

Hominy Corn Harvest Stew

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Posole is a simple, rustic stew common throughout many Native and Hispanic communities. The word *posole* is Spanish for a stew made from dried hominy corn, vegetables, spices, and dried red chiles. This stew is usually cooked in large quantities. *Posole* corn comes in three colors - white, blue, and red. White is the most common. It is usually sold in local grocery stores in the Mexican food section as a dried mix. *Posole* is customarily eaten throughout the year especially when a hearty meal in cold weather is welcome. This is one of my favorite versions! **Dried hominy needs to be re-hydrated before use so make sure you soak it the night before you plan to cook it.**

Ingredients

- 2 cups dried hominy corn, (any color)
- 1 quart water
- 5 quarts water (20 cups) (separate use)
- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 2 zucchini squash, cut into half-moon wedges
- 2 yellow squash, cut into half-moon wedges
- 4 tomatoes, diced
- 4 dried New Mexico red chile pods, seeded, stemmed and torn into 12 pieces
- 1 Tablespoon New Mexico mild red chile powder
- 2 bay leaves
- 4 cups water from cooked posole
- 1 teaspoon *Azafran* (Native American saffron)
- 2 1/2 teaspoons fresh Mexican oregano leaves, finely chopped (or dried oregano) separate uses
- 1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves, finely chopped (or dried thyme)
- 1 teaspoons salt (or to taste)

Directions

1. Soak dried hominy overnight in 1 quart (or 4 cups) of the water. (See Note below.)

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(Hominy Harvest Stew continued.)

2. The following day, drain and discard Posole water. Place the hominy corn in a large pot filled with the remaining 5 quarts (20 cups) of water. Water should cover the hominy by at least 3 inches - if not, add a little more water. Bring to a boil over high heat, reduce heat, and simmer, uncovered, for about 1 ½ to 2 hours until the kernels burst and are puffy and tender, when tasted. Add water during cooking, if needed, to keep the kernels covered. Drain the hominy corn, keep the water, and set aside. You should have approximately 4 cups of hominy corn water left after draining the corn. White corn tends to puff the most.
3. In a separate 6-quart pot, heat the olive oil over medium to high heat and sauté the onion until clear, about 2 to 3 minutes. Add garlic, zucchini squash, yellow squash, and tomatoes, and sauté for another 3 minutes.
4. Add the cooked posole, red chile pods, bay leaves, water from the cooked posole, and *Azafran*. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 30 minutes. Add the oregano, thyme, and salt, and continue cooking for 30 more minutes. For a thicker stew, remove several cups of the stew and blend in a food processor or blender, and return to the stew pot once blended.

Serve hot in large soup bowls as a main course with warm bread, or No-Fry Frybread.

Makes 8 to 10 servings.

Note: It may be easier to cook hominy corn in advance in a slow cooker for 6 to 8 hours or overnight. For every 2 cups of dried hominy corn, use 6 cups of water in the slow cooker or crock-pot. Bring the hominy corn, covered with water, to boil on high, then reduce heat to low, and slow cook overnight for approximately 6 to 8 hours. Remove from slow cooker and use according to the recipe.