

GUAM CHAMORRO MÀNHA TITIYAS

I have loved the mánha titiyas from Chotde since they first came out, I don't know, somewhere in the 1980s to 1990s. Infact, I still have the original bag the titiyas were sold in! I knew one day I'd have to try to make some. During the late 1990s, I made my first attempt, ah, not so much. I put too much flour and it tasted like flour titiyas. Several years ago, a relative made mánha titiyas. It was close, and delicious, but it did not have the same texture and feel – both the feeling in the hands and the feeling in the mouth. I watched the mánha titiyas interview video by Marissa Borja. She interviewed Robert Camacho and Gina Salas of Island Food Products. Thank you to the Camacho family for sharing their recipe, and to Marissa and crew for bringing it to us!

It took me a while to do this because I had to be in the mood to thaw out a gallon of mánha that I brought back from Guam. Can I tell you how delicious fresh mánha is by itself? I also wanted to make fresh coconut milk for this recipe. It only took me three times to get the proportions right, and boy does it taste and feel just like I remember getting them at Chode. I don't know if Island Food Products made the Chode titiyas as well, but thank you all anyways!

I know it's a challenge to get fresh mánha and make fresh coconut milk, especially if you're off-island. It will be a while before I can test a recipe with canned mánha and canned coconut milk because I still have plenty of fresh mánha to use. You may consider the following adaptation, though I can't guarantee the same results because the liquid textures will be different.

Canned mánha & juice: Measure 1 cup of the mánha juice and mánha together. You may also pour the entire can into a blender. Puree the mixture and measure out 1 cup.

Coconut milk: Fresh coconut milk is thinner than the canned variety but much more pleasant to drink. I would pour one can into a bowl and whisk the separated components together. Mix together ¼ cup of the stirred coconut milk and ¼ cup of water.

Sugar: Don't delete any sugar! This amount gives the titiyas the right texture.

Parchment paper vs. wax paper: For this particular recipe, wax paper does NOT work. However, I did have to reuse the parchment sheets – 10-inch round ones are available on Amazon.com if you don't want to cut regular parchment. They are great for a second titiyas, okay for a third round – but don't reuse it to make a fourth one.

INGREDIENTS

Set 1

1 cup or 237.5 grams fresh mánha with juice (young coconut juice and meat all mixed together)
½ cup or 188.5 milliliters fresh coconut milk (when you make fresh milk, it's generally thinner than canned coconut milk)
2 tablespoons or 57 grams unsalted butter, melted
¾ cup or 150.5 grams granulated sugar

Set 2

1 ¾ cups or 217 grams name-brand, all-purpose flour (Gold Medal or King Arthur)

Set 3

Vegetable oil for the pan

Tools: *medium bowl, 10 pieces parchment paper, ½-cup measuring cup, pastry brush, tiny bowl, cooling rack, 2 large dinner plates that barely have a ridge on the top and bottom (I use the light, thin Corell plates.)*

DIRECTIONS

1. Cut the parchment pieces into squares the width of your griddle pan. Set aside.
2. Preheat griddle pan to somewhere between medium-low and medium heat, about the 7 to 8 on the face of a clock.
3. Pour all of set one into the medium bowl and mix well with hand. Squeeze the mánha pieces together to break them up quite a bit; there's no need to puree fresh mánha. Most of the pieces will dissolve into the titiyas as it cooks. You'll have a few pieces in each titiyas that you will see. There should still be grains of undissolved sugar.
4. Add 1 ¾ cups of the flour. If the batter is still loose, add the last ¼ cup. If 1 ¾ cups of flour makes your batter thicker than thick pancake batter, leave out the last ¼ cup. I use all 2 cups of flour. **DO NOT ADD ANY MORE FLOUR!** The batter will be slightly thinner than boñelos aga' batter, but just by a little bit. It's a not too thin and not too thick pancake batter. I'll post a video to paulaq.com soon.
5. Place one sheet of parchment on top and middle of one plate
6. Scoop the batter out with a ½-cup measuring cup and pour on the center of the parchment. Use a small spoon to scrape batter out of measuring cup.
7. Place another sheet of parchment on top of the batter.
8. Put the other plate on top of the parchment and gently/evenly press the sandwich together. It should spread the batter into a nice even circle that's about 8 inches in diameter. It should be about 1/4 inch thick.
9. Brush the griddle liberally with vegetable oil. Sometimes need a lot of oil so that the titiyas doesn't stick to the paper. Grease the griddle pan every time, or every other time you put a new titiyas on it.
10. Cook till lightly browned on one side. It should take about 2 minutes, don't cook for much more. Flip to the second side. Adjust your heat if necessary so that it browns/colors slightly.
11. If the parchment still sticks to the titiyas, place on a cooling rack for 5 minutes. You must remove the parchment paper while it is still hot to the touch, not warm. I've found it easier to remove the paper while hot. Gently peel the paper away from the titiyas. You will have to use the tips of your fingers to get started then place your palm directly against the paper and the titiyas, peeling the paper away with the other hand. I peel one titiyas while another cooks.
12. Keep titiyas in a tortilla warmer of sorts. There are retail ones for Mexican-style tortillas, or you can keep it sandwiched between wax paper and two damp kitchen towels. I love the retail tortilla warmers because I can use it for all varieties of Chamorro titiyas too. Line the tortilla warmer with an opened napkin then place a piece of wax paper on top of the napkin. The edges of the napkin will keep the edges of the tortillas from getting wet as they cool.

Recipe courtesy PaulaQ.com.