PDF | Fresh Mexico: 100 Simple Recipes for True Mexican Flavor

by Marcela Valladolid
In her vivacious, fresh voice, Marcela Valladolid invigorates America’s taste for real Mexican food—dishes that can be accomplished on any busy weeknight but that still express the authentic flavors of her native cuisine.

Growing up in Mexico, Marcela Valladolid rejoiced in the complex moles, dozens of different chiles, and homemade tortillas that graced her family’s dinner table. Going to school across the border in San Diego, and later to cooking school in Paris, she found plenty to love in the markets, quickly folding new ingredients into her repertoire. But she also encountered some curious foods masquerading as authentic Mexican: cheddar cheese—stuffed quesadillas, tortilla chips drowning in still more cheese, and the ubiquitous everything-but-the-kitchen-sink overstuffed burritos. Where were the authentic, easy-to-prepare Mexican recipes she grew up with? The brightly flavored seafood ceviches bursting with freshness? The simple, slender burritos filled with nothing more than intensely flavorful braised meat and blistered chiles? The healthy salsas that come together in minutes but can transform a meal?

In *Fresh Mexico*, Marcela brings these dishes to life. Her food is much like her, Mexican but influenced by other cultures. You’ll find recipes for Tilapia Ceviche; Butternut Squash—Chipotle Bisque; Roasted Pork Loin with Pineapple Glaze; Ancho-Chocolate Braised Short Ribs; and Fresh Guava Layer Cake.

Inspired ideas, helpful cooking techniques, and ingredient substitutions make this the most accessible, appealing, and contemporary Mexican cookbook you’ll find today. In addition, fast recipes and dishes that are low in fat are called out with easy-to-find symbols. With more than a hundred delicious recipes and beautiful color photography
throughout, *Fresh Mexico* introduces a new generation of Americans to the vibrant flavors of modern Mexico.

**Amazon.com Review**

**Book Description**

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In her vivacious, fresh voice, Marcela aims to invigorate America’s taste for real Mexican food—dishes that can be accomplished on any busy weeknight but that still express the authentic flavors of her native cuisine. Her food is much like her, Mexican but influenced by other cultures. You’ll find recipes for Tilapia Ceviche; Butternut Squash-Chipotle Bisque; Roasted Pork Loin with Pineapple Glaze; Ancho-Chocolate Braised Short Ribs; and Fresh Guava Layer Cake.

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**From *Fresh Mexico*: Game Hens in Apricot, Tequila, and California Chile Sauce**

This recipe is one of my favorites ever. It comes from my aunt Marcela, a chef who inspired me to enter the magical world of the culinary arts. We not only share the same name and the same career, we also agree that sweet and spicy is one of the best combinations when preparing Mexican food. Store-bought apricot preserves, used here, work well; just be sure to buy the best you can find. A kitchen syringe is a useful tool for injecting the hens with a flavorful mixture of broth, butter, and tequila. The result is a moist and succulent dish. — *Marcela Valladolid*

**Ingredients**

- 3 cups chicken broth, or more as needed
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 4 tablespoons golden tequila
- Two 2-pound Cornish game hens, thawed if frozen
- 3 California chiles, stemmed and seeded
- 1/2 cup apricot preserves
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Fresh apricot halves, for garnish

(Serves four)

**Directions**
Preheat the oven to 350 F.

Mix 1/4 cup of the chicken broth, the melted butter, and 2 tablespoons of the tequila in a small glass bowl. Using a kitchen syringe, inject the mixture all over the hens, about 1/2 inch deep into the flesh. (If the butter in the mixture solidifies, warm it in a microwave.)

Put the chiles and 2 cups of the broth in a small saucepan, and bring to a boil over high heat. Remove the pan from the heat. Let stand for 5 minutes to soften the chiles. Then transfer the mixture to a blender and puree until smooth. Strain the chile mixture into a small bowl, pressing on the sieve to extract as much liquid as possible. Discard whatever is left in the sieve.

Mix 1/4 cup of the preserves and 1/4 cup of the chile mixture in a medium bowl. Season heavily with salt and pepper. Rub the mixture all over the hens, working some of it between the skin and the breast. Put the hens on a rack in a large roasting pan. Add the remaining ½ cup broth to the roasting pan.

Roast, basting with the pan drippings every 20 minutes, for 1 hour, or until a thermometer inserted into a thigh registers 160 F. Add more broth if the juices begin to dry out.

Transfer the hens to a platter. Strain the pan juices into a medium saucepan. Add the remaining 2 tablespoons tequila, 1/4 cup apricot preserves, and chile mixture. Bring to a boil over high heat.

Reduce the heat and simmer for 5 minutes, or until the sauce thickens slightly. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Pour the sauce over the hens, garnish the platter with fresh apricot halves, and serve.

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