



Flex Mex

BY KATE SHERWOOD

Fajitas without the tortillas? Tostada salad without the cheese or deep-fried shell? Fish tacos without the battered, deep-fried fish? You bet. Who knew Mexican food didn't have to be dripping with calories, salt, and grease?

Got a question or suggestion? Write to healthycook@cspinet.org.

Nutrition Action on the Web
To watch Kate prepare the Shrimp Tostada Salad, go to nutritionaction.org/healthycook.



Naked Chicken Fajitas



Use a Haas avocado that's black-skinned and heavy for its size. It should yield slightly to gentle pressure.

- 2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 6 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tbs. chili powder, more or less to taste
- 1/8 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 3/4 tsp. salt, divided
- 1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1/2" strips
- 1 15 oz. can no-salt-added black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 avocado, peeled and cut into chunks
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, quartered
- 1/2 cup cilantro leaves, roughly chopped
- 1 Tbs. fresh lime juice, more to taste
- 2 bell peppers (any color), sliced into 1/2" strips
- 1 onion, sliced into 1/2" strips

Mix 1 Tbs. of the oil with the garlic, chili powder, black pepper, and 1/2 tsp. of the salt in a medium bowl. Add the chicken and toss to coat evenly. Set aside. In another bowl, make the black bean salsa. Gently toss together the beans, avocado, tomatoes, and cilantro. Season with the lime juice and remaining 1/4 tsp. of salt. Taste and add more lime juice if you'd like. Set aside.

In a large non-stick skillet over medium-high heat, sauté the peppers and onions with the remaining 1 Tbs. of oil. Don't stir until they begin to char, 3-5 minutes. Stir and continue to cook until they begin to soften, 2-3 minutes. Remove from the skillet.

In the same skillet, add the chicken and sauté until fully cooked, 3-5 minutes. Toss in the peppers and onions. Serve with the black bean salsa. Serves 4.

PER SERVING (2 cups)

Calories: 390	Sodium: 530 mg
Total Fat: 18 g	Cholesterol: 70 mg
Sat Fat: 3 g	Carbohydrates: 29 g
Protein: 31 g	Fiber: 11 g

Shrimp Tostada Salad



Look for chipotle peppers in adobo sauce in small cans in the Mexican section of your grocery store.

- 4 cloves garlic
- 1 chipotle pepper in adobo sauce (the more sauce that clings to the pepper, the spicier the dish)
- 2 tsp. honey
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 cup orange juice
- 2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 lb. shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 cup corn, fresh cut from cob or thawed from frozen
- 1 15 oz. can no-salt-added black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 head butter lettuce (Boston or bibb), leaves separated
- 1 avocado, peeled and cut into chunks
- 1/4 red onion, thinly sliced
- 2 oz. unsalted tortilla chips
- 1 lime, cut into wedges

Make a sauce in a food processor or blender by pureeing the garlic, chipotle pepper, honey, salt, orange juice, and oil until smooth. In a large skillet over medium-high heat, simmer the sauce until it is reduced by half, about 5 minutes. Reduce the heat to medium-low. Stir in the shrimp and simmer until opaque, 1-2 minutes. Stir in the corn and black beans. Remove from the heat.

Arrange the lettuce on one large platter or 4 plates. Top with the shrimp mixture. Garnish with the avocado, red onion, and tortilla chips. Serve with lime wedges. Serves 4.

PER SERVING (2 cups)

Calories: 500	Sodium: 500 mg
Total Fat: 20 g	Cholesterol: 170 mg
Sat Fat: 2.5 g	Carbohydrates: 48 g
Protein: 32 g	Fiber: 10 g

Fish Tacos



Buy a firm-fleshed white fish that will hold together while frying. Try tilapia, domestic mahi-mahi, or halibut.

- 1/3 cup low-fat sour cream
- 1 jalapeño pepper, seeded
- 2 Tbs. fresh lime juice
- 1 bunch cilantro
- 3/4 tsp. salt
- 1/4 cup canola oil
- 1/2 cup cornmeal
- 1 1/2 lbs. fish, cut into 1" strips
- 10 6" soft corn tortillas, warmed according to package instructions
- 1 avocado, peeled and cut into chunks
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, chopped
- 1/4 red onion, thinly sliced
- 2 cups finely shredded red cabbage

In a food processor, purée the sour cream, jalapeño, lime juice, cilantro, and salt. Set aside. Heat the oil in a large non-stick skillet over medium heat until hot but not smoking. While the oil heats, spread the cornmeal on a plate. Pat the fish in the cornmeal to coat on all sides. Fry in the oil until the cornmeal is lightly browned, 1-2 minutes per side. Remove and drain on paper towels.

To assemble the tacos, top each tortilla with fish, cilantro sauce, avocado, tomato, red onion, and cabbage, then fold in half. Makes 10 tacos.

PER SERVING (1 taco)

Calories: 210	Sodium: 260 mg
Total Fat: 8 g	Cholesterol: 60 mg
Sat Fat: 1 g	Carbohydrates: 20 g
Protein: 16 g	Fiber: 4 g

Fish Tacos



Correction

Last month's recipe for Creamy Tomato Risotto should have called for 1 cup of pearled barley rather than hulled barley. If you use hulled, you'll need to boil it for 45-60 minutes before starting the recipe.