

The Baja Kitchen -

Baja Recipes from Author Ann Hazard

Here are two more Baja recipes from author Ann Hazard. Ann is author of the books, [Cooking With Baja Magic](#) , [Cartwheels in the Sand](#) and [Agave Sunsets](#), is a writer who is passionate about all things Mexican. She's a third generation Baja Aficionada who has followed her father and grandfather's footsteps up and down the world's longest peninsula since she was nine. She, her sister and parents flew in converted World War II cargo planes, landing on dirt roads in obscure places. The family also took to the roads (dirt, usually) in their camper and stayed at deserted beaches and in lush palm oases where they were the only gringos around.

Here are two of Ann's favorite recipes. We have a few more yummy items on the back burner, so you can check back for more magic from the Baja kitchen.

CRAB SALAD LORETO

Quick, easy and dyn-o-mite, this salad is guaranteed to transport you right to a palapa on the beach, where you're eating barefoot, with your feet digging aimlessly in the grainy sand, sand that's still warm from the leftover heat of the just-set-sun. Can you hear the waves quietly lapping against the shore in front of you as the new moon cuts a silver sliver in the early evening sky? Ah yes. Here comes the first star.

You are in Loreto, the oldest permanent settlement in all of Baja. Yes. It's true. Located nearly three quarters of the way down the peninsula, on the Sea of Cortez side, Loreto was founded by Padre Juan María Salvatierra, a Jesuit priest on October 25, 1697. The Misión de Nuestra Señora de Loreto is located in the center of town. It was the first of 20 missions founded by Jesuit priests in Baja before they were expelled in 1767 for mistreating the Indians. Loreto was the capital of Baja until it was destroyed by a hurricane in 1829—at which time the capital was moved to La Paz.

So, how are things in Loreto these days? Well, it's been targeted by Fonatur, the Mexican tourist agency, to become the next Cancún or Ixtapa—serious tourist resorts both. It has a lovely malecón, a walkway that runs right along the sea, a new marina and some pretty swanky resorts that offer tennis, golf, fishing and diving. It has air service from L.A. and San Diego. Serves two as a meal.

1 pound cooked crab, diced and chilled
2 avocados, peeled, seeded and diced
1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded
2 tomatoes, diced
1 3 1/2 ounce can sliced black olives
8 - 10 romaine leaves, rinsed and dried
1 1/2 cups tortilla chips

Dressing:

2 tbsp olive oil
2 tbsp Mexican lime juice
1 tsp garlic powder
2 cups salsa fresca

Two to four hours before serving, combine all ingredients except lettuce, crab and chips. Cover and refrigerate. At mealtime, arrange crab mixture on top of lettuce leaves and garnish with chips.

Mix together ingredients for dressing in small bowl. Pour over salad, toss gently and serve.

JALAPEÑO CORNBREAD

Jalapeño chiles, real corn and lots of cheese distinguish this corn bread from the old-fashioned, all-American y'all version of cornbread. It's not too fiery, but makes an awesome side dish for roasted or grilled foods. I love it! My mom used to serve it with fresh fried chicken (fresh because the chickens were purchased—very recently alive—from rancheros we happened to come upon in our travels up and down the dusty back roads of Baja) during our summer camping trips on the Pacific side of the peninsula back when I was in high school! Mom tried to get away with only putting a couple of jalapeños in the batter, but Nina, our dad and I had a conspiracy going. As soon as she left the camper, even if the cornbread was already in the oven, we'd sneak it out and add a whole bunch more diced chiles! You can just imagine her shock when she took her first bite of what she thought was a subtly flavored, lightly spiced delicacy! The look on her face, the way she rushed for a soda and gulped it down—these are priceless memories! Truly they are. Serves 12.

2 - 10 jalapeño chiles, finely chopped with seeds
1 3 1/2 ounce can diced green chiles
1 onion, finely diced
1 17 ounce can creamed corn
1/2 tsp baking soda
1/2 tsp salt
1 tbsp sugar
2 eggs
3/4 cup buttermilk
1/3 cup corn or canola oil
1 cup cheddar cheese, grated
2 cups yellow corn meal

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 9 x 14 inch pan. In a large bowl, mix jalapeños with corn and onion. Beat in baking soda, salt and sugar, then add the eggs one at a time, beating well. Add buttermilk and oil, then cheese and cornmeal. Pour batter into pan and bake for 30 to 40 minutes, or until the top is brown and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool in pan and serve in squares.

Thank you to Author Ann Hazard from BajaMagic.com for this contribution

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