

“BAJA FRESH”

I absolutely love the recipes this week. All the recipes are classic Southern California faire, Latin inspired, but not exactly authentically Mexican. It's more about fresh ingredients for Pico de Gallo and staples like beans and rice. I think you'll really enjoy my homemade sweet pepper sauce, too!



SEARED STEAK WITH PICO DE GALLO SALSA AND BROILED ZUCCHINI



CHICKEN TORTILLA SOUP



HOMEMADE TORTILLAS

WHAT'S FOR DINNER

- Tortilla Soup
- Seared Steak with Pico de Gallo Salsa and Broiled Zucchini
- Fish with Beans and Veggie Rice
- Leftovers Creation ~ Chicken Enchiladas with Sweet Pepper Sauce

EXTRAS

- Cinnamon Sugar Chips

NOURISHING ADDITIONS

- Homemade Tortillas
- Pico de Gallo Salsa

Suggested Extras (Recipes and shopping list items not included.)

- Simple and delicious lunches, snacks, or quick dinners can be made with pre-soaked, cooked and warmed rice and beans with salsa, avocado slices, leftover meat and a sprinkle of salt and pepper, to taste.

Planning Notes

- Pre-soak brown rice and black beans overnight for recipes as needed this week. (Pre-cooked brown rice and canned beans may be substituted.)
- Tortillas are needed for this week's recipes. Plan ahead to make the recommended homemade version!
- Make the Tortilla Soup from scratch in a crock-pot or over low heat for several hours.
- Save leftover chicken from Tortilla Soup for Chicken Enchiladas.



FISH WITH BEANS AND VEGGIE RICE



CHICKEN ENCHILADAS WITH SWEET PEPPER SAUCE

CHICKEN TORTILLA SOUP

Total Time: 2 ½ -5 hours

* Use a slow cooker on low-medium heat for 4 hours

Ingredients:

3 tablespoons Extra Virgin Olive Oil or butter, divided
1 medium onion, sliced
1-2 garlic cloves, minced
6-8 bone-in chicken pieces
Salt and Pepper
1 cup zucchini, chopped
1/2 cup carrots, chopped
1/2 cup corn kernels
2 medium tomatoes, seeded and chopped
1 bell pepper, chopped
2 tablespoons cilantro, finely chopped
1 avocado, chopped
2-4 tortillas, corn or flour
1 cup grated jack cheese
1/2 cup green onions, chopped (*optional*)
sour cream (*optional*)

Heat 2 tablespoons oil in large stockpot or Dutch oven. (**If using slow cooker, use a medium skillet.*) Add onions, and sauté for 3-4 minutes, until translucent and slightly browned. Add garlic and chicken, season with salt and pepper to taste, and sauté until chicken begins to brown, then add 6-8 cups of water. (*Transfer this mixture to slow cooker if necessary.*) Let simmer for 2-4 hours over low heat, then add zucchini, carrots, corn, tomatoes, bell pepper, and cilantro to pot and simmer for 20 minutes, until vegetables are soft. Season with salt and pepper, as needed.

Meanwhile slice tortillas in 1-inch strips. Season with salt and pepper, and drizzle with 1 tablespoon oil. Heat in 400° oven for 5-7 minutes, until golden brown and crispy. To serve, top soup with tortilla strips, cheese, a dollop of sour cream, and green onions as desired.

SEARED STEAK WITH PICO DE GALLO SALSA AND BROILED ZUCCHINI

Total Time: 20 minutes

Ingredients:

Rib-eye or New York steak, 4-6oz. per person
Salt and pepper
Garlic powder
Extra virgin olive oil
1 medium zucchini per person, sliced into thin strips
¼ cup Pico de Gallo per person (*part of this week's recipes*)
Farmers cheese, or Feta cheese, crumbled

Preheat broiler on high heat.

Season steak liberally with salt, pepper, and garlic powder. Sear for 3-5 minutes per side in oil over a very hot pan. Place zucchini slices on a baking sheet and drizzle with oil and salt and pepper. Place under broiler until beginning to brown evenly. Serve steak with zucchini slices and Pico de Gallo on the side, then sprinkle with farmers cheese or feta cheese as desired (*optional*).

FISH WITH BEANS AND VEGGIE RICE

Total Time: 30 minutes

**Pre-soak beans and rice overnight before using for recipe, unless you are using canned beans and pre-cooked rice.*

Ingredients:

2 cups black beans, soaked overnight or canned and rinsed
½ cup, plus 2-4 tablespoons olive oil, organic lard, or other high-heat cooking fat
1 cup Pico de Gallo salsa (*this week's recipes*)
2 cups cooked brown rice (*soak overnight and simmer in water until soft, or use store-bought pre-cooked rice*)
salt and pepper
1 filet of white fish per person, such as cod, halibut or seabass
1 cup flour or arrowroot powder
cilantro for garnish (*optional*)

Heat 1-2 tablespoons oil, lard, or cooking fat in a large saucepan. Sauté beans, seasoning with salt and pepper, to taste, then mash with a fork or potato masher for desired consistency. In a separate saucepan, heat 1-2 tablespoons oil, lard, or cooking fat and sauté pre-cooked rice with salsa. Season, as needed, with salt and pepper. Keep beans and rice warm.

Heat ½ cup cooking fat in a saucepan until very hot. Sprinkle fish filets with salt and pepper, then dredge in flour or arrowroot powder, shaking to remove excess. Sear fish in hot fat for 3-5 minutes per side (*or less, depending on thickness*) until a golden crust forms. Set fish aside and repeat with remaining filets. To serve, layer rice, beans and fish and top with finely chopped cilantro.

CHICKEN ENCHILADAS WITH SWEET PEPPER SAUCE

Total Time: 30 minutes

Ingredients:

¼ cup butter or extra virgin olive oil
2 bell peppers, seeded and chopped
1 onion, chopped
2 tablespoons tomato paste
salt and pepper
¼ cup chicken stock (water may be substituted)
1-2 cups cooked chicken meat, shredded
1-3 tortillas per person, depending on size of tortillas (Homemade Tortillas recommended)
4 avocados, seeded and chopped into cubes
1-2 cups Farmers cheese, or Feta cheese, crumbled

Preheat oven to 400°F.

Heat butter or oil in a large saucepan and sauté peppers and onion for 8-10 minutes, until soft and beginning to brown. Stir in tomato paste and season liberally with salt and pepper. Carefully transfer contents to a blender, add stock or water, and puree until smooth. Transfer sauce back to saucepan and stir in chicken meat to warm.

Using a slotted spoon, scoop some coated chicken into a tortilla, then add some avocado cubes and cheese. Roll tortilla and place in a baking dish, seam-side down. Repeat until baking dish is full of enchiladas. Pour remaining pepper sauce over enchiladas, then sprinkle with cheese. Bake for 10 minutes, then serve topped with a sprinkling of fresh cheese.

PICO DE GALLO SALSA

Ingredients:

6-10 tomatoes (*depending on size*), seeded and chopped into small pieces
1 onion, finely chopped
2 cloves of garlic, finely chopped
juice of 1 lime
¼ cup cilantro, finely chopped

Place ingredients in a large bowl and gently toss until evenly blended. Serve immediately or store in an airtight container for up to 1 week. (*Storing will result in juices draining out of tomatoes.*)

CINNAMON SUGAR CHIPS

Total Time: 15 minutes

Ingredients:

Tortillas (*Homemade Tortillas recommended*)
High-heat frying fat, such as organic lard or olive oil
Cinnamon
Sugar

Cut tortillas into wedges and fry in very hot fat or oil until golden brown (tortillas should bubble when they enter the fat). Using a slotted spoon, transfer chips to a bed of paper towels and sprinkle immediately with cinnamon and sugar. Repeat with remaining tortillas wedges as desired.

HOMEMADE TORTILLAS

A tortilla maker is used for this recipe, but you may just roll dough as thinly as possible into a disk and bake on a flat pan over the stove for 1-3 minutes per side. You may also have a simple tortilla press to flatten dough, then bake in a pan on the stove.

Makes 10-12 tortillas

Ingredients:

1/3 cup masa harina
1 2/3 cup all purpose or sprouted all purpose flour
2 tablespoons
3 tablespoons lard
¾ tablespoon salt
¾ cup very warm water

Place all ingredients except water in a food processor and pulse until a coarse crumb forms. Slowly add water while pulsing until a ball of dough forms. Transfer dough to a floured surface and roll into a 3-inch round log.

Heat tortilla press. Slice 1-inch disks from roll of dough. Use hands to press and flatten disk and cook with tortilla press according to manufacturer's instructions (*or on a skillet- see note above*). Serve tortillas immediately, or store in an airtight container for a few days.