Random Taco Cookbook



# Credits

(who took the picture?)  
(what website did the pic come from)  
(who wrote the code?)

# Lightly Seasoned Beef with Zaatar, Corn Salad and Mango Avocado Salsa in Hard Corn Shells (Traditional; US)

# Lightly Seasoned Beef

Lightly Seasoned Beef  
=====================  
  
\* 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.

# Zaatar

Zaatar  
======  
  
\_A.k.a. za‘tar, za’atar, zattr, etc.\_  
  
Zaatar is a thyme-based Middle Eastern seasoning that adapts well to tacos. It has a pleasantly dry, faintly sour/bitter flavor. It goes well on savory bases like squash and lamb, and combines with other sour seasonings like lemon juice and radish.  
  
There are many kinds of zaatar, some quite different; this recipe is representative, not definitive.  
  
\* 4 units thyme  
\* 2 units oregano  
\* 2 units sesame seeds  
\* 0–1 unit salt  
\* 1 unit sumac (to be found at a Lebanese or Syrian market, or at a yuppie grocery; in a pinch, lemon zest can substitute)  
\* Other herbs to taste: fennel pollen, marjoram, cumin, etc.  
\* Optional: trace olive oil or lemon juice as a binder (but not if you plan to store it)  
  
Toast the sesame seeds. Grind all ingredients together using any method, stopping when the mixture is not too fine to pick up by pinching.  
  
May be added to meat during cooking, or sprinkled over a finshied taco.  
  
The latest theories have not ruled out the possibility of a zaatar mole.

# Corn Salad

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.  
  
---  
This is my first Github commit. I'm glad it's taco related.

# Mango Avocado Salsa

Mango Avocado Salsa  
===================  
  
Goes great on soft shell chicken tacos with cheese (or deep-friend wantons with scallops)!  
  
\_\_Ingredients\_\_  
  
\* 2 Avocados  
\* 2 Mangos  
\* 1 Orange  
\* 1 Tablespoon Honey  
\* Garlic cloves (leave it up to your buds)  
\* Pepper  
\* 1 Lime  
  
\_\_Directions\_\_  
  
1. Chop avocado and mango into bowl.  
2. Squeeze the lime and half the orange in, add honey.  
3. Add garlic (chopped or pressed) and pepper to taste.  
4. Stir and enjoy!

# Hard Corn Shells (Traditional; US)

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.

# Baja Beer Battered Fish with Packaged Seasonings, Veggies for Fish Tacos and Black Olives in Fresh Corn Tortillas

# Baja Beer Battered Fish

Baja Beer Battered Fish  
========================  
  
This is the beer battered fish for [Baja fish tacos](../full\_tacos/baja\_fish\_tacos.md).  
  
Batter  
-------  
  
\* 1/2 c flour  
\* 1/4 c baking powder  
\* 1 egg  
\* 1/2 c beer (Tecate!)  
\* 1 tsp salt  
\* 1 tsp chili powder (paprika, salt, garlic salt)  
\* 2 tsp parsley  
  
Beat the eggs and fold all batter ingredients until smooth.  
Add flour to make it thicker or add beer to make it thinner.  
If you have time let the batter chill for a couple hours.  
  
Fish  
------  
  
\* 1 lb. cod fillet, grouper, or similar white fish, the fresher the better  
  
\* Cut fish into small chunks.  
\* Fill a pan with oil and heat until approx. 375 F.  
\* Fill a bowl with about a cup of flour and keep it next to the batter bowl.  
\* Dip a fish piece into flour then into the batter.  
\* Fry for 4-5 minutes, turning halfway through. Drain on a paper towel.

# Packaged Seasonings

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

# Veggies for Fish Tacos

Veggies for Fish Tacos  
======================  
  
Fish tacos are a special breed, requiring different vegetable options.  
  
\_\_Assemble your veg from the following options:\_\_  
  
\* Cabbage, purple, shredded  
\* Cabbage, other shades, shredded  
\* Radishes, sliced into thin slices  
\* Red peppers, diced  
\* Cherry tomatoes, sliced (if you're a heathen)  
\* Cilantro, if it doesn't taste like soap to you  
  
And one requirement:  
\* Limes, sliced for juicing over tacos.  
  
Place out your selections and assemble into your taco. Then squeeze a lime over the top.

# Black Olives

Black Olives  
==========  
  
Canned black olives add a sweet and cool meatiness to a traditional American taco.

# Fresh Corn Tortillas

Fresh Corn Tortillas  
===================  
  
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.

# Boiled Ground Beef with Quick and Dirty Spice Mix, Cheese (Traditional; US) and Mango Lime Salsa in Hard Corn Shells (Traditional; US)

# Boiled Ground Beef

Boiled Ground Beef  
==================  
  
Boiling ground beef is a great way to to preserve flavor and delicious juiciness. This process requires a bit more time, but it's totally worth it.  
  
\_\_Ingredients\_\_  
  
\* 2 pounds lean ground beef  
\* 1 teaspoon salt  
\* 1 teaspoon chili powder  
\* 2 teaspoons cumin  
\* 1 teaspoon garlic powder  
\* 1 onion, minced  
\* enough water to completely cover the meat \_(Beef broth also works well!)\_  
  
  
\_\_Directions\_\_  
  
Place all ingredients in a large pan over high heat. Bring to boil. Turn down to medium/medium low heat and simmer for 1 hour. Use a potato masher to break apart the meat.  
  
Strain away any leftover liquid. If you are making this ahead of time you can place the leftover liquid in the fridge to harden the grease. Spoon off any hardened grease and add a little liquid back to the meat if you are reheating it.  
  
---  
  
\_(Credit belongs to my wife, Jamie. See the full recipe [here](http://www.jamies-recipes.com/2012/11/mexican-ground-beef/).)\_

# Quick and Dirty Spice Mix

Quick and Dirty Spice Mix  
=========================  
  
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  
-----------  
  
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.

# Cheese (Traditional; US)

Cheese (Traditional; US)  
======================  
  
A major flavor component of a traditional American taco, select a cheese that's firm and sharp.  
  
\* Cheddar (shredded)  
\* Jack/Pepper Jack (shredded)

# Mango Lime Salsa

Mango Lime Salsa  
======================  
  
This fresh mango salsa is sweet, tangy, and simple. It pairs exceedingly well with Garlic Lime Sauce for delicious fish tacos. The recipe is a simplified version of the [mango salsa](http://www.loveandoliveoil.com/2008/04/fish-tacos-with-mango-salsa.html) on Love and Oil.  
  
In a bowl, combine:  
\* 2 ripe fresh mangoes, chopped   
\* 1/2 cup diced sweet onion  
\* 1-2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro  
\* Juice of 1 fresh lime  
\* (optional): 1/2 fresh jalapeno, diced  
  
Stir and serve.

# Hard Corn Shells (Traditional; US)

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.