Tacos al Pastor

MEXICAN

YIELD	ACTIVE	TOTAL	OVEN	PER SERVING
18 tacos, 3 per serving	≈1 h	≈11 h 20 min (2 days)	275 °F (135 °C), then 350 °F (177 °C)	847 kcal · 935 mg Na · 46 g protein

EQUIPMENT
Blender · Disposable aluminum loaf pan · Rimmed sheet pan · Cast iron skillet

#	INGREDIENT	MASS	VOLUME	PROCEDURE
MARINADE				
1	Ancho chiles, dried*, seeded*	34 g	2	Toast the chiles in a dry saucepan over medium-high, turning, until puffed and pliable, ≈5 min. Add the water and base (it boils at once). Tip into a bowl; cover.
	Pasilla chiles, dried*, or guajillo*	14 g	2	
	Water	118 g	½ cup	
	Better Than Bouillon, roasted chicken	3 g	½ tsp	
2	Neutral oil (canola)	9 g	2 tsp	Wipe out the pan. Heat the oil over medium-high until shimmering. Add the spices and stir until fragrant but not browned, ≈30 s.
	Cumin, ground		1 tsp	
	Mexican oregano		1 tsp	
	Achiote powder	14 g	1 tbsp	
3	Chipotles in adobo*, La Costeña*	15 g	1	Add the chipotle and sauce and cook ≈30 s. Add the vinegar, salt and sugar, then take off the heat.
	Adobo sauce	10 g	2 tsp	
	White vinegar	60 g	¼ cup	
	Kosher salt, Morton	7.2 g	1½ tsp	
	Granulated sugar	8.4 g	2 tsp	
4	Garlic	9 g	3 cloves	Scrape the pan into the blender with the chiles and their liquid, and add the garlic. Blend until completely smooth, ≈1 min. Cool slightly.
PORK LOAF (DAY 1)				
5	Pork loin, center-cut	907 g	2 lb	Slice the pork as thin as possible (15 min in the freezer firms it). Pound each slice inside a split zip bag to under ¼ in. Toss with the marinade until coated.
6	Bacon, Smithfield*, sliced*	227 g	8 oz	Layer bacon and pork in the loaf pan, bacon first, until all the meat is in. It can mound over the top. Cover tightly. Refrigerate 4–36 h.
7				Roast uncovered at 275 °F (135 °C) on a foil-lined sheet pan until completely tender, ≈4 h. Cool slightly, cover and refrigerate ≥2 h or overnight.
SERVE (DAY 2)				
8	Pineapple*, peeled, cored, quartered*	905 g	1	Oven to 350 °F (177 °C). Lift out the loaf and scrape off its fat and jelly. Keep fat and juices separate. Brush the pineapple with melted fat and roast on foil until tender, ≈25 min.

#	INGREDIENT	MASS	VOLUME	PROCEDURE
9				Slice the loaf as thin as possible into shavings. ≈10 min before the pineapple is done, crisp the meat in 1 tbsp fat in the skillet over medium-high until browned in spots. Add the juices and cook to a moist glaze.
10	Corn tortillas, El Milagro*, warmed*	850 g	36	Chop the pineapple. Pack the meat into double-stacked tortillas, and top with pineapple, onion, cilantro, salsa and a squeeze of lime.
	White onion*, finely diced*	160 g	1 cup	
	Cilantro*, minced*	8 g	½ cup	
	Salsa verde		1 cup	
	Limes*, wedges*		3–4	

NUTRITION	MASS	CALORIES	SODIUM MG	PROTEIN G
Ancho chiles, dried	34 g	96	15	4
Pasilla chiles, dried	14 g	48	12	2
Better Than Bouillon, roasted chicken	3 g	5	340	1
Neutral oil (canola)	9 g	80	—	—
Cumin, ground		8	4	0
Mexican oregano		3	0	0
Achiote powder	14 g	52	5	2
Chipotles in adobo	15 g	10	120	1
Adobo sauce	10 g	7	80	0
White vinegar	60 g	11	1	—
Kosher salt, Morton	7.2 g	—	2,880	—
Granulated sugar	8.4 g	33	0	—
Garlic	9 g	13	2	1
Pork loin, center-cut	907 g	1,506	426	194
Bacon, Smithfield	227 g	892	1,705	31
Pineapple	905 g	453	9	5
Corn tortillas, El Milagro	850 g	1,801	—	36
White onion	160 g	64	6	2
Cilantro	8 g	2	4	0
Total		**5,082**	**5,609**	**278**
Per serving (1/6)		**847**	**935**	**46**

Nutrition: USDA FoodData Central: SR Legacy (chiles, canola, cumin, oregano, vinegar, sugar, garlic, pork loin roast, bacon, pineapple, onion, cilantro) and Branded Foods labels (Better Than Bouillon, La Nuestra achiote, La Costeña, Morton, El Milagro). Pork and bacon counted raw, including all the fat; much of the bacon fat drips off, so real calories are lower. Water, salsa and limes not counted.

NOTES

- Center-cut loin is leaner than the blade-end loin Kenji uses, so the bacon carries the fat. Don’t skip it.
- Serious Eats measures Diamond Crystal: 2½ tsp Diamond weighs the same as 1½ tsp Morton.
- The cooked loaf keeps a few days in the fridge, so only the day-2 steps are day-of work.
- Grill instead: cool side of the grill at ≈275 °F (135 °C) air until 180–190 °F in the center, ≈4 h.