Random Taco Cookbook



# Credits

(who took the picture?)  
(what website did the pic come from)  
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Recipe Number 1

Bulgar Black Bean Filling  
=========================  
  
This is a quick and easy vegetarian substitute for a ground beef-like texture without using a soy substitute.  
  
\* 1 cup cooked, strained bulgar  
\* 1/3 cup cooked black beans (or canned), rinsed and strained.  
  
Mix bulgar and black beans together. For better texture, slightly mash the black beans. Add your choice of seasonings to taste and serve.   
  
  
  
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.  
  
  
Traditional Taco Mixins  
(makes about 20 servings)  
  
- 1 (16 ounce) container sour cream  
- 1/4 head iceberg lettuce (rinsed, dried, shredded)  
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese  
- 3 diced tomatoes  
- 1 (2.25 ounce) can black olives, drained  
  
Add ingredients to tacos in layers.   
  
  
  
  
  
Phoning it in Pico de Gallo  
===========================  
  
\_Super Quick & Easy Pico\_  
  
  
\* 1 pint grape tomatoes, quartered (make your kids do this part)  
\* 3 tablespoons finely chopped white onion  
\* Coarse salt  
\* Squeeze of lime  
\* As many finely chopped red (or green) jalapeños as you want (optional)  
  
Combine the tomatoes, cilantro and onion together in a bowl. Season to taste with salt and lime.  
  
Reserve some of this mixture for kids, and then add as much jalapeño as you like to the remaining mixture for the non wimps.  
  
  
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.

Recipe Number 2

Crock Pot Pulled Pork  
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This is the base of my very favorite tacos. Added bonus is by cooking these all day in a slow cooker, your house smells \_amazing\_.  
  
Note: Unless you're cooking for a dozen people, you're going to end up with a lot of leftover pork, but that's about the best problem you can possibly have.  
  
GET GOING EARLY–in a perfect world, you're gonna give this thing at least eight hours on low.  
  
\* 2-3 pound hunk of pork shoulder.  
\* chili powder  
\* mexican oregano (dried)  
\* ground cumin  
\* medium-sized onion (or, a couple shallots)  
\* can of green chilies, diced  
\* pepper & salt  
  
Chop up your onion or shallot into small bits–you don't want big loops of onion, dice it.  
  
Rub your hunk of pork generously with chili powder, oregano, pepper, salt, and a pinch or two of cumin. I tend to try and have a very light crust of this stuff on the outside of the pork.  
  
Toss the hunk of pork, the onions, and the green chilis into the crock pot, set that sucker to LOW, and let it slow cook. I try to get mine in by 9am so I can eat around 6pm. If you're pressed for time, you can do this in about four hours on high, but the deliciousness factor is lowered.  
  
Once the time is up, either shred the thing up in the crock pot or, if you can actually get it out without it falling apart, get it into a bowl and shred from there. That way, you're getting it out of what ends up being a GIGANTIC AMOUNT of juices. But again: oh no, your pork ended up sitting in a big vat of juice–we all weep for you.  
  
  
  
  
  
  
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.  
  
  
Sweet Potato and Apple Hash  
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Sweet potatoes are my go-to taco punch-up. I was going my normal route of making small (1/4" or so) cubes of sweet potatoes when I thought: Hey, it's fall, I'm going to add an apple in there. Fuck yes.  
  
\* 2 Small sweet potatoes (you'd be amazed how little sweet potato you need for tacos)  
\* 1 Small apple  
\* One can diced green chilis  
\* A couple pinches of chili powder  
\* A queeze of honey  
\* Pat o' butter  
  
Mix this all into a pan, with about 1/4 cup of water, and boil it all up until the water goes away, toss in the butter, and continue to pan-fry until things get a little browned.   
  
  
Sour Cream  
==========  
  
Cool and tart, sour cream is an almost-essential part of the traditional American taco, and many others as well.  
  
  
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Recipe Number 3

Asian Style Tofu or Pork Marinade  
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For marinade mix:  
  
\* quarter cup lime juice  
\* quarter cup soy sauce  
\* quarter cup toasted sesame oil  
\* two cloves of garlic, chopped  
\* 3 teaspoons cumin  
\* 1 teaspoon paprika  
\* Some chopped cilantro  
  
Mix with sliced tofu or pork, marinate for 30 minutes and quickly sauté.  
  
  
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Lettuce (Traditional; US)  
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In a traditional American taco, lettuce serves to add extra crunch and coolness. Favor the bulkier lettuces over leafier fare such as Bibb lettuces or mesclun.  
  
\* Iceberg Lettuce (shredded)  
\* Romaine Lettuce (shredded; maintain the stalks)  
  
  
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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.