

A Taste of Mexico – Part II

Written by Debbi Covington

Tuesday, 11 July 2017 12:33 - Last Updated Wednesday, 12 July 2017 06:30



Summer is a great time to entertain. The days are longer. The weather is warmer. Okay, who am I kidding? This is Beaufort. The weather is straight up hot. Anyway, the summer is still a good time to have friends over for cool cocktails and spicy Tex-Mex fare. This week's menu features easy, make-ahead recipes that are great for serving buffet-style. Thank you, **John Wollwerth**, for the beautiful food photography. If you missed the last edition of *Lowcountry Weekly*, you can read A Taste of Mexico - Part I [here](#).

Cream of Cilantro Soup

Cilantro is a fresh herb with a lively, pungent flavor. It can be found year-round in most supermarkets and is generally sold in bunches. Cilantro may be stored for up to a week in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. Both the leaves and tender stems can be used in fresh or cooked dishes.

1 bunch fresh cilantro

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4 cups chicken broth, divided

2 tablespoons butter

2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened

1 cup container sour cream

1 garlic clove, minced

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon ground red pepper

1/4 teaspoon ground cumin

Fresh cilantro sprigs, to garnish

Sour cream, to garnish

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Remove the long stems from cilantro and coarsely chop leaves. Process cilantro and 1 cup chicken broth in a food processor until blended, stopping to scrape down sides. Melt butter in a Dutch oven over medium heat; whisk in flour. Gradually add remaining 3 cups broth, whisking constantly until mixture is smooth. Increase heat and boil 1 minute. Stir in cilantro mixture, cream cheese, sour cream, garlic, salt, ground red pepper and cumin; simmer soup for 10 minutes. Garnish with fresh cilantro and sour cream. Serves 4 to 6.

Beef and Bean Tortilla Stacks



Flour tortillas are layered with with salsa-seasoned ground beef, cottage cheese and refried beans, then topped with enchilada sauce. This simple Mexican-style recipe will turn an ordinary meal into a fiesta!

2 pounds ground round

2 (1.25-ounce) packages taco seasoning

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1 1/2 cups fresh salsa

2 cups cottage cheese

1 egg, lightly beaten

6 (10-inch) burrito-style flour tortillas

1 (16-ounce) can refried beans, divided

2 cups shredded cheddar cheese, divided

1 (10-ounce) can enchilada sauce

1/2 cup chopped green onion

Sliced black olives

Brown ground round in a large non-stick skillet over medium-high heat. Remove from skillet; drain well. Place cooked beef in a large bowl. Add taco seasoning and fresh salsa; stir to combine. In a small mixing bowl, mix cottage cheese with beaten egg. Spray a 10-inch springform pan with cooking spray; place on a baking sheet. Place 1 flour tortilla in bottom on pan. Spread half of refried beans evenly over the tortilla; top with a second tortilla. Spoon half of beef mixture evenly over tortilla; sprinkle with 1 cup cheese. Place a third tortilla on top; spread evenly with cottage cheese-egg mixture. Top with fourth tortilla; spread evenly with remaining beef mixture and sprinkle with 1 cup cheese. Top with fifth tortilla; spread evenly with remaining

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refried beans. Place remaining tortilla on top. Pour enchilada sauce evenly over the top. Bake, uncovered, in a preheated 350 degree oven for 75-85 minutes or until cooked through. Remove from oven; let stand for 10 minutes. Remove ring from pan. Garnish with green onion and black olives. Serves 8.

Pico de Gallo

Literally meaning "rooster's beak," this is a spicy raw salsa that's usually served as a condiment. It's also really good served atop a bunch of mixed salad greens.

6 plum tomatoes, chopped

1/2 cup finely chopped sweet onion

1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro

2 tablespoons fresh lime

1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and minced

1 garlic clove, minced

Stir together all ingredients. Cover and chill until ready to serve. Makes 3 cups.

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