

Explore Traditional Mexican Tacos

Regarding Mexican cuisine, one of the most iconic and beloved dishes is the taco. Tacos are a very traditional and authentic Mexican dish. Tacos were meant to be a cheap, portable meal for workers and were kept simple.

Although there are regional variations, Mexican tacos are typically made with soft corn tortillas and simple, fresh ingredients like meat, onions, and cilantro. They are often served with a squeeze of lime and a side of salsa. In contrast, Tex-Mex or Americanized taco versions may use flour tortillas and include additional ingredients like cheese, sour cream, and lettuce. When tomatoes and lettuce appear on a plate of tacos in Mexico, they're considered a salad, not a topping.

Most authentic tacos usually have two or three ingredients. Ingredients will vary from region to region.

Traditional Mexican tacos are typically made with soft corn tortillas, not wheat. In most parts of Mexico, the taco will almost always come on two tortillas, not one.

The meat is the star of the taco. Whether it's succulent al pastor (pork), flavorful carne asada (beef), tender barbacoa (beef, goat, or lamb), or juicy pollo (chicken), the meat is often seasoned with a blend of authentic Mexican spices and slow-cooked to perfection. The meat is prepared using techniques such as grilling and braising. There is no ground beef in authentic tacos. Vegetarian tacos can be filled with potatoes, cactus, mushrooms, or beans.

Every region in Mexico has its way of making salsa. Two popular salsas, salsa verde (green salsa) or salsa roja (red salsa), add a flavor burst to traditional Mexican tacos. Salsa should be made with fresh tomatoes or tomatillos, onions, cilantro, and chilies.

Two essential toppings for traditional Mexican tacos include diced onions and fresh cilantro.

A squeeze of fresh lime juice is often added to enhance the taco flavors, providing a hint of acidity that balances the richness of the other ingredients.

In Northern Mexico, Carne Asada Tacos are thinly sliced grilled steak with a topping of onion and cilantro.

In the Baja Peninsula, Mexican fish tacos, called Tacos de Pescado, often feature deep-fried white fish topped with cabbage slaw and a creamy white sauce.

In Western Mexico, crispy and caramelized bits of pork tucked into tortillas are known as Tacos de Carnitas. Tacos de Birria is filled with a seasoned stew. Birria tacos are often served with a side of the broth from the meat, allowing you to dip the tacos for added flavor.

In Central Mexico, savor Tacos al Pastor made with tender pork marinated in pineapple and a flavorful chile and achiote sauce. Tinga de Pollo Tacos are loaded with herbs, spices, tomato, and tender shredded chicken.

In Southeast Mexico, Tacos de Tasajo Tacos include thinly sliced, salted beef.

In the Yucatán Peninsula, you find Cochinita Pibil Tacos, featuring pork marinated in achiote paste, bitter orange, and aromatic spices, then wrapped in banana leaves and slow-cooked until fork tender.

When you bite into a delicious traditional Mexican taco, appreciate the authentic ingredients, regional variations, and traditional cooking methods that make it a special culinary delight. Explore and savor different kinds of Mexican tacos one taco at a time.