

Taco Salad

Maximum munchability awaits your diners tonight. This taco salad features a fluted tortilla cup filled with homemade taco filling and is surrounded by seasonal crisp lettuce. Savory avocados, sliced bell peppers, cucumbers and poppin' good cherry tomatoes round out this classic salad. It's topped with homemade tomato salsa. What's not to like here?

Preparation time: 40 mins. Serves: 2

Organize Your Ingredients!

Notes on Organizing

Prep and organize ingredients so they are easy to add as you need them.

Prep a total of 2 cloves of chopped garlic: 1 clove for Taco Filling and 1 clove for Quick Salsa.

There are 3 onion preps: 1/4 C. chopped for Taco Filling, 1/2 C. chopped for the Salsa and 1/2 C. sliced for seared Onions and Peppers.

Shaped Tortillas/Seared Onions and Peppers

Shaped Tortillas:

two 6" soft corn or wheat-flour tortillas

Seared Onions and Peppers:

2 tsp. canola oil

1/2 C. onions (thin sliced and quartered)

1/2 C. green pepper (cut into 1" strips)

1/4 C. red pepper (cut into 1" strips)

2/3 C. Quick Low-sodium Tomato Salsa

1/4 C. sharp cheddar cheese (shredded)

Taco Filling

1 tsp. olive oil

1/4 C. onion (chopped)

1 clove garlic (smashed and chopped)

8 oz. lean ground beef

- or -

plant-based ground product of choice

1/2 tsp. dry oregano leaves

1/2 tsp. dry basil leaves

2 tsp. chili powder

1/4 tsp. ground cumin

1/4 C. white wine

dash of Tabasco

Quick, Low-sodium Tomato Salsa

1 clove garlic (smashed and chopped)

1/2 C. onion (chopped)

1/2 of a Jalapeno pepper (seeded and finely chopped)

1 Anaheim Pepper (seeded and finely chopped)

1/4 C. fresh cilantro (chopped)

1 lime (juiced)

pinch of salt

one 15 oz. can no-salt diced tomatoes

Salad Assembly

8 leaf lettuce leaves (rolled and thin-sliced)

1 C. cucumber (peeled and chopped)

2 tsp. olive oil

1 T. lime juice

2 Roma tomatoes (chopped) - or 8 cherry tomatoes (halved)

1 avocado (sliced)

1/3 C. plain, nonfat yogurt

2/3 C. Quick, Low-sodium Tomato Salsa

1/4 C. sharp cheddar cheese (shredded)

Let's Prepare, Cook, and Plate This!

Basic Assembly Instructions

Now that you've prepped ingredients, you have only a few easy steps left to complete the meal.

Shape tortillas: **Shaped Tortillas/Seared Onions and Peppers**

1. Start by sprinkling tortillas with a little water and setting them over the opening of a 5" bowl. You're essentially creating a tortilla lid over the bowl.
2. Warm bowl with tortilla lid in the microwave for 25 seconds. Remove from the microwave and push the warm, softened tortilla into the bowl as you shape it into a cup with fluted edges. Leave shaped tortilla in the bowl and set aside to cool. Repeat process with second tortilla in a separate bowl.

Seared Onions and Peppers:

Using a medium-sized sauté pan, heat canola oil until it shimmers. Toss sliced onions and peppers until edges start to turn brown. Set aside on a plate.

Taco filling

1. Using the same medium sauté pan, toss chopped onion and garlic 1 minute in oil over medium-high heat.
2. Add plant-based or meat option, spices, white wine and Tabasco. Toss over medium-high heat until meat browns. Remove from heat and set aside.

Quick, Low-sodium Tomato Salsa

If assembling by hand: Place all ingredients in a medium-sized bowl. Stir together with tomatoes.

If using a food processor: Pulse all items (except tomatoes) in food processor until finely chopped. Add the tomatoes and pulse a few times to mix them with the other items.

Taco Salad Assembly

1. Place sliced lettuce leaves in a large bowl. Add prepped cucumber and toss with olive oil and lime juice. Divide lettuce mixture between two large plates.
2. Make an indentation in the center of the salad ingredients. Remove shaped tortilla from bowl and place in the space. Fill with seasoned "meat" filling.
3. Divide seared veggies, tomatoes and avocado slices over the lettuce portion of the plate.

Serve salads with a dollop of yogurt and 1/3 C. of salsa.

Garnish salads with shredded cheddar cheese.

What I've Learned from this Recipe

Making your own taco filling is definitely the way to go. You'll end up with perfectly seasoned filling that's not too salty. The same will be true when you make your own salsa.

Let us know what you think, and ask any questions you may have! chezdon@plate6.com