

# *cathy gillen thacker*

## **Beef Enchilada Casserole**

2 tablespoons shortening  
2 tablespoons flour  
2 tablespoons Mexican Hot, Texas-blend, or regular chili powder  
1 small can tomato sauce  
2 cans water  
1 teaspoon salt  
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper  
1 pound extra lean ground beef

1 dozen corn tortillas, from refrigerator section  
3 cups of sharp cheddar, or Mexican blend grated cheese (Using the Mexican blend will make it hotter.)  
1 bunch of green onions

Brown ground beef, drain. Melt shortening in a saucepan over medium heat, add flour and stir until roux is smooth. Stir in chili powder until mixed, then add tomato sauce and two cans of water. Add salt, red and black pepper, and extra lean ground beef. Stir and let simmer for 15-20 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Spread one half cup of chili-beef gravy in bottom of a 13 by 9 casserole dish. Soften one dozen corn tortillas in microwave, or in warm skillet, two at a time. Slice one bunch of green onions. Fill each tortilla with two tablespoons of cheese and a sprinkling of green onions, roll, and place face down in casserole dish. Repeat with other eleven tortillas, placing rolls side by side. Top with remaining chili gravy, cheese, and diced green onions. Cover with foil, place in 350 oven for 25 minutes, or until heated through in the middle. Uncover and continue baking until cheese is bubbling and casserole begins to brown on top. Serve. This casserole freezes well, unbaked. It can go straight from the freezer to the oven, covered with foil. It will take longer to heat, of course. Figure at least an hour. This is a wonderful make-ahead dish.

To make cheese enchiladas, simply omit the ground beef in the chili gravy. To make beef enchiladas, fill tortillas with cooked ground beef and onion, and omit cheese, or use a light cheese topping.

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