Random Taco Cookbook



# Credits

* Taco image:
* Tacos from:
* Code by:

Mahi Mahi Rub, Pickled Red Onions, Tomatoes (Traditional; US), Red Cabbage Filling, Hard Corn Shells (Traditional; US)

Mahi Mahi Rub  
==============  
  
A rub for Mahi Mahi, if fish tacos be what you're fancying:  
  
\* 1 Part spicy chili powder  
\* 1 Part salt  
\* 1 Part ground cumin  
\* 1/2 Part chopped cilantro  
\* 1/2 Part cayenne  
\* 1/2 Part pepper  
\* 1/2 Part oregano  
\* 1/2 Part onion powder  
\* 1/2 Part garlic powder  
  
You choose your measurements and enjoy!

Pickled Red Onions  
==================  
  
My wife made this recipe up, after eating something similar, but if you are making brisket tacos, it is the most wonderful accessory:  
  
\_\_Ingredients\_\_  
  
\* Vinegar  
\* 2 chopped red onions  
\* 1 tablespoon of sugar  
\* a dash of chili powder  
  
Chop the red onions into rings and put them into a container of vinegar. Add the sugar and store the mixture in your refrigerator to marinate and pickle, the longer the better.  
  
Pick out the rings and place them on your brisket taco. Eat.  
  
Variations  
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Pickled onions are a favorite in the Von Doom house, too. [@littlewhirl](http://twitter.com/littlewhirl) played around with a similar starting point and we use this brine instead:  
   
\* 1/2 cup apple cider vinegar  
\* 1 T Sugar (I usually use coconut palm sugar because I'm a hippie I guess)  
\* Water  
\* 1 1/2 tsp salt  
\* 1 sprig fresh oregano and/or cilantro (optional)  
  
Slice 1 red onion on a mandolin (WORTH IT). In a bowl melt the sugar and salt with some warm/hot water. Add vinegar and 1c of filtered water.  
Add in onion, top off w/ water so that the onion is just covered.   
VERY IMPORTANT: Let sit at room temp for at least an hour. Trust me.   
  
The apple cider vinegar is a tangier but also more subtle, keeping more of the onion flavor there. And using a partial salt water brine lets it work nice for quick pickles, but also for slightly longer engagements. Leading to the most important aspect:   
  
PICKLE ALL THE THINGS  
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Seriously. All the things. Pickle your fridge. Pickle your waffles. Make. Lots. Of. Pickles.   
  
\* \_\_Cabbage\_\_ — red or green work. You only need an hour or so (like onions)  
\* \_\_Jalepeños\_\_ — seriously GTFO these are good. Add dill for a twist. Add parboiled carrots if you want to cut the spice  
\* \_\_Greenbeans\_\_ — because greenbeans are goddam delicious  
\* \_\_Toy cars — kid with an attitude? Pickle their favorite toy car. Let's see them try to cop a tude when their matchbox cars are soggy and briney  
\* \_\_Cauliflower\_\_ — personal favorite. Pickles in an hour, super delicious  
\* \_\_Baby corn\_\_ — baby corn is gross, but if you pickle it you can make jokes about how big all the other things you pickled are

Tomatoes (Traditional; US)  
======================  
  
Adding a bit of coolness and moisture, tomatoes are a staple ingredient of the American taco. The better the tomato the more flavor they will impart, but even a sub-sandard grocery store tomato has a place in a traditional taco.  
  
\* Tomatoes (diced)  
\* Cherry Tomatoes (quartered)  
\* Grape Tomatoes (sliced)

Red Cabbage Filling  
===================================  
  
\* 1/2 head of red cabbage, shredded  
\* 3 chopped green onions  
\* 1/2 bunch of finely chopped cilantro  
\* 2-3 squeezed limes  
  
1. Mix all ingredients in large bowl

Hard Corn Shells (Traditional; US)  
======================  
  
Mistakenly thought by many to be traditionally Mexican, hard shells were actually popularized in the US in the mid-20th century.  
  
While they can certainly be made at home (if you have access to a deep-fryer), the best method of obtaining hard taco shells is to head to the grocery store.

Packaged Seasonings, Salsa de chile de árbol, Tomatoes (Traditional; US), Ground Beef (Traditional; US), Fresh Corn Tortillas

Packaged Seasonings  
==============  
  
Lest we be accused of snobbery, let's acknowledge that a taco is a taco, and taco night can be well-served by not having to think at all.  
  
Feel free to use the pre-packaged seasoning of your choice. When I'm in an old-school mood, I head straight for...  
  
\* Old El Paso Taco Seasoning

Salsa de chile de árbol  
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This is a go-to taco sauce in western Mexico and probably elsewhere. You can  
mix and match the techniques in the two variants presented here, and substituting  
or adding chiles is a ramp onto the combinatorial superhighway of Mexican food and  
can demystify the salsa bar at the local taquería.  
  
# Red  
  
\* dried whole \*chiles de árbol\*  
\* tomatoes  
\* onion  
\* \*optionally\*, garlic  
  
Take between .3 and 1 chiles per tomato, remove the stems and put them in a  
saucepan with a tablespoon or two of oil (olive, soy, etc.) The pan and oil should be very  
hot and the chiles should seem to be at risk of burning. Rotate the  
chiles around and let them get dark brown to black without actually burning them —  
this can happen quickly, which is good because your eyes, nose, and lungs  
may reach their maximum vaporized chile tolerance during this step.  
  
Add a bunch of chopped onion and garlic and lower the heat. Cut the tomatoes  
in half and throw them in with salt to taste. Cook until the tomatoes look stewed.  
If you have one of those blender wands that you can put directly in a saucepan,  
you can blend everything now (you may end up making this sauce frequently enough  
to justify the purchase of a blender wand.) Otherwise wait until the mixture  
is not hot and blend it in a standard blender.  
  
# Green  
  
\* dried whole \*chiles de árbol\*  
\* green tomatillos  
\* onion  
\* cilantro  
  
Take between .1 and .5 chiles per tomatillo, remove the stems and put them in a bare, hot saucepan.  
Toast the chiles without oil until they are dark. Add halved or quartered tomatillos, salt, and a  
tablespoon or two of water to prevent burning the chiles before the tomatillos release  
their juices. When the mixture has cooked for as long as you can stand to wait, remove  
the heat and let it cool. Blend and place in a little salsa bowl and heap with finely  
chopped onion and cilantro.  
  
One non-obvious little point is that skipping the oil in the chile roasting-toasting  
step seems to increase the spiciness of the final product.

Tomatoes (Traditional; US)  
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\* Grape Tomatoes (sliced)

Ground Beef (Traditional; US)  
==================  
  
The tranditional base for an American taco is ground beef, browsed in a skillet and seasoned.  
  
\* 1lb Ground Beef  
  
1. Heat a skillet on the stovetop.  
2. Brown the ground beef for 8-10 minutes, or until it is thoroughly cooked, stirring frequently to avoid sticking or burning. (If you're not using a non-stick pan, which is preferred, use 1T oil to keep things loose.)  
3. Stir in seasonings.

Fresh Corn Tortillas  
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This is the only way to go. So worth it. Makes roughly 15 tortillas.  
  
\* 1 3/4 cups masa harina  
\* 1 1/8 cups water  
  
1. In a medium bowl, mix together masa harina and hot water until thoroughly combined. Turn dough onto a clean surface and knead until pliable and smooth. If dough is too sticky, add more masa harina; if it begins to dry out, sprinkle with water. Cover dough tightly with plastic wrap and allow to stand for 30 minutes.  
2. Preheat a cast iron skillet or griddle to medium-high.  
3. Divide dough into 15 equal-size balls. Using a tortilla press, a rolling pin, press each ball of dough flat between two sheets of wax paper.  
4. Place tortilla in preheated pan and allow to cook for approximately 30 seconds, or until browned and slightly puffy. Turn tortilla over to brown on second side for approximately 30 seconds more, then transfer to a plate. Repeat process with each ball of dough. Keep tortillas covered with a towel to stay warm and moist (or a low temp oven) until ready to serve.

Universal Taco Seasoning, Roasted Tomatillo and Mushroom Sauce, Potato Hash, Ground Beef (Traditional; US), Hard Corn Shells (Traditional; US)

Universal Taco Seasoning  
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I got tired of buying packets of store-bought taco seasoning, so I experimented with various spices and ratios until I landed on this recipe. I keep a jar of it in the cupboard at all times.  
  
\* 6 tbsp chili powder  
\* 4 tbsp cumin  
\* 4 tbsp corn starch  
\* 3 tbsp onion powder  
\* 1 tbsp salt  
\* 1 tbsp garlic powder  
\* 4 tsp oregano (Mexican oregano, if you've got it)  
\* 2 tsp crushed red pepper  
  
Combine in Mason jar and shake well to combine.  
  
This mix works well for chicken, pork and beef, destined for the grill, oven, slow cooker or stovetop. You could tweak it a bit to target a specific meat, but I like to have a base, universal mix around. Makes it super easy to turn leftover anything into delicious taco filling: Just chop up whatever it is, toss it into a skillet, sprinkle generously with seasoning, then add a bit of water and simmer to impart flavor.

Roasted Tomatillo and Mushroom Sauce  
====================================  
  
\* 2 pounds tomatillos  
\* 4 dried chipotle chiles  
\* 2 pounds shiitake mushrooms  
\* 1/4 cup olive oil  
\* 1 cup water  
  
1. Remove husks from tomatillos and rinse them. Place them whole on your oven's broiler rack. Broil and turn them until they're browned on all sides.  
2. Boil the water. Drop in the dried chiles and bring the water down to a simmer. Keep them in until they are soft.   
3. Slice the shiitakes and cook them in a pan with the olive oil until they're tender.  
4. Take the chiles and tomatillos (once they're cooled off) and blend them in a food processor until they make a nice puree.  
5. Put the blended tomatillo-chile mixture in a saucepan and bring it to a boil. Add the cooked mushrooms and bring it back to a boil. Then bring the heat down until the mixture is simmering. Cook for about 10 minutes. Add salt to taste.  
  
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A friend gave me this recipe a while back, but I can't remember who it was. Sorry, friend.

Potato Hash  
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\* 6 or so small yukon gold poatoes   
\* 4 green onion, chopped  
\* 1/2 small can of green chiles  
\* olive oil  
\* coarse salt  
\* 1/4t chili powder  
\* dash cumin  
\* 1/4t garlic powder  
\* Nutrional yeast (optional)  
  
  
Peel and dice potatoes, throw in a pan with a 1/4 or so of water, cover and cook on medium-high until potatoes are soft.  
Once potatoes are soft, lower to medium heat add green onions, chiles, spices and olive oil. Cook until hash-like. BOOM.

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3. Stir in seasonings.

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Sriracha Salt, Sour Cream, Corn Salad, Lightly Seasoned Beef, Hard Corn Shells (Traditional; US)

Sriracha Salt  
=============  
  
I actually received this as a gift, but I found a recipe to make your own.  
  
\_\_Ingredients\_\_  
  
\* 1 cup Salt  
\* 10 tsp. Sriracha  
  
Mix the two ingredients together in a bowl. Spread it out on a baking sheet lined with foil or parchment paper. Put in a 200-degree oven, then turn the oven off and let it sit overnight inside. It will clump, but place in ziplock bag and attack it with a rolling pin. Tada!  
  
The effect on most food is as awesome as you'd expect but it is especially amazing with eggs. Add it to your breakfast tacos.

Sour Cream  
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Cool and tart, sour cream is an almost-essential part of the traditional American taco, and many others as well.

Corn Salad  
==========  
  
\* 2 Ears of corn  
\* 1 Lime, juiced  
\* Small handful of Cilantro, chopped  
\* A few green onions, chopped  
\* Garlic salt, or Garlic AND salt. I use Trader Joe's Garlic Salt in the grinder usually.   
  
Cut the corn off of the cob, and in a mixing bowl mix together corn, lime juice, chopped cilantro and garlic salt. You can tweak any of this stuff as desired.  
  
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This is my first Github commit. I'm glad it's taco related.

Lightly Seasoned Beef  
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\* 500 g ground beef or chopped steak  
\* 20 g black cumin seed, ground  
\* 2 cloves garlic  
\* 15 ml white wine  
\* 4 g salt if wine is unsalted  
\* oil to coat the pan  
  
1. Heat oil in the pan.  
2. Toss in the garlic, and the beef on top of that.  
3. Add the cumin. Brown the beef.  
4. Use the splash of wine to loosen anything stuck to the pan.  
  
Perfect, lightly seasoned taco meat.

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Quick and Dirty Spice Mix, Sour Cream, Potato Hash, Zucchini and Corn Filling, Hard Corn Shells (Traditional; US)

Quick and Dirty Spice Mix  
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I’m not going to make a lot of big assumptions here. You own a skillet of some sort. You have some jars of jankity-ass spices from who-knows-when. You want to eat some tacos within the next, like, fifteen minutes. I got you covered, bachelor(ette).  
  
\* 2 Tbsp all-purpose flour  
\* 2 1/2 tsp. chili powder  
\* 3/4 tsp. onion powder (or 1 1/2 tsp. minced yellow onion)  
\* 1 1/4 tsp. salt  
\* 1 tsp. paprika  
\* 3/4 tsp beef bouillon powder  
\* 1/4 tsp. granulated sugar  
\* 1/4 tsp. cayenne pepper  
\* 1/4 tsp. garlic powder  
\* 1 tsp. cumin  
  
Put all this in something with a lid, add 3/4 cup of water, and shake it. Brown a pound of ground beef, then pour the whole situation in there. Stir. Cook it down until it looks like you only put in half a cup of water. You have tacos now.  
  
Vegetarians  
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I’ve made this with that soy protein “ground beef” and it does not \_surprisingly\_ taste like someone put spices on a stack of cheap bar coasters and ran it all through a blender. (Vegetable) oil the skillet when you’re dealing with that stuff, unless you’re looking for excuses to buy a new one.  
  
If you leave out the bouillon for the sake of doing things vegan-style you’ll probably want to nudge up the salt a little.

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Potato Hash  
===================  
  
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\* 4 green onion, chopped  
\* 1/2 small can of green chiles  
\* olive oil  
\* coarse salt  
\* 1/4t chili powder  
\* dash cumin  
\* 1/4t garlic powder  
\* Nutrional yeast (optional)  
  
  
Peel and dice potatoes, throw in a pan with a 1/4 or so of water, cover and cook on medium-high until potatoes are soft.  
Once potatoes are soft, lower to medium heat add green onions, chiles, spices and olive oil. Cook until hash-like. BOOM.

Zucchini and Corn Filling  
=========================  
  
Vegan  
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\_\_Ingredients\_\_  
  
\* Diced zucchini  
\* White or yellow corn kernels  
\* Chopped white onion  
\* Chopped tomatoes  
\* Finely chopped garlic  
\* Black beans (you can even use [Garlic Black Beans](/base\_layers/garlic\_black\_beans.md))  
\* Finely chopped oregano or Epazote  
  
\_\_Directions\_\_  
  
1. Toast corn in a skillet over high heat with oil and salt for about 5 minutes. Remove corn.  
2. Cook onion in the skillet until it caramelizes (about 5 minutes). Leave onion in there.  
3. Add garlic, cook another 1 or 2 minutes.  
4. Add diced tomatoes, cook for 8-10 minutes.  
5. Add zucchini, cook until it's tender.  
6. Add corn back in.  
7. Add black beans, Epazote; add salt, pepper, and other seasonings to taste. Cook for 3-4 more minutes.

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