Random Taco Cookbook



### Credits

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* Source: https://taco-1150.herokuapp.com/random/?full\_taco=true
* Code by: Adade Gbadoe

First Taco Recipe

### Universal Taco Seasoning

Universal Taco Seasoning  
========================  
  
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.

### Guacamole (Simple)

Guacamole (Simple)  
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If you're not in the mood to be fussy, this could be considered a minimum-viable guacamole recipe.  
  
\* 2 ripe avocados  
\* 2-4 limes, depending on juiciness, delivering 2-4T of lime juice  
\* 1 diced tomato (seeded if it's a big one)  
\* salt (to taste)  
\* hot sauce (to taste; Frank's Red Hot is a standard, but go with what you like)  
  
1. Scoop the avocado meat into a bowl and mash them with a fork. Leave it a bit lumpy as we will do more stirring in a bit and we don't want to over-work them.  
2. Add the chopped tomato.  
3. Add the lime juice; hold some back for later adjustment).  
4. Add ½t salt.  
5. Add 2T hot sauce.  
6. Stir with the fork again.  
7. Taste.  
8. Adjust salt/lime/hot sauce as desired.  
  
This recipe will support one average-size bag of chips, so adjust quantities based on expectations.

### Drunken Green Beans

Drunken Green Beans  
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Green beans are fine. Green beans cooked in beer are better. Maybe even the best.  
  
\* 1 Surly fist full of green beans  
\* half a beer  
\* quarter cup vegetable broth  
\* 2 cloves garlic  
\* 1 Tbsp olive oil  
\* some salt, whatever  
  
First peel and dice the garlic and sauté it in the olive oil. Before it gets all burned and ruined, add the beer and vegetable broth.   
   
As the liquid comes to a boil, cut the green beans up. Add the green beans and a pinch of salt and let them simmer for about five minutes. If you like your beans on the softer side you can let it go a little longer. But the trick is to pull them right after the color starts to turn and you've just made a delicious addition to any taco.

### Bulgar Black Bean Filling

Bulgar Black Bean Filling  
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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.

### Hard Corn Shells (Traditional; US)

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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.

Second Taco Recipe

### Universal Taco Seasoning

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### Salsa de Aguacate

Salsa de Aguacate  
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This is the traditional green sauce served from a Mexican taco cart. Very popular with Tacos al Pastór or Tacos de Canasta, it is a creamy, green sauce. It has avacado, but it by no means a guacamole. Usually available with other taco cart staples such as: sliced radishes, spicy salsa roja, fresh cilantro, and fresh limes.  
  
\* 1/2 Kilo of Green Tomatillos (~1lb.)  
\* 2 green Serrano peppers (optional for heat)  
\* 1 avacado  
\* 2 limes  
\* 1/2 cup crema (Mexican sour cream, thinner and sweeter than standard sour cream)  
  
Cook the tomatillos and peppers in a pot with water until soft. Drain the water out and let cool.  
  
Put tomatillos, peppers, salt, lime-juice, crema, and avacado (shelled and pitted) in blender. With lid on, blend until completely mixed and liquid consistency. Salsa should be the consistency of crema, liquid, yet slightly viscous.  
  
Pour over your tacos liberally. Refrigerate between uses.

### Green Chile Cabbage Salad

### Green Chile Cabbage Salad with Seared Corn  
This isn't a tradition, or even particularly traditional -- except in my apartment in Oakland, where I make this for myself ever time I make pork tacos.  
  
#### Ingredients  
\* 1 green cabbage  
\* 4 limes  
\* 2 ears corn, or roughly two cups of corn kernels (adjust to desired corn-y-ness)  
\* Dried, Powdered New Mexico Green Chile, to taste  
\* Salt, to taste  
\* Olive oil  
\* Optional: some crumbled cotija or queso Oaxaqueno  
  
#### Directions  
1. If using ears of corn, strip the kernels from them with a sharp knife.  
2. Heat a few tablespoons of oil over high heat. I like to use a Dutch Oven for this, but the main cookware properties you want are heavy-bottomed and wide.  
3. Toss the corn kernels in to the oil, spread them evenly, salt very lightly and let them ride. I \_highly\_ recommend a splatter guard for this step, but \*\*not\*\* a lid. You want the corn to dry out just a little and get a good sear. It's done when it's starting to get dark, a little chewy, and probably is sticking to the pan.  
4. While the corn is going, core and chop the cabbage in to wide strips.  
5. How's the corn doing?  
6. Juice the limes.  
7. How's the corn doing? If it's not done yet, grab a beer and hang out 'til it is.  
8. The corn is done? Great. Toss it on top of the cabbage. Add a little salt, then a good hit of olive oil, then half-or-so of the lime juice. Toss in a good tablespoon or two of the green chile powder. Start stirring.  
9. You want everything coated nicely, but I don't like the salad too oily, so go easy on that. I add lime until the sour balances the sweet of the corn. I add green chile slowly -- it takes a second to rehydrate and get hot. I might add as much as a half cup of the stuff to a salad for myself or spicy food fans like me; I go easier on the spice-unenthused.  
10. Serve it! If you're in to tossing a little cheese on there, do it -- but I usually just eat it straight. Sometimes this goes on fish or chicken tacos; sometimes it's a side to richer pork tacos. It's always awesome.  
  
\*\*Note on ingredients\*\*: green chile is the gastronomical life blood of New Mexican cuisine, but it's little known in the other 49 states. I like a brand called [\_Los Chileros de Nuevo Mexico\_](http://www.loschileros.com/), which I can find sometimes in tiendas and other times at Whole Foods (go figure). The trick here is this: just don't accept substitutes. It's not the same. I've also had to accept that fresh chile is just not what this salad needs, so don't do that either (it doesn't distribute well enough across the cabbage). Do have this with cold, crisp beer.

### Marinated Portobello Mushroom

Marinated Portobello Mushroom  
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Sometimes you're throwing a taco party and you need a vegetarian option. Sometimes you just don't feel like eating meat.  
  
Since a proper taco is never overstuffed, one decent-sized portobello should be enough for three servings. Multiply accordingly, and drop your mushrooms into a big Ziploc bag with enough [salsa verde](/condiments/simple\_salsa\_verde.md) to cover. Let everything sit in your fridge for a couple of hours.  
  
Remove, season with just a touch of salt and cracked black pepper, then lay onto a grill (or a grill pan on your stovetop) over medium to medium-high heat for a few minutes on each side. Cut into thick slices, and you'll have a nice, earthy taco base.

### Fresh Corn Tortillas

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.

Third Taco Recipe

### Quick and Dirty Spice Mix

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.

### Pickled Vegetables

Pickled Vegetables  
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\_\_Whisk:\_\_  
  
\* 1/4 cup rice vinegar  
\* 2 teaspoons sugar  
\* 1 teaspoon soy sauce  
\* 1 teaspoon fish sauce  
\* Some red pepper flakes  
  
\_\_Then toss in some sliced vegetables. Suggestions include:\_\_  
  
\* cucumbers  
\* carrots  
\* onions  
\* radishes  
  
Mix, cover and chill in fridge for at least 30 minutes before using.

### Lettuce (Traditional; US)

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)

### Garlic Black Beans

Garlic Black Beans  
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Vegetarian/Vegan  
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\* Can of plain black beans  
\* 3 - 6 cloves of garlic chopped fine  
\* Vegetable oil of your choice  
\* Cumin  
\* Cayenne or Chipotle pepper (optional)  
\* Lemon juice (optional)  
  
1. Heat a tablespoon of olive oil in a saucepan over medium heat.   
2. When olive oil starts to shimmer, add the garlic and let it simmer for about 10 seconds.  
3. Add cumin and pepper (if wanted) and simmer for another 10 seconds.  
4. Pour in the entire can of beans, don't drain or rinse them.  
5. Simmer for about 15 minutes or until the bean broth has thickened to your liking. If the beans will be the main ingredient of your tacos, cook until the beans are just about totally dry. If you're using them in a mixture (like the [Black Bean, Potato, and Onion Tacos](/full\_tacos/black\_bean\_potato\_onion\_tacos.md) ), let the broth stay a little bit runny.  
6. Add a squeeze or two of lemon juice if you like.

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