

Mexican Loaded Sweet Potatoes



I'm always looking for vegetarian recipes that are 'Meaty'. The kind where you really don't even think about the fact that there is no meat in them and they leave you feeling satisfied and not missing the fact that there is no bone to gnaw on at the end of the meal. This was one of those recipes. Crispy on the outside and almost mash like in the middle, the sweet potatoes were the perfect vehicle for spicy Mexican beans and corn, a delicious dollop of sour cream, tangy Pico di Gallo salsa and a generous helping of creamy avocado. This was a champion dish, a total prizewinner the whole family will adore.

Prep time: 25 Minutes

Cooking time: 45 Minutes

\$\$ Medium Budget

Serves 4

Extra virgin olive oil for frying and drizzling

4 medium sized whole sweet potatoes, stabbed with a fork on all sides a few times

2 corn cobs, peeled (a tin of kernels is fine if you are pushed for time)

1 large brown onion, finely diced

2 garlic cloves, finely minced

1 tin of black beans, drained and rinsed

1 heaped tbs of Em's Mexican Spice Blend (recipe below, very handy to have in the cupboard and takes minutes to make)

1/2 a bunch of coriander, washed well and finely chopped, stalks included

1 cup of water

Juice of 1 lime

1/2 tsp of sugar

Sea salt and pepper

Sour cream to serve

1 avocado, quartered, peeled and fanned (see photo)

Coriander leaves for garnish

Green Chilli slices for garnish

For the Pico Di Gallo:

2 large ripe tomatoes, quartered and flesh removed then finely diced (you could use grape or cherry and finely chop)

1/2 a red onion, finely diced

1/2 a green chilli, finely chopped, seeds removed for less heat

Juice of 1/2 a lime

1/4 bunch of coriander, washed well and finely chopped, stalks included

Sea salt and cracked pepper

Preheat the oven to 200°C

Place the stabbed sweet potatoes on a lined baking tray, drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Bake in the oven for 45 minutes or until tender in the centre when pierced with a skewer.

Heat a griddle pan or BBQ and chargrill the corn cobs until tender and lightly charred. Remove from the heat and allow to cool slightly before standing the corn on its end and running your knife down all sides to remove the kernels. Set aside for later.

Heat a fry pan and add a little oil. Fry the onion until soft and then add the garlic, frying for a minute or so until aromatic. Sprinkle in the spice blend, beans and corn kernels, pour in the water and stir to combine. Allow the mixture to come to a simmer and reduce the heat. Season with salt, pepper, sugar and lime juice and allow the liquid to reduce until you have a nice pasty mixture. Stir through the coriander a few minutes before serving.

To make the Pico Di Gallo, place the tomato, onion, chilli and coriander in a bowl and toss to combine. You can make this ahead and if you do, don't add the lime and salt and pepper until just before serving as it will draw the moisture out of the tomatoes and make it a touch soggy.

Remove the sweet potatoes from the oven. They will be piping hot so use a tea towel to hold them while you slit them down the middle about 2/3rds of the way down and pull them apart slightly. Pop the sweet potatoes on plates and divide the bean mixture between them. Place a dollop of sour cream on each one and top with the seasoned salsa. Garnish with the fanned avocado slices, chilli slices and coriander sprigs. Drizzle over a little extra virgin olive oil and serve with lime wedges if you wish.

Mexican Spice Blend

