



Calabacitas Tacos with Salsa Verde

Equipment List

- Sauté pan, sauce pan
- Cutting board and knife
- Mixing bowls
- Blender

Recipe Ingredients

Calabacitas

- 2 medium zucchini, diced
- 2 ears of corn, kernels shucked
- ½ onion, finely diced
- 2 garlic cloves, roughly chopped
- ½ cup olive oil
- Queso fresco
- Corn tortillas, warmed on grill
- Salt/pepper to taste
- Chorizo (pre-cooked)

Instructions

1. Dice zucchini, onion, and garlic.
2. Shuck the corn and remove the kernels.
3. In a small sauce pan, combine cleaned tomatillos, serrano peppers, and half an onion. Fill with water and simmer until the tomatillos and peppers are tender. Strain the ingredients into a blender.
4. Add garlic, cilantro, salt and pepper to the blender with the other ingredients.
5. Blend at high speed until a smooth puree is achieved. Optionally, you can add about ¼ cup of the cooking liquid to make a lighter/thinner salsa. Adjust seasoning by adding salt or pepper as needed and transfer to a bowl.
6. In large, hot skillet, add olive oil. Once oil is warm, add diced zucchini and cook until golden. Add the onions, garlic and corn and continue to cook until all the ingredients are tender.
7. Add the pre-cooked chorizo to the pan to heat through.
8. Crumble queso fresco over the top of the mixture and set it aside.
9. Warm the tortillas by heating pan to medium high heat. Add corn tortillas and flip once.
10. Place the heated tortillas on a plate. Top with calabacitas/chorizo mixture. Add a generous amount of salsa verde and queso fresco. Enjoy!

Meet Your Corn Farmer

Ramona Farms is operated by Terry and Ramona Button on the Gila River Indian Reservation near Sacaton, Arizona. The farm has been passed down through generations, mainly growing corn, beans, wheat, cotton, and other traditional heirloom, and non-traditional food products. Terry and Ramona are deeply connected with their community and even worked to prevent the extinction of Tepary beans, and sell their products at local markets.



by: **Chef Chris Mendoza**

Yield : 8-12 tacos



Allergy Indicators:



Dairy

Christopher Mendoza is a native of Phoenix, Arizona. While navigating the challenges of teen parenthood during high school, Chris used his love for his children as a catalyst for personal growth. Following graduation from Le Cordon Bleu, Christopher studied under the direction of renowned chefs Christopher Gross and Chris Curtiss. Christopher has worked with Chef Charleen Badman on gardening projects and culinary education at his daughter's school. His journey reflects resilience, dedication, and a commitment to excellence in the culinary arts.

Salsa Verde

- 1 pound tomatillos
- 2 serrano peppers
- 1 bunch cilantro
- 2 garlic cloves
- ½ onion



Share your experience on Facebook and Instagram @BlueWatermelonProject and don't forget to tag us!
#chefinthegardenaz



Planting Corn Seed

Planting Instructions

1. Corn must be planted in a large block, not long single rows, to ensure good pollination and ear development.
2. Rows should be spaced 24-30 inches apart and seeds planted 1-2 inches deep and 9-12 inches apart in the row. Using a pencil, mark the eraser-end of a pencil 1-2 inches to help guide seed planting depth.
3. Corn requires regular watering throughout the growth cycle for best production. Do not allow the soil to dry down significantly at any time in the season.

Lesson

The **corn** we know today could never survive in the wild; it relies on humans to plant it. That's because the kernels (seeds) adhere firmly to the cob, rather than loosening and scattering on their own. It takes some strong hands – or a machine – to loosen the kernels! However, it wasn't always that way.

Like so many of our other favorite fruits and vegetables, the sweet corn we enjoy at picnics is very different from its wild ancestor. The domestication of corn began in Mexico and Central America thousands of years ago, from a wild grain called teosinte. Wild teosinte had small ears with just five to 10 small, widely spaced kernels. When Aztec and Mayan Indians began growing the crop and selecting which teosinte kernels to plant, they likely saved seeds from plants that grew better, had larger cobs, and had kernels that were tastier or easier to grind into meal.

Most grains have seed heads that shatter, scattering the seeds around the mother plant, effectively planting seeds for the next generation. Corn seed heads (cobs), on the other hand, hold on tightly to their kernels. Did the farmers also select for that trait? We don't know. But we do know that when you sow corn seeds, you're doing what this plant can't do on its own!

The corn plant is tall with a stout stem with a tassel at the top. Large, narrow leaves grow out from the stem. Spikes grow from under the bases of the leaves. These spikes are a form of flower. They develop into ears, which contain the seeds that people eat. Leaves called shucks or husks surround each ear.

There are many varieties of corn plants. The Indians of the Americas grew corn with yellow, red, blue, pink, or black kernels. Today most corn has yellow kernels. Corn kernels may be soft, hard, starchy, or sweet. The hardest kernels are called popcorn. They explode when heated.

People often eat sweet corn boiled or roasted corn on the cob. Corn kernels are also used to make masa, corn bread and other dishes. Farmers feed other kinds of corn to their farm animals. The parts of the plant that are not eaten may be made into paper, fuel, and other products.

This lesson is made possible due to the generous support from:

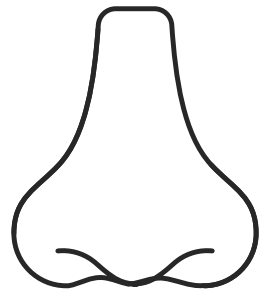
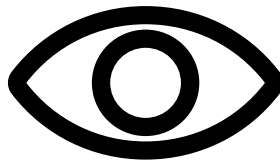
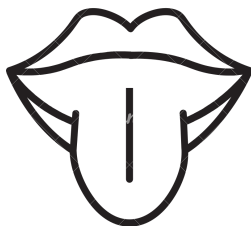




Student Feedback Sheet

Corn

Can you describe it using the five senses?



This lesson is made possible due to the generous support from:



Student Feedback Sheet

Corn

What feedback would you like to share with your Blue Watermelon Project team that prepared this lesson for you today?

What rating would you give this lesson?



Older Students:

Please complete the Student Feedback Form!
Scan the QR Code.



This lesson is made possible due to the generous support from:

