



Chocolate Tacos

NIBBLEDISH CONTRIBUTOR

Ingredients

- 500g ground beef (or pork, or chicken if you prefer)
- 1 red onion, diced
- 1 red pepper, diced
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons paprika
- 1 tablespoon cumin seeds
- 1 tablespoon chili powder (or more, if you want it spicy)
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 8 cherry tomatoes, quartered
- splash of balsamic vinegar
- a few chunks of good quality dark chocolate

Instructions

Not a dessert! This is a really basic recipe that gives a decent base for tacos. The chocolate was experimental but worked well. It is added at the end of the cooking process - like you might do with a knob of butter - to give the sauce a nice richness and to ever so slightly sweeten the meat; just enough to create a little bit of interest on the tongue. I think it tasted great.

One thing that I tried to do in this recipe is make sure that even though the recipe is simple, you try to get the most flavour out of what you have. This means pre-browning the meat separately to caramelize it nicely (chucking it in with the veg to cook all together will just boil the meat) and toasting the cumin seeds beforehand.

Makes enough for about 10 6-inch tortillas for your tacos.

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1. On a high heat, toast the cumin seeds in a dry pan until fragrant. Pound to a powder in a pestle and mortar, combine with the paprika and chilli powder and set aside.
 2. Add olive oil to the pan (use the same pan, it will still be lovely and fragrant!) and brown the meat. Season with salt and pepper. You want to get some colour on the meat, some dark bits here and there - no colour, no flavour! (as my hero would say). Add a splash of balsamic to wake the meat up a bit - the acid will also help tenderise the meat slightly. **Toss and empty into a bowl. Set aside.** The reason we cook the meat and veg separately is because the veg will release water when cooking, which will result in you simply boiling the meat and the flavours won't be as developed. Also, simply having too much in the pan at one time makes it hard to get the pan as hot as you need it.
 3. Add a little more olive oil to the pan and heat. Sautee the onion and pepper together with the garlic. Again, get some colour on the veg. Season. Add the cooked meat and toss together. Add the dry powder mixture and the tomato paste. Mix well.
 4. Pour on enough boiling water to almost cover the meat and veg and let simmer. When half reduced, add the cherry tomatoes and stir. Allow to reduce further until you have a lovely thick sauce.
 5. Add the chocolate. Allow it to melt and mix well. Taste and season if necessary.

Serve with lettuce. I used a lovely bright green butterhead.
