

## **Ceviche: Peru's Culinary Jewel**

Ceviche is a flavorful Peruvian seafood appetizer or a light lunch for summer entertaining!

Ceviche is a popular cold dish in South America. It is an authentic Peruvian dish of fresh fish or seafood marinated in a citrus-based sauce, often referred to as "tiger's milk."

There are many variations of ceviche, with each region and country having its own unique version. The basic ingredient is raw fish cut into bite-size pieces or shellfish, marinated in acidic fruit juice (typically lime), salt, and seasoned with spices and herbs, such as cilantro and chile peppers. Ceviche has a refreshing and flavorful taste, with a combination of sour, spicy, and savory flavors.

The juice changes the texture of the fish but does not change its "raw" taste due to the citric acid. The citric acid in the lime juice alters the structure of the proteins in the fish, making the fish more opaque and firm, just as if it had been cooked with heat.

Many different types of fish can be used for ceviche. Ceviche made with shellfish is also quite popular.

Peruvian ceviche typically features fresh white fish, such as sea bass, marinated briefly in lime juice, accompanied by cilantro, chile pepper, red onion, and salt. It's served with cold sweet potatoes or corn on the cob. In contrast, Mexican ceviche typically combines fish and seafood, such as shrimp and octopus, which are marinated in a mixture of tomato and lime juice for a longer period. It's served with tostadas and avocado, creating a more complex and spicier flavor. Have you tried both types of ceviche?

Sashimi-grade fish, which is suitable for raw consumption, is the ONLY fish you should use for ceviche. The best choice for making ceviche is sea fish with firm white flesh, such as sea bass, striped bass, grouper, sole, or flounder. The acid marinade will not kill bacteria and parasites, so eat fish that have been previously frozen.

The most important thing when making ceviche is ensuring that it is marinated for the proper amount of time. Too short, and your seafood will be raw. Too long, and it will be rubbery in the case of shrimp or octopus or chalky and crumbly in the case of fish.

Follow these guidelines when making ceviche:

1. The more acidic the marinade, the faster the cooking will go.
2. The smaller the fish pieces, the faster the cooking will proceed.
3. Every pound of fish requires 1/2 cup of freshly squeezed lime or lemon juice.
4. Not all limes and lemons have a similar effect because they have different acidity. It is always best to check the fish while it is curing to ensure it is cooked through.
5. You will need at least 30 minutes and usually an hour for the citrus to cook the fish, depending on the size of the fish pieces.

6. Ceviche can be overcooked. Leaving the fish in the marinade longer than required does not improve the quality.
7. Opt for vegetables that offer bright colors and a crunchy texture.
8. Never place ceviche in metal bowls, as the acid in the marinade can leach molecules from those metals into the food.
9. Ceviche is best served chilled or at room temperature.

Refrigerate ceviche leftovers immediately in a container with a tightly fitting lid for 1 to 2 days at most.

Ceviche is a healthy and nutritious dish. Rich in protein and low in fat, it provides essential vitamins and minerals. Lime juice enhances the flavor, aids digestion, and provides vitamin C.

Are you ready to prepare this dish? This amazing fish dish is well worth trying out!