

Published August 30th, 2023

Smoky, savory street tacos a perfect pre-prep dish for a relaxing Labor Day

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Street Tacos Photos Susie Iventosch

My son was visiting his brother and discovered a wonderful cookbook, "Rachel's Good Eats," on the kitchen shelf. He saw so many great recipes and wanted to try them at home. So, we quickly got around to making the Mexican Street Tacos and were so taken with this recipe, that we have made it four times in the same number of weeks! The chicken thighs are first browned with this amazing rub made of cumin, chili powder, oregano, garlic powder, salt and pepper. Then, instead of finishing them on the stove as the recipe indicates, we slow cook them in a Dutch oven for about 2 1/2 hours until they are fall-off-the-bone tender. The kitchen smells so delicious as these are cooking in the oven. Then we make the tacos with the shredded chicken and all of the fixings - shredded cabbage, diced tomatoes, cheese, cilantro, sliced radishes, jalapenos, lime wedges and guacamole. Lots of guacamole! I just used this same chicken along with shredded breast meat in my

enchiladas and am really excited about that too.

Instead of the regular chili powder called for in the recipe, which is usually a blend of chili powder and other spices, I substitute New Mexico chili powder, because it has mild heat, but such a beautifully robust and slightly smoky chili flavor. Not surprisingly, New Mexico chili powder derives from the New Mexican Chile, which was first grown by the Pueblo and other Hispanic groups throughout the state of New Mexico. The New Mexico chili grows from a green pepper to a ripened red, and while the flavor is retained, the heat mellows in the drying process. There are many different strains of the New Mexico chili, but allegedly the most prized peppers are grown in the Hatch Valley area along the Rio Grande.

Rachael's Good Eats <https://rachaelsgoodeats.com/>

Street Taco Chicken Thighs

(Serves 6)

INGREDIENTS

10-12 boneless, skinless chicken thighs

1 recipe taco rub (recipe below)

1/4 cup olive oil

1 large yellow onion coarsely chopped

1 cup chicken broth

2 tbsp. fresh squeezed lime juice

12 tortillas

1 cup grated mixed Mexican cheese, or crumbled feta, or Cotija cheese

Garnishes: guacamole, shredded cabbage, diced jalapenos, cilantro leaves, diced tomatoes, sliced radishes, shredded cheese, feta cheese, lime wedge and salsa

Taco Meat Rub

2 tsp. ground cumin

2 tsp. New Mexico chili powder

2 tsp. Himalayan pink salt

1 tsp. garlic powder

1 tsp. dried oregano

1 tsp. ground black pepper

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 250 F. Get a Dutch oven or cast-iron pot with a tight-fitting lid ready. You will cook the chicken in this pot.

Rub chicken thighs, top and bottom, with half of the taco meat rub. Heat oil, a little bit at a time, and sauté onions until translucent. Sprinkle 1-2 tsp. of the rub over onions and continue to cook for another two minutes. Remove onions from pan and place in the Dutch oven. Set aside.

Heat more oil in the pan, and working in batches, brown the chicken thighs on both sides until very aromatic and golden brown. Remove thighs and place on top of the onions in the Dutch oven. Add about 1 cup of water to the frying pan to deglaze, scraping up any bits of chicken, onions, and spices. Pour the deglazed pan scrapings, along with the chicken broth and lime juice over the top, cover and bake for 2 1.2 hours, or until very tender. Remove from oven and cool enough to handle.

Using two forks, shred the chicken and put the shredded chicken back into the broth that is still in the Dutch oven. Cover and refrigerate until ready to heat and serve.

This step can be done several days ahead of time, and in fact, the chicken is even better if it has a couple of days to sit back in the juices.

When ready to serve, reheat chicken in the Dutch oven at about 300 F for 30 minutes or so. Heat

tortillas in the oven, on a cast iron pan or over the grill. Serve with shredded chicken thighs, grated cheese and top with all of the garnishes you love to have with your tacos!



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