

Pork in Annatto Seasoning Tacos –

Tacos de Cochinita Pibil

- 3 lb (1.4 kg) pork; preferably assorted cuts, with and without bone, such as shoulder, leg, loin, rib, hocks, etc.
- 1 batch *recado rojo* (recipe on page 2)
- ¼ cup sour orange juice (or mix 2 tbsp orange juice, 2 tbsp white vinegar and a squirt lime juice)
- 3-4 banana leaves, fresh or frozen; washed and roasted (method on page 3), or Al foil
- ½ cup water
- 1 batch Red Onion and Habanero Pepper Condiment (recipe on page 3)
- Warm corn tortillas

Wipe clean and pat dry all the pieces of meat with paper towels. If using pieces with skin, such as hocks, cut the skin open with kitchen scissors first, leaving the meat attached around each bone. Slice the boneless meat into large chunks, a couple of inches thick. Place all the meat in a non-reactive container; wearing food-grade gloves, rub each piece of meat with enough of *recado rojo* to coat completely. Add juice (sour orange, or mixture) to any leftover *recado rojo* in the small bowl, and pour this over meat.



Cover container and allow meat to marinate in the fridge for at least four hours, but preferably overnight. **Assemble the dish for slow cooking:** Line the bottom and sides of the slow cooker with the roasted banana leaves, smooth side down (or use long strips of Al foil instead, shiny side up), leaving a good length over the rim of the slow cooker, to fold over. Place the marinated meat inside. Pour any remaining marinade in the container over the meat.



Fold banana leaves (or foil) over the meat, to close it like a package. Pushing the wrappings away from the wall of the slow cooker, pour half a cup of water at the bottom of the pot, for extra moisture during cooking. Place lid to close, and turn on the slow cooker on LOW for 8 hours, or HIGH for 5 hours (the lower is the preferred setting.) After the cooking time is completed, turn off slow cooker, and remove cover. Open the wrappings. Check doneness with a fork; the meat should flake easily and fall off the bone. Transfer to a serving plate.



By simply shredding some meat onto warm tortillas and topping with the spicy condiment, the delicious meat becomes the classic delight of ***tacos de cochinita pibil***:



... Cont. Pork in Annatto Seasoning Tacos – *Tacos de Cochinita Pibil*

Yucatan Style Red Seasoning - *Recado Rojo*

Ingredients

- 4 tbsp annatto powder
- 1 tsp dry oregano (preferably Mexican oregano)
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- Pinch ground cloves
- ½ tsp black pepper
- ¼ tsp all-spice (*pimienta gorda*)
- ¼ tsp garlic powder (not garlic salt)
- 1 tsp salt
- ¼ cup sour orange juice (or mix 2 tbsp orange juice, 2 tbsp white vinegar, and a squirt of lime juice)

Place all the dry ingredients in a mixing bowl (photo below, left). Mix thoroughly, then gradually add juice and continue mixing, until a uniform paste is formed (photo below, right):



How to prepare banana leaves (skip this part if using Al foil): If using frozen banana leaves, place in the fridge to thaw the night before. The next day, place a tall pot or colander upside-down in the centre of the kitchen sink, as a stand (first photo, below). Set a cutting board on top of the colander or pot; wash the banana leaves, one by one, by placing on the cutting board, washing with running water and gently rubbing with a clean cloth, while moving and folding the leaf to wash all the surface (second photo below). Flip and repeat with the other side. Extend a kitchen towel on a counter, and place the clean banana leaf on top; dry with paper towels, flip and dry the other side (third photo below). Repeat with the other leaves. At this point, the leaves may be wrapped with a towel or placed in a large plastic bag and kept in the fridge for a couple of days. **Before using, the leaves must be roasted to make them pliable;** place a baking sheet on the stove over medium heat. Run the leaves over, with the smooth side facing up; the surface will quickly become shiny, and the leaf will be pliable. Do not over cook or they will burn and become brittle again. Repeat with the other leaves.



Habanero and Red Onion Condiment -

Condimento de cebolla morada y chile habanero

Ingredients

- ½ red onion; peeled and sliced very thinly
- 2-3 habanero peppers, to taste; washed, stems removed and sliced very thinly
(handle with gloves)
- ¼ cup sour orange juice (or mix 2 tbsp orange juice, 2 tbsp white vinegar and a squirt lime juice)
- Salt, to taste

Place sliced red onions and habanero peppers in a non-reactive bowl or bottle (photo right); add salt to taste, and a quarter of a cup of sour orange juice (or vinegar/juice mix, photo far right):

