



Chicken Mole - Ole!

By Sunny Conley
Photography by Russell Bamert



Preparing exquisite cuisine can be as undemanding as drizzling a swirl of chocolate mole atop the main entrée. Moles are complex cooked dark sauces (or gravies) embellished with a creative blend of seasonings that generally include dried chiles, onion, garlic, and ground seeds, such as sesame or pumpkin (pepitas). The best-known moles (mole poblano) contain a smidgeon of Mexican chocolate that confers richness to the smooth sauce without adding a cloyingly sweet after taste.

The word "mole" comes from the Aztec "molli," meaning "concoction," "stew," or "sauce." In Mexico, mole, commonly served with poultry, is prepared in hundreds of ways and its roster of ingredients can number as few as four and as many as four-dozen. I offer a time manageable recipe that will impress guests with its tempting tingle.



Chicken Mole

- 4 mulattos
- 4 anchos
- 4 guajillos
- 4 pasillas
- 1 (15 oz.) can whole tomatoes
- 1 large white onion
- 4 garlic cloves, peeled and chopped
- ½ cup almonds, sliced
- 1 ripe plantain or "cooking banana"*
- ½ cup peanuts
- 1 slice bread, toasted
- 2 corn tortillas
- 1 round or tablet of Abuelita or Ibarra Mexican chocolate
- ½ cup sesame seeds
- Olive oil for frying

*Plantains, available locally in the produce section of most grocery stores, are firmer than bananas and deliver a squash-like flavor.

Note: Rinse dried chiles under running water. Pat dry with a paper towel. Snap off the tops of each chile and discard. Remove veins and seeds from chiles. Peel onion and cut in quarters. Peel, then cut plantain in ¼ inch pieces and set aside with the chiles.

Heat ¼ inch of oil in a large iron skillet or wok and fry all ingredients, in batches, beginning with the chiles and ending with the nuts, tomatoes and chocolate. As you fry all the ingredients, set them aside in a large bowl, mixing them together as you go.

Once ingredients have been sautéed, puree them in a blender, thinning the paste with vegetable or chicken broth. Consistency should be fairly thick, but just thin enough to blend to a smooth sauce.

Cook over low heat (or in crock pot) for approximately two hours, or until mole turns a dark reddish-brown color. To test doneness of mole, stir it, and if you see the bottom of the pan or pot, it's ready to drizzle or ladle over chicken, turkey or pork. (I prefer chicken or turkey breast, or center cut pork.) Serve with warm corn tortillas or bolillos (Mexican rolls) with plenty of butter.

(Adapted from a recipe by Jacqueline Higuerra McMahan.)

Sundance
STEAK & SEAFOOD

Fine Dining with Casual Comfort

Hours: Mon-Thur 5-9 • Fri-Sat 5-9:30

INTERNATIONAL WINE LIST

BLACK ANGUS BEEF, FRESH SEAFOOD,
HIGHLY RECOGNIZED SERVICE & CULINARY STAFF

505-257-2954 • 2523 SUDDERTH, RUIDOSO, NM

Dine & Shop at the Barbershop Plaza in the Center of Historic Hillsboro - Cafe - Gift Shop - NM Wine Tasting

Continental Cuisine with slow roasted brisket, great grilled salmon, sandwiches, salads and fresh baked pies and cakes. Wines & beer Served. Call for Hours.

BARBERSHOP PLAZA
CAFE Winery MOTEL

200 Main Street, Hillsboro, NM
For information on lodging or dinner reservations call 505-895-5283
Directions: North on I-25 to Exit 63, West on Hwy 152, 17 miles West