

Black Bean, Avocado and Queso Fresco Torta – Bruschetta Style

Tortas are a Mexican sandwich which is served on crusty bread similar to French bread. There are many varieties of tortas which could be compared to a sub sandwich or if grilled and pressed a Panini. This recipe I usually serve as a sandwich, but one night I was out of French bread, but I did have some toasted round pieces of French bread (Bruschetta) so, I served them as an open faced-bruschetta style. My husband liked these tasty treats better than the sandwich style, so hence a new twist on what would otherwise be a very traditional torta. Try it both ways.

There are four different components to this dish. While it might seem like a long recipe it is really very easy.

1. The bread or bruschetta which is the foundation of the dish.
2. The Black Bean Spread
3. The Cheese – Queso Fresco
4. Ripe avocado preferable Hass

Ingredients

Amount

Bread – French, Italian or Cuban style bread

1 loaf

Olive Oil

as needed

Black Bean Spread –

Black beans

1 can

Fire roasted tomatoes or just diced tomatoes

1 can

Green chilies

1 small can

white onion diced small

½ of an onion

(white onions are common in Mexican Cooking but you can also use red or yellow onions)

Cooking oil

enough to coat the bottom of a sauce pan

Fresh garlic

1 tbsp

Dry ground cumin

1 tbsp

Chipotle Chili Powder

½ tsp

Salt and pepper

To taste

Cheese –

Queso fresco – grated or sliced

1/2 pound

Avocado

Ripe avocados

Two

Lime/Lemon Juice

one lime/lemon or 2Tbsp bottle lemon juice

(This is used to prevent the avocados from turning brown quickly. If you are going to serve these quickly –which you should you don't need this. If you are going to cut the avocados and let them sit for over an hour before you use them in the recipe you should just coat the avocados with a little of one of the above listed acidic ingredients.

Method –

Bread –

1. Heat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Cut bread into circles ¼" – ½ inch thick. YOU WILL NOT NEED THE WHOLE LOAF. I FIGURE 4 PIECES PER PERSON BUT I ALWAYS CUT A FEW EXTRA JUST IN CASE. **So, cut 20 circles.**
3. Lay bread on a baking pan.
4. Brush with Olive oil
5. Bake in oven 15 minutes or until the bread is toasted on top and golden brown. (This helps the bread to not become mushy and browning increases flavor)
6. Set aside – but leave the oven on.



Healthy Chef Recipes

Recipe by Chef Gail Crawford



Black Bean Spread

1. Open all the cans of ingredients – black beans – green chili's – tomatoes.
2. Drain the juice off the GREEN CHILIS AND TOMATOES
3. Heat a medium size sauce pan over high heat. Add any type oil to coat the bottom of the pan.
4. Let oil heat up till really hot
5. add onions – sauté 2 minutes – stir
6. add garlic – sauté one minute – stir
7. add beans, green chilies and tomatoes, cumin, chili powder
8. When ingredients are all hot and boiling turn the heat down to low.
9. Continue to cook and stir until the juices reduce and you have a fairly thick paste – not glue.
10. Set aside

Cheese –

1. While beans and breads are cooking slice or grate the cheese.
2. Set aside

Avocados –

1. Cut the avocado in half from top to bottom.
2. Remove the seed.
3. Use a large spoon like a soup spoon and gently run the spoon around the inside of the avocado to release the fruit from the skin.
4. Dice the fruit into ¼ squares
5. If you are going to let the fruit sit over an hour, coat with just a little juice from a lemon or a lime.
6. Set aside

Assemble and Serve

1. **Top each piece of bread (bruschetta) with generous amount of the black bean spread.**
2. **Put bread on a baking tray – no need to grease.....**
3. **Top each piece of bread with a piece of cheese – however much you like**
4. **Put in preheated 350 degree oven.**
5. **Cook for 15 minutes or until cheese is melted.**
6. **Remove from oven**
7. **Top with diced avocados and serve**

