

Boxboles Recipe



Here's the TikTok on how it's prepared:

<https://www.tiktok.com/@mariamescobar7/video/7402344117814037766>

The traditional Mayan highland dish you are describing is called **Boxboles** (pronounced *bosh-bol-es*), a specialty of the Ixil and Achi Maya communities of Guatemala. In this dish, a vibrant, herb-infused corn masa is rolled tightly inside tender, fresh chayote (mirliton) leaves and steamed until the leaves fuse with the dough, imparting an incredibly unique, earthy taste. [1, 2, 3]

Instead of unwrapping the leaf like a standard corn-husk tamale, you eat the tender leaf right along with the masa, drenched in a warm, rich toasted squash seed and tomato sauce. [1]

Traditional Guatemalan Boxboles

- **Prep time:** 30 minutes
- **Cook time:** 1 hour 5 minutes
- **Yield:** 20 to 25 rolls (Serves 4 to 6) [\[1\]](#)

Ingredients

For the Masa & Wrappers:

- **25 to 30 tender chayote leaves**, thoroughly washed and patted dry
- **500g fresh corn masa** (or 2 cups *masa harina* mixed with roughly 1¼ cups warm water and ½ tsp salt)
- **2 cups packed chipilín leaves**, finely chopped (If chipilín is unavailable, fresh spinach or amaranth leaves work as a substitute)
- **1½ teaspoons salt** (divided) [\[1\]](#), [\[2\]](#)

Optional: Recado (Toasted Seed Sauce):

- **120g raw pepitas** (hulled green pumpkin/squash seeds)
- **10 medium ripe tomatoes**
- **120g miltomates** (small Guatemalan green tomatillos—optional)
- **1 to 2 chiles cobaneros** (or 1 serrano chile for heat) [\[1\]](#)

For Garnish:

- **Dry white cheese** (*queso seco* or crumbled feta)
 - **Fresh lime wedges** [\[1\]](#)
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Step-by-Step Instructions

1. **Prepare the Herb Masa:** If using *masa harina*, knead the flour, water, and ½ teaspoon of salt into a smooth, pliable dough. Add the finely chopped chipilín (or spinach) leaves and the remaining teaspoon of salt to the fresh or prepared masa. Knead for another 2 minutes until the herb is completely distributed and the masa turns a beautiful pale green. [\[1\]](#)
2. **Assemble the Boxboles:** Place one fresh leaf flat on your work surface, smooth side down. Take a small portion of the green masa (about 1 tablespoon) and

press it onto the center of the leaf, rolling it lengthwise into a log shape about 3 inches long. [1]

3. **Roll and Seal:** Roll the leaf tightly around the masa like a small cigar. Gently fold or tuck the open leaf ends underneath to seal the dough inside. Repeat this process until all of your masa is used. [1]
4. **Steam:** Line the bottom of a large steaming pot with a few extra chayote leaves or a steamer basket insert. Pour in enough water to sit just below the basket line. Layer the wrapped [boxboles](#) inside, cover tightly, and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low and steam for **35 to 45 minutes** until the leaf wrapper is tender and the internal masa is firm and completely cooked through. [1]
5. **Make the Recado Sauce:** While the rolls are steaming, dry-toast the pepitas in a skillet over medium heat for 3 to 4 minutes, stirring constantly until golden and fragrant. Remove and let cool. In the same skillet or directly over a flame, roast the tomatoes, miltomates, and chiles until the skins are thoroughly charred and softened. Blend the roasted vegetables, toasted pepitas, and a pinch of salt together until completely smooth. Simmer the sauce in a skillet for 5 minutes to thicken slightly. [1]
6. **Serve:** Arrange 4 to 5 hot boxboles on a plate. You can slice them crosswise into bite-sized rounds or leave them whole. Generously ladle the warm, earthy tomato-pepita sauce over the top, cover with crumbled *queso seco*, and serve hot with a fresh squeeze of lime juice. [1]

You can see variations of these traditional snacks shared by home cooks on community platforms like the [Tamalitos de Frijol en Hoja de Güisquil TikTok Video](#) or discuss regional versions with food historians at [Sabor a Guate](#). [1, 2]