

MEET THE AUTHOR: JOHN STEINBECK

When it came to food, John Steinbeck found inspiration in his surroundings. While living on Long Island, he took advantage of the abundant seafood – regularly fishing and clamming for his supper. During an extended stay in London, he foraged on the property for greens he could add to a salad or braise with bacon bits.

However, Steinbeck often traveled across the Western part of the United States, leaving him with little to no access to fishing or foraging. It was then he turned to a simple recipe from friend and screenwriter Jack Wagner – posole. They dubbed it “ideal for a writer on the road” because it was “just” a can of chili and a can of hominy. With many recipe variations since then, this soup is a delicious favorite.



JOHN STEINBECK: PORK AND POZOLE WITH CHIPOTLES

Serves 25

INGREDIENTS

5 quarts cooked or canned pozole (or hominy) (Recipe below)	5 dried chipotles, or 5 chile en adobo, or to taste
5 pounds pork shoulder, trimmed of excess fat and cut into chunks	5 tablespoons ground cumin, or to taste
Salt and pepper to taste	5 large onions, peeled and chopped
5 tablespoons fresh oregano or marjoram, or 5 teaspoons dried	5 tablespoons minced garlic
	Chopped fresh cilantro leaves for garnish
	Lime wedges

METHOD

Combine pozole, pork, salt, pepper, oregano, chili, cumin and onion in a saucepan that will fit them comfortably. Add water or some pozole cooking liquid to cover by about an inch and turn heat to medium high. Bring to a boil, then adjust heat so mixture simmers steadily. Cook, stirring occasionally, until pork is tender, about an hour; add liquid if necessary. Stir in garlic and cook a few minutes more. Taste and adjust seasoning. Mixture should be a little soupy. Serve in bowls, garnished with cilantro and lime wedges.

POZOLE

INGREDIENTS

10 pounds pork shoulder or butt	6 tablespoons salt plus more to taste
15 cloves garlic	4 ½ quarts cooked hominy*
15 dried red New Mexico chiles or other large, somewhat mild, dried red chiles	5 teaspoons dried Mexican oregano

METHOD

Cut the pork into chunks. Most classic posole recipes will have fairly big pieces, but if you prefer to cut it into bite-sized pieces, that works as well. Decide what size you prefer and go with it. For extra flavor, include a few pieces of pork shank or knuckle bones in the mix. Put the pork in a large pot and cover with cool water. Bring to a boil. While the pork heats up, peel the garlic and remove the stem and seeds from the chiles. Skim off any foam that has formed in the pot. Add the garlic, chiles, and salt to

the pork. Reduce the heat to maintain a steady simmer, cover, and cook until the pork is fork-tender, about 90 minutes. You can also do this by putting the covered, oven-proof pot in a 350°F oven for the same amount of time. This allows you to be totally hands off.

Add the cooked or canned and drained hominy and oregano. Continue cooking at a simmer until the flavors blend and the pork is very tender, another hour. Add additional water to keep ingredients covered as necessary, returning the mixture to a boil and reducing back down to a simmer when needed. Taste the broth and add more salt as necessary.

**Canned hominy works fine here. If you want to start with dried, put 5 cups dried hominy in a large pot and cover with cold water. Bring to a boil and add enough salt to season (the water should taste a tad salty), reduce heat to maintain a steady simmer, and cook until just tender (about 2 hours), drain, and then use as directed in the recipe above.*

