

# Arepas



## Poached Chicken

1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breast halves

$\frac{1}{2}$  small onion, sliced

1 bay leaf

5 peppercorns

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt

## Chicken & avocado salad

1 pound shredded poached chicken (see recipe below)

2 Haas avocados, peeled, pitted, roughly mashed

2-3 tablespoons mayonnaise

1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon fresh lime juice

$\frac{1}{2}$  red bell pepper, seeds and ribs removed, diced

3 tablespoons finely chopped white onion

3 tablespoons finely chopped cilantro

$\frac{1}{2}$  jalapeño pepper, seeds and ribs removed, finely chopped

2 teaspoons finely minced garlic (2 medium cloves)

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt or more, to taste

Fresh ground black pepper

## Arepas

3 cups precooked white corn flour (P.A.N. or Masarepa)

$3\frac{1}{4}$  cups warm water

1 teaspoon salt

Oil

## Instructions

Poach the chicken Put the chicken onion, bay leaf, peppercorns and salt in a medium saucepan. Cover, by an inch or two, with

cold water. Bring to a boil. Lower heat and simmer for 15 minutes, until the chicken is cooked through. Remove chicken from the pot and set it aside to cool. When chicken is completely cool, shred it by pulling it apart by hand or with the fork method (see my BBQ Chicken Enchilada post for more on the fork method)

Make the chicken avocado salad In a medium bowl mix the mashed avocado with mayonnaise and lime juice. Add the rest of the ingredients: chicken, bell pepper, onion, cilantro, jalapeño, and garlic. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Cover and store in the fridge until you're ready to eat. Can be made a day ahead.

Make the arepas Preheat oven to 350°F. Pour warm water into a large bowl. Stir in salt to dissolve. Pour in the corn flour and immediately start kneading the mixture with your hands, being sure to squeeze out any lumps. Allow the dough to sit for 3-5 minutes. Divide dough into 8 pieces. To shape an arepa, roll the dough into a ball and then pat it, between your hands, into a disc. Press your thumbs around the outside of the disc to form a nice edge. Discs should be 3½ – 4 inches in diameter and ⅓ to ½ inch thick. Set discs on a large platter or baking sheet as you form them. (If the dough seems dry or cracks when you roll it, add a more warm water)

Sear the arepas in a skillet Lightly oil a large skillet (cast iron or non stick). Turn the heat to medium and get the skillet nice and hot. Brown the arepas in batches, about 4 minutes per side, until they are seared with some brown areas on both sides. Set them back on the platter or baking sheet as you go.

Finish the arepas in the oven When all the arepas are seared, set them directly on the wire rack in the center of the oven. Cook for 15-20 minutes, until they are puffed up a bit. They will have a very taut outer skin. Set them back onto the baking sheet for just a minute or two until they're cool enough to handle. Cut them open. Fill them with Reina Pepiada chicken & avocado salad. Serve warm. Enjoy!

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