

# Pork and Red Chili Pozole with Cabbage

Serves 6–8

While this may not be a true pozole—it's thicker and more stew-like, I've added tomatillos for body and acidity, and there's cabbage braised alongside the pork—you can, and should, still garnish it like one, piling your bowl high with shredded cabbage, coins of thinly sliced radish, and tons and tons of fresh lime. Anything else should be an invitation to make it your own. If you're looking for a more spiced version, I recommend tossing the pork with 2 teaspoons ground cumin before searing in the pot to allow the spices to toast in the pork fat. Swap the pork shoulder for chicken thighs, leave the cabbage on the side, use a new dried chili you're excited about. Make it brothier by using half the amount of meat, make it thicker by simmering it even longer. Scale it up and make a double batch. Make it days ahead and gently rewarm before serving. Oh, and if you can't find tomatillos, tomatoes are not really a good substitute, but this stew is good even without them—just different.

## Ingredients

**4 ounces dried new mexican or guajillo chilies**

**8–10 cloves garlic, chopped or sliced**

**1 yellow onion, roughly chopped; plus more, thinly sliced, for serving**

**4–5 pounds boneless pork shoulder, cut into 1 ½"–2" inch pieces**

**Kosher salt, freshly ground black pepper**

**2 tablespoons canola or grapeseed oil**

**1 ½ pounds tomatillos, husks removed, halved or quartered**

**1 medium head green or savoy cabbage (not napa cabbage), ¼ of it thinly sliced, the rest torn into large pieces**

**1 (29 ounce) can hominy aka pozole, drained and rinsed**

**1 bunch cilantro, tender leaves and stems, for serving**

**2–4 limes, quartered, for serving**

**1 bunch nice radishes, thinly sliced, for serving**

**Tortilla chips or tostadas, crumbled, for serving**

## Instructions

- 1 Using your hands (or scissors), remove the stems from the chilies and remove about half the seeds (or leave them all in if you are confident in your tolerance for spiciness). Tear (or slice/cut) the chilies and place in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Using tongs or a wooden spoon, toss the chilies occasionally, until they start to smell toasted, fruity, almost chocolate-y, about 2-3 minutes (they'll change color slightly, but tough to tell given how dark red they already are).
- 2 Add the chopped onion, about half the garlic, 3 cups of water and season with salt. Bring to a simmer and reduce heat to low, letting the chilies and onions/garlic soften in the water for 5 or so minutes. Transfer all the chilies, onion and garlic to a blender or food processor along with about half the liquid in the pot (less if using a food processor since those tend to leak) and blend until the mixture is mostly smooth (a few bits and pieces here and there is fine); save the remaining water to use later and set both set aside.
- 3 Next, season pork with salt and pepper. Heat oil in a large, heavy bottomed pot (preferably dutch oven– it doesn't need a lid) over medium heat. Working in batches as needed (to not overcrowd the pot), add pork and sear until deeply browned all over, about 12–16 minutes total. Transfer pork to a large bowl, leaving the fat behind and set aside. If your pork is especially fatty, you may need to drain some of the fat off– I like to leave about 2–4 tablespoons in the pot, but if you have much more than that, pour it off and save for something like roasting vegetables or frying eggs.
- 4 Add remaining chopped or sliced garlic to your pot and cook over medium heat until lightly browned and toasted, 3–4 minutes. Add the chili paste and know it's gonna splatter a bit at you/the stove/your shirt/etc., so stand back or apply apron as needed. Use a wooden spoon to scrape up the bits on the bottom of the pot the best you can.
- 5 Add the pork back to the pot, along with tomatillos, torn cabbage, any leftover water from the chilies and 5 cups of additional water (the pot will be full– this is okay! The liquid will reduce, the pork and cabbage will shrink). Season with salt and pepper and bring to a simmer. Reduce heat so it's gently bubbling and let it do its thing, uncovered, unbothered, for 2-ish hours, until the pork is cooked through and tender, the cabbage is wilted and soft and tomatillos have burst and become jammy.
- 6 Add in drained hominy, season again with salt and pepper and continue simmering another hour or so, until the hominy has had a chance to become flavored by the broth, the pork is nearly falling apart, and the whole pot is nicely thickened.
- 7 Once the pozole is finished, you can serve and top with the sliced cabbage, onion, cilantro, tostadas, etc, serving with lime wedges alongside for squeezing over.

**DO AHEAD:** This stew does get better with age– it can be made and refrigerated 5 days ahead, frozen 2 months ahead. If making ahead, let it cool completely before covering and storing in the refrigerator (or dividing among containers and freezing). Reheat gently over medium heat before serving with all your toppings.

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