



TREA How-To Workshop Series on Local Food

Today's Discussion: Tortilla Press with Pamela Reid



What is a Tortilla Press?

A tortilla press or tortilla maker is a metal kitchen tool that uses force to press a ball of dough into either flour or a corn tortilla. To make the perfect homemade tortillas, push the levers to bring the plates together to flatten the dough. Compared to using a rolling pin, a tortilla press is more convenient as it is more efficient, less messy, and produces uniform thickness.

Steps on How to Use a Tortilla Press

1. Combine the Ingredients

- Ingredients:
 - 4 cups of all-purpose flour
 - 1 tbsp of salt
 - 2 tbsp of baking powder
 - 2 tbsp of olive oil
 - 1 ½ cups of water
- On a clean surface, combine the all-purpose flour, salt, baking powder, olive oil, and water in a mixing bowl.
-

2. Knead and Rest the Dough

- Bring the dough together into a ball by kneading and adding additional flour as needed. Continue kneading for 5-10 minutes until the dough is smooth and elastic. After, wrap the ball of dough in either plastic or beeswax, let it rest for 30 minutes.

3. Flatten the Dough

- After 30 minutes, divide the dough into golf ball-sized pieces to be flattened by the tortilla press, which should make 6 inch size tortillas.



4. Begin Rolling

- To prevent the dough from sticking, cut either parchment, waxed, or beeswax paper to cover the bottom and top base plate of the press. After, place a golf-sized chunk of dough into the center by pressing firmly down on the lever. Once the dough is pressed, gently remove the tortilla. Note, you can press down more than once to make a uniform shape.

5. Proceed to Cook

- Heat a skillet over medium-high heat and start to cook the tortilla until it is bubbly and golden for approximately 60 seconds on each side before flipping it over.

6. Cool Down

- Cover the cooked tortillas in either a towel or cloth to keep them warm and moist. After they have completely cooled down, store the tortillas inside a container at room temperature for up to 1 week.

Tips

- Consider using potholders or oven mitts when picking up the skillet to avoid burning yourself.
- Never pour water onto a cooking oil fire as it will cause the fire to flare and spread.

To learn more about the Tortilla Press, visit:

- [Tortillas: a cultural history by Paula E. Morton](#)

