

Huevos Veracruz

Huevos Rancheros is my favorite breakfast, hands down. But I'm also a fan of slightly spicy, slightly salty Veracruz-style *salsas*, which traditionally blend tomatoes, peppers, olives, and capers. Here's a mix of the two: warm corn tortillas topped with black beans, eggs, Veracruz sauce, and, for a tangy twist, a little goat cheese. Now *that's* breakfast.

This recipe makes 2 hearty or 4 more normal portions, and can be doubled or tripled as needed.

TIME: 40 minutes

MAKES: 2 to 4 servings

For the Veracruz sauce:

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

1 medium yellow onion, peeled and finely chopped

1 large red bell pepper, seeded and chopped

2 or 3 jalapeno peppers, seeded and chopped

1 (14-ounce) can diced fire-roasted tomatoes (regular diced tomatoes are fine)

2 tablespoons capers, with a little juice

1/4 cup chopped Manzanilla olives

Salt and freshly ground pepper

For the beans:

1 16-ounce can black beans, drained

1/2 teaspoon cumin (optional)

Salt and freshly ground pepper

For assembly:

Vegetable or olive oil spray

4 large eggs

4 corn tortillas

4 ounces goat cheese, crumbled

Lime wedges, chopped cilantro, and sliced avocado (optional)

Heat large skillet over medium heat. When hot, add the olive oil, then add the onion, bell pepper, and jalapeno and cook, stirring frequently, until the peppers are tender and the onions just begin to brown, about 5 minutes. Add the tomatoes (with their juices), capers, and olives, and season the sauce with salt and pepper. Reduce heat to low and simmer the sauce for 20 to 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.

For the beans: combine the beans and the cumin in a small saucepan and warm over low heat, stirring occasionally. Season with salt and pepper.

When the sauce is ready, heat a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Spray lightly with the oil, and fry the eggs (one or two at a time) to desired doneness.

Meanwhile, just before the eggs are done, heat the tortillas for about 15 seconds in a microwave to warm them (you can also heat them in a pan or in a pop-up toaster). Place a tortilla on each plate (or slightly overlap 2 on one plate for large servings). Divide the beans between the tortillas, and top each tortilla with a fried egg. Top the eggs first with the *salsa* Veracruz, then with the goat cheese, lime, cilantro, avocado, and whatever else you feel like adding. Serve immediately.