Random Taco Cookbook



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Source: https://taco-1150.herokuapp.com/random/?full\_taco=true

Code by: Adade Gbadoe

First Taco Recipe

### Zaatar

Zaatar  
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\_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.

### Garlic Lime Sauce

Garlic Lime Sauce  
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This sauce packs a creamy, sour, garlicky punch and can cut the heat on a spicy salsa. It pairs well with Mango Lime Salsa for excellent fish tacos. This is a simplified version of the [lime sauce recipe](http://www.loveandoliveoil.com/2008/04/fish-tacos-with-mango-salsa.html) on Love and Oil.  
  
Combine in a bowl:  
\* 1-2 tablespoons mayonnaise  
\* 1/2 cup plain yogurt  
\* 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice  
\* 1-2 cloves minced garlic  
\* salt to taste  
\* (optional): chopped fresh cilantro garnish  
  
Whisk ingredients together in bowl.   
  
Serve on the side, or drizzle as a decorative layer onto prepared tacos. Optionally sprinkle with chopped cilantro as garnish.

### Tomatoes (Traditional; US)

Tomatoes (Traditional; US)  
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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)

### @deezthugs' Smokey Turkey Tacos

@deezthugs' Smokey Turkey Tacos  
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These tacos have and will blow minds.  
  
(Note: I cannot separate the base\_layer here from the seasoning, it is all integral)  
  
\* 2 Packages ground Turkey or Chicken (1.5 to 2 lbs) - not the lean stuff for Chrissake!  
\* Several slices of cooked bacon, diced  
\* 2 Tbs Coconut oil  
\* 2 Tbs Bacon Grease. That's right, Bacon Grease. (What you don't keep it? Might as well just quit now)  
\* 1 Medium sweet onion  
\* (The following dry ingrediants can be increased depending on amount of meat)   
\* 4 Garlic Cloves, smashed  
\* 1 tsp Cumin  
\* 2 tsp Onion powder  
\* 1 tsp Chipotle powder (use as much as required)  
\* 1 tsp (cool smokey) Paprika  
\* 1 tsp Cinnamon  
\* 1 tsp Ground Ginger  
\* 1/2 - 1 tsp Black Pepper  
\* 1 tsp Kosher Salt  
\* 3 Limes, juiced  
\* [optional] 1/2 can low-salt Chicken broth  
  
Combine all dry seasonings in bag, shake up and combine well with raw turkey meat. return to fridge for an hour or more.   
  
Melt the Bacon Grease over medium heat, add Coconut oil and diced onion, cook down till onions are, well, you know, awesome. Add the smashed garlic. Add the bacon. Add the turkey meat and break it down into medium/small bits with a spatula or butter knife. After cooking for a few minutes and the meat has begun to brown, drizzle 2 of limes' juice onto the meat.  
  
Cook well, adding optional chicken broth to shape the consistency as needed. (Generally not needed unless you accidentally buy low-fat meat. Shame on you.)  
  
Finally, transfer amount for a meal to a frying pan, frying for a few minutes to create some crispy bits (This is the key step:)), adding lime juice as it cooks. Spoon onto favorite tortillas add condiments and devour.

### 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.

Second Taco Recipe

### Universal Taco Seasoning

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.

### 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.

### Traditional Taco Mixins

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.

### Carnitas

Carnitas  
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This recipe calls for both slow cooking the roast as well as frying before serving.  
  
\_\_Ingredients\_\_  
  
\* Pork shoulder roast  
\* Onion and Garlic powder  
\* Jalapenos  
\* Green Onions  
  
  
\_\_Directions\_\_  
  
1. Place a pork shoulder roast in a crock pot, cover roast completely with water.   
2. Sprinkle onion & garlic powder into crock pot.   
3. Cook for 6 to 8 hours on high, or 8 to 10 hours on low.  
4. If frying at a later time, refrigerate roast with some of the cooking water.  
5. When ready to make tacos, shred the meat.  
6. Chop up as much jalapenos and green onions as desired.   
7. In a large frying pan add some oil. When the oil is hot but not burning add the meat and fry.   
8. Add some of the cooking water as needed to fry pan to keep the meat moist.  
9. In the last 5 or so minutes of cooking the meat, add the jalapenos and onions to meat.  
10. Meat should come out crispy but still moist  
11. Serve on tortillas (preferably soft corn tortillas) with choice of condiments (salsa, cheese, onions, etc)

### Hard Corn Shells (Traditional; US)

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.

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.

### Salsa de chile de árbol

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.

### 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.

### Zucchini and Corn Filling

Zucchini and Corn Filling  
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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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