

Recipes From The Baja Kitchen Baja Recipes by Author Ann Hazard

These recipe will be in featured in Ann Hazard's newest book, *Cooking With Baja Magic Dos*. It will be available in Fall 2005 throughout Baja and California. The new cookbook will have over 60 new recipes with corresponding stories and all new art. Whether or not you have Ann's original cookbook, you will want a copy of *Baja Magic Dos*! For more information on Ann and her Baja books, visit [www.bajamagic.com](http://www.bajamagic.com).

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

## MAYAN SALSA HABANERO

Back when Europe was locked in the dark ages, the Mayans were thriving, their culture both sophisticated and diverse. The five Maya nations were originally located in Belize, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico. Although their cities were abandoned approximately 450 years ago, they're still thriving as a people and today inhabit the Mexican states of Tabasco, Campeche, Chiapas, Yucatán and Quintana Roo.



When Terry and I visited the Yucatán a few years ago, our friend Antonio (formerly of Ensenada) acted as our private tour guide. We visited Chichenitzá and Tulum, swam in cenotes (underground rivers and lakes) and snorkeled in the Caribbean. If you ever visit the Riviera Maya, the Mayan people'll surround you. They still farm the land and live in small villages throughout the Yucatán peninsula — much as they did centuries ago. They own and work in the shops where you'll buy handicrafts or groceries, the restaurants where you'll eat and the hotels where you'll stay. They are a friendly and proud people. If you're interested, it's possible they will teach you a few words in their language.

For the Maya, eating is an act of spirituality. Their foods are different than the northern Mexican food most Americans and other tourists are familiar with. Their chile of choice is the habanero, the hottest chile known to mankind. It is revered for its healing powers and supposedly will ward off any number of diseases. I will personally attest that it gives the best endorphin rush of any chile.

When habaneros are combined with lime juice, they lose some of their fire. I invented this recipe after a trip to the Riviera Maya where I did much tasting and asked a lot of questions about the salsas. If your palate is very heat-sensitive, cut down on the habaneros, but don't be a pansy and leave them out altogether. This makes about a quart.

- 1 large red onion, finely diced
- 6 large tomatoes, finely diced
- 1 bunch cilantro, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 – 6 habanero chiles, minced with seeds and membranes removed

Juice of 2 limónes (Mexican limes) or key limes  
1 tbsp Controy or orange juice  
1 tbsp salt

Mix all ingredients together in bowl. Cover and refrigerate for up to three days. Use with chips, on tacos or as a condiment to any Mexican dish. It's makes a wonderful, simple nacho dish, when you pour grated cheese over a plate of totopos (tortilla chips), microwave for a minute or until the cheese is melted, top with salsa habanero and serve.



### TROPICANA BREAKFAST RELLENOS

Brad and Diane from Washington, who are friends of Nina and John, spent a week at the Tropicana Inn in San Jose del Cabo over Thanksgiving recently. We ran into them there and both were raving about the breakfast rellenos. They said they ate them every morning. Nina and I made a vow there and then to get the recipe for Baja Magic Dos. We highly recommend staying at this hotel if you go to San Jose. It's centrally located, spectacularly built and decorated and the restaurant and bar are as good as it gets! Be sure and try this for breakfast. Better yet, try it tomorrow and then start planning your trip!

Serves four.

#### *Salsa ranchera*

2 green bell peppers, thinly sliced  
2 white onions, thinly sliced  
2 lb tomatoes, thinly sliced  
2 tbsp olive oil  
1 tsp oregano  
2 bay leaves  
Salt to taste  
Rellenos



4 poblano chiles, blistered  
3 cups salsa ranchera (Salsa section or use Salsa Veracruzana from preceding recipe)  
1 tsp epazote  
Salt and pepper to taste  
½ lb jack cheese, shredded  
2 tbsp butter  
8 eggs  
½ lb queso Chihuahua, shredded

#### *To make Salsa Ranchera*

In large skillet, sauté bell pepper, tomato onion until done. Add oregano, bay leaf and salt. Cover and simmer on low heat for fifteen minutes.

#### *To make rellenos*

To blister the chiles: If you have a gas stove, lay the chiles over the open flame and char skins well, turning with tongs frequently until they're uniformly blackened and stop snapping. The more charred they are, the easier it is to remove the skins. If you have an electric stove, place chiles in a large skillet on high heat. Turn frequently as above. Remove chiles to plastic bag, close it and

let stand for 10 minutes. Remove from bag, place in ice-cold water and remove the skin, veins and seeds. Do not remove stem!

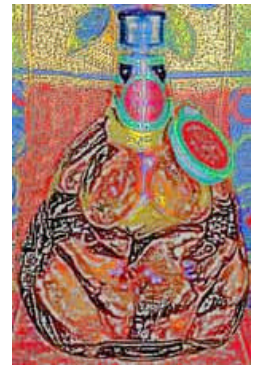
In saucepan, heat ranchera sauce. In medium bowl, scramble the eggs. Add crushed epazote, salt and pepper. Melt butter in skillet and cook the eggs until done. Make a slit in each chile and stuff with ¼ of the eggs. Put on a cookie sheet and top with combined cheeses. Broil for a minute or until cheeses are bubbling and almost brown on the edges. Move to warm plate and cover each relleno with ranchero sauce. The Tropicana serves this with fried potatoes or beans on the side.

## BEACHCOMBER COCONUT SHRIMP

*Christine went to high school with Nina in La Jolla, CA. Then they lost touch for nearly 30 years until we ran into each other in Buena Vista in 2001. Christine and her husband, Leo had just bought a house here. Now they're not only our good friends, but our neighbors too! When we visited them in Florence, Oregon a few summers ago they took us to their restaurant/tavern in Old Town Florence, the Beachcomber. There was a Baja specialty, coconut shrimp on their menu, so of course Terry ordered it. And lo and behold ... I loved it! So here it is. Make sure those shrimp are nice and crispy and be brave and leave the seeds in the jalapeños! As Christine says, "Mo hottah, mo bettah!" They have since sold the restaurant, but the recipe lives on. Serves four to six.*

### Leo's Coconut Shrimp

2 lb jumbo shrimp  
1 cup flour  
1 cup cold beer or ice water  
½ tsp sugar  
½ tsp salt  
2 tbsp olive oil  
1 egg  
1 cup shredded coconut  
1 cup corn or canola oil



Peel, devein and butterfly shrimp, leaving tail on. Rinse and drain. In mixing bowl, combine flour, beer, sugar, salt, olive oil and egg. Slightly chop coconut in food processor and pour onto plate for rolling.

Heat oil in deep fryer or deep skillet to medium high heat. Dip shrimp in batter and roll in coconut. Cook in oil until golden brown and crispy on each side. Drain on paper towel.

### Christine's Dipping Sauce

1 cup orange marmalade, mango or pineapple preserves  
2 fresh jalapeños, minced

For spicier sauce, do not remove seeds. Mix with marmalade and leave in refrigerator for an hour to give flavors a chance to blend. Arrange shrimp on a platter with dipping sauce in a bowl in the middle and serve.

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