Carne Asada with Chipotle Mango Salsa

NIBBLEDISH CONTRIBUTOR

Ingredients

For the Carne:

2 lbs flank steak (skirt works as well)
3 garlic cloves, minced of pushed through a press
1 lime, juiced
2 tbsp olive oil
1 ½ tbsp adobo sauce from can
1 tsp salt
6 flour tortillas
1 cup shredded jack cheese (optional)
2 limes, sliced
1 or 2 avocados, sliced

For the Salsa:

1 medium mango, diced
1 garlic clove, minced or pushed through a press
½ small red onion, finely diced
1 lime, juiced
1 small canned chipotle pepper, minced*
1 tbsp of adobo sauce (juice from can)*
½ tsp salt
fresh cilantro, roughly chopped (optional)

*From one 7oz (or smaller) can of Chipotle Peppers in Adobo Sauce

Instructions

Carne Asada
Makes 6 servings

Carne asada is a North Mexican (Baja) dish involving any thin cut of meat (usually flank or skirt steak) that is marinated, grilled, and then served in tacos or burritos. It's a pretty general term, and so too are the guidelines for the marinade (usually involving chili) and subsequent accouterments (likely including avocado). Ingredient analogies aside, I like to think of it as the Mexican street stand equivalent of a deli turkey sandwich. You can stick with my guidelines below, but the condiments are really up to you.

This recipe can easily be made for more people by buying a larger cut of meat and increasing the number of tortillas.

The night before: whisk together garlic, lime juice, olive oil, adobo, and salt in a small bowl. Place the steak in a large ziplock bag and cover in marinade, swooshing the liquids around in bag to make sure the meat is fully covered. Marinade overnight.

The night you'll be eating, heat a grill pan over a high flame (alternatively, you can use a large skillet and pan sear). Remove the steak from the marinade and pat dry with a few sheets of paper towel. Lay steak across pan. Grill on one side for 3-5 minutes, until it has nice, black markings. Flip steak and repeat. Rotate the meat 90 degrees and cook for an additional minute or so to gain the cross-hatch grill mark effect. Repeat on the other side. Remove steak to plate, cover with foil, and allow to rest for ten minutes before slicing.

Meanwhile, wrap the tortillas in foil and place in a 350°F oven for 5-10 minutes (until warmed through).

To serve, slice steak in thin strips against the grain*. Place limes, cheese, avocado slices, and mango salsa (recipe precedes) in separate serving bowls and arrange buffet style with the tortillas and sliced meat on the carving block.

* cuts of meat like flank steak or brisket have a natural way the fibers of the muscle run. (E.G. When brisket is cooked down over time, you may notice that it begins to break apart and become stringy—it is falling apart along the grain.) To create nice slices of meat that hold together well, you need to slice it in the opposite direction of the muscle. It will feel tougher and less natural to make these incisions than if you were going with the muscle, but that’s how you know you are doing it right.

Chipotle Mango Salsa
Makes 6 servings (as an entree condiment)

Combine all ingredients in a medium mixing bowl and toss to combine. For best results, make the salsa the night before to allow the flavors to intensify.