

Turn Avocados Into Guac

Avocados have experienced a surge in popularity, with millions of avocado recipes online, avocado toast being the latest “hip” breakfast, and even avocado-themed t-shirts, mugs, and other merchandise.

Known for being a healthy fat because it is monounsaturated and helps maintain healthy cholesterol levels. They also contain vitamins C and E, folic acid, and magnesium, and potassium.

Guacamole is an avocado-based food that has stood the test of time and is now a staple in American households. September 16 is even National Guacamole Day!

The first people to make guacamole were the Aztecs before the 16th century. The guacamole they made was made entirely of avocado. The name guacamole can be traced back to the Nahuatl word, āhuacamolli. Āhuacamolli translates to “avocado sauce.”

Guacamole was popular in Mesoamerican society because of the nutritional value it added to their diets due to the high levels of fat and protein. Most of the other foods the Aztecs consumed were low fat, and avocados added needed nutrition to their diets.

When Europeans arrived in the area that is now Mexico, they also loved guacamole. So they tried to replicate the dish with other foods substituted for the avocado, but of course, they did not measure up to the guacamole made with real avocado.

Most of the key ingredients in modern guacamole, including avocado, tomato, and onions, are native to the Americas. The Columbian exchange, which the travel between the “New World,” Europe, and other places in the Eastern and Western hemispheres allowed the exchange of plants, animals, spices, people, and technology, provided new flavors to this traditional recipe. For example, garlic and cumin originated in Asia but were transported to Europe and then from Europe to America. The Persian lime was also introduced to the Aztecs through the Columbian exchange, grown in the Middle East and transported by ship.

Today, guacamole is a well-known and popular food in American culture. Many variations can be made to guacamole to make it match your preferences, but there are some essential factors to remember when making guacamole from scratch.

First of all, be sure to select avocados that are ripe but not overripe. When choosing your avocado, the skin should be a consistent black color with pebbly skin. When the avocado is gently squeezed, it should yield slightly to the pressure. If the avocado has mushy spots, it is too ripe. If it is rock hard, it is underripe. Place an unripe avocado in a brown paper bag with an apple or a banana to speed up the ripening process.

If you are topping the guacamole with cheese, bacon, or other toppings, be sure to wait to add them until right before serving. For the best results, guacamole should be eaten the same day it was prepared. You can't keep guacamole from turning brown, but you can slow it down. Use Hass avocados, add lime to the guacamole, cover the finished mixture with plastic directly on its surface, and keep it cold, even when you serve it. It can be stored overnight in an airtight container.

Guacamole is delicious as a dip for chips, and a person can also use it as a dip for vegetables if you are cutting down on processed foods or carbohydrates. I like it on tacos and sandwiches!

The best thing about making your guacamole at home from scratch is controlling the ingredients and avoiding unhealthy additives. You can also add ingredients to your guacamole, such as chopped peppers, tomatoes, onion, cilantro, and more.

Try this healthy recipe from The University of Wyoming Extension Nutrition and Food Safety team at <https://uwyoextension.org/uwnutrition/recipes/veggie-packed-guacamole/>

Veggie Packed Guacamole

Servings: 8 servings

Ingredients

- 2 avocados
- 1 lemon
- 2 Tablespoons cilantro
- 1 small tomato chopped
- 1 jalapeño pepper
- ½ cup green pepper chopped

- 1 small white onion chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Mash avocado and lemon juice with a fork until creamy.
2. Chop cilantro, tomato, peppers and onion. Add to avocado mash.
3. Mix well and season with salt and pepper.
4. Allow to chill for 1 hour before serving so flavors mix.

Sources

<https://tenochtitlan.omeka.net/exhibits/show/guacamole>

<https://www.epicurious.com/archive/entertaining/partieevents/everything-you-need-guacamole>