Spiced Queso & Pickled Red Onion Tacos

with Green Beans, Avocado & Toasted Pepitas

Popular in Latin American cuisines, queso para freír is a firm white cheese that can hold its shape even when fried or seared. In this recipe, we're coating it in a delicious blend of Mexican spices, then searing it to make a satisfying base for our tacos. To complement the spices on the gueso, we're topping it with buttery avocado and crisp summer green beans dressed with cool, tangy crema. For a classic garnish, we're also quickly pickling red onion and pan-toasting pepitas (or pumpkin seeds), adding even more exciting flavor and texture.



Le Pont Vers Le Bar Chinon, 2015





Ingredients

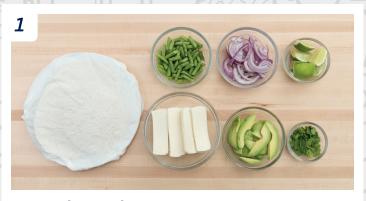
- 8 Corn Tortillas
- 1 Pound Queso Para Freír
- 4 Ounces Green Beans
- 2 Limes
- 1 Avocado
- 1 Red Onion
- 1 Large Bunch Cilantro

Knick Knacks

- 1 Tablespoon Sugar
- 1/4 Cup Mexican Crema
- 1/4 Cup Pepitas
- 1 Tablespoon Mexican Spice Blend

(Ancho Chile Powder, Smoked Paprika, Garlic Powder, Ground Cumin & Dried Mexican Oregano)

Makes: 4 servings | Calories: about 790 per serving Prep Time: 15 minutes | Cook Time: 25–35 minutes



Prepare the ingredients:

Wash and dry the fresh produce. Heat a medium pot of salted water to boiling on high. Stack the tortillas on a plate; cover with a damp paper towel. Snap off and discard the stem ends of the green beans; cut the green beans into 1-inch pieces on an angle. Peel, halve and thinly slice the onion. Quarter the limes. Slice the cheese crosswise into 16 equal-sized planks. Pick the cilantro leaves off the stems; discard the stems. Pit, peel and thinly slice the avocado; top with **the juice of 2 lime wedges** to prevent browning.



Blanch & dress the green beans:

Add the **green beans** to the pot of boiling water. Cook 3 to 4 minutes, or until bright green and slightly softened. Drain thoroughly and rinse under cold water for 30 seconds to 1 minute to stop the cooking process. Transfer to a medium bowl and add the **crema**; toss to coat and season with salt and pepper to taste. Rinse and wipe out the pot.



Pickle the onion:

In the pot used to blanch the green beans, combine the **onion**, **sugar**, **a big pinch of salt**, **the juice of 2 lime wedges** and ¼ **cup of water**; heat to boiling on high. Once boiling, cook, stirring occasionally, 1 to 2 minutes, or until the onion has softened and the liquid is slightly reduced in volume. Remove from heat and set aside to pickle, stirring occasionally, for at least 10 minutes.



Toast the pepitas:

While the onion pickles, in a large pan (nonstick, if you have one), heat 1 teaspoon of olive oil on medium-high until hot. Add the **pepitas**; season with salt and pepper. Toast, stirring frequently, 2 to 3 minutes, or until golden brown. (Be careful, as the pepitas may pop as they toast.) Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate and immediately season with salt and pepper. Wipe out the pan.



Season & cook the cheese:

While the onion continues to pickle, pat the **cheese** dry with paper towels; season with salt, pepper and the **spice blend** on both sides. In the pan used to toast the pepitas, heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil on medium-high until hot. Working in batches, add the seasoned cheese and cook 2 to 4 minutes per side, or until golden brown and crispy. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate and immediately season with salt and pepper. Rinse and wipe out the pan.



Warm the tortillas & serve your dish:

Heat the same, dry pan on medium until hot. Working in batches, add the **tortillas** and warm 30 seconds to 1 minute per side, or until soft and pliable. Transfer to a serving dish. Divide the **cooked cheese**, **dressed green beans**, **pickled onion** (draining before adding), **avocado**, **toasted pepitas** and **cilantro** between the warmed tortillas. Serve with the **remaining lime wedges** on the side. Enjoy!