, green veins or discoloration. If they don't run throughout, you can just cut off those pieces. If dark veins run through, do not eat, as it can be poisonous.

PRIVATE NOTES

Leave a Private Note on this recipe and see it here.