

Birria-Style Smash Tacos

Ingredients

2 lbs. ground beef, 75% lean, divided into 12 portions
2 tsp. coarse kosher salt
2 tsp. guajillo chili powder (or dark chili powder), divided
1 tsp. granulated garlic
1 tsp. granulated onion
1/2 tsp. cracked black pepper
1 tsp. bouillon concentrate (or 1 bouillon cube)
1 packet (5 grams) Sazon seasoning mix
2 tsp. hot sauce
12 corn tortillas
8 oz. shredded quesadilla cheese (or Monterrey Jack)
1 small white onion, diced
2/3 c. chopped cilantro

Directions

Step 1: Prep seasoning and sauce. Combine salt, 1 teaspoon chili powder, granulated garlic, granulated onion, and black pepper to make taco seasoning; set aside. For sauce, bring 1 cup water to simmer; add 1 teaspoon taco seasoning, 1 teaspoon chili powder, bouillon, Sazon seasoning, and hot sauce. Stir sauce to dissolve ingredients; pour into squeeze bottle or glass measuring cup.

Step 2: Smash. Roll each portion of ground beef (about 3 ounces each) into a ball; preheat griddle to medium-high. Place balls of ground beef on griddle, leaving plenty of room between each. (Note: sear in batches based on surface space.) Use a large spatula to smash each ball of ground beef extremely thin to a diameter slightly larger than a tortilla. Add some remaining seasoning on each patty, squirt each with about 1 tablespoon sauce. Top each with a tortilla.

Step 3: Create taco. Once beef develops a deep brown crust, flip tortilla side down, making sure to fully scrape up beef and keep crust intact. Evenly top each beef patty with cheese. Once cheese melts and tortillas begin to crisp, top each patty with about 1 tablespoon onion and cilantro. Use spatula edge to press a crease down middle of each patty, fold tortilla over to form taco. Remove from heat; serve with remaining taco sauce.

Cheesy Baked Spaghetti with Ground Beef

Ingredients

16 oz. ground beef
1 yellow onion
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 T. Italian seasoning
24 oz. jar spaghetti sauce
16 oz. spaghetti noodles
16 oz. whole milk cottage cheese or whole milk ricotta
3 c. shredded whole milk mozzarella
1 1/2 c. shredded Parmesan cheese
1/4 c. heavy cream
Kosher salt
fresh cracked pepper

Directions

Step 1: Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Cook pasta 2 minutes less than the package directions recommend. Toss with olive oil and season with salt and pepper.

Step 2: While the pasta is cooking, brown ground beef in a large sauté pan over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to medium and add onion, garlic, and Italian seasoning along with a couple pinches of salt and pepper. Cook, stirring frequently for about 4 minutes or until the onions become translucent. Add pasta sauce and stir to combine. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Step 3: In a large bowl, combine spaghetti noodles, cottage cheese/ricotta cheese, half the mozzarella, half the Parmesan, heavy cream, and a couple large pinches of salt and pepper. Use tongs to toss the ingredients together.

Step 4: Lightly grease a 9x13-inch baking dish and transfer the spaghetti mixture to the pan. Spread spaghetti in an even layer. Top pasta with meat sauce. Then add the remaining mozzarella and Parmesan cheese.

Step 5: Tightly cover the pan with foil and bake for 40 to 50 minutes or until the pasta is warmed through, the cheese is melted, and the edges of the pasta are bubbling. Broil for 1 to 2 minutes if desired to brown the cheese.

Let rest for 5 to 10 minutes, then cut into slices. Garnish with Parmesan and fresh chopped parsley and enjoy!

Chicken Fried Steak with Cream Gravy Recipe

Ingredients

1 ½ lbs. top-round steak
1 ½ c. all-purpose flour
1 tsp. kosher salt
1 tsp. black pepper freshly ground
1 tsp. paprika not smoked
¼ tsp. cayenne pepper
3 each eggs beaten
½ c. whole milk
vegetable oil for frying
cream gravy
2 T. vegetable oil
2 T. all-purpose flour
2 c. whole milk
black pepper freshly ground to taste
kosher salt to taste

Directions

Step 1: Cut the top-round steak into four even pieces. Use a meat tenderizer to pound the beef with the spiky end. Hit every square inch on both sides multiple times until the meat is quarter-inch thick. Season both sides with kosher salt and black pepper. In a large skillet, heat a half inch of vegetable oil to 300 degrees Fahrenheit.

Step 2: Mix the flour, kosher salt, black pepper, paprika and cayenne pepper together in bowl. Then transfer the mixture to an 8x8-inch or 9x13-inch pan.

Step 3: In a medium bowl, beat the eggs then add the milk. Stir to combine. Pour the mixture into a second 8x8-inch or 9x13-inch pan.

Step 4: Dip a piece of beef in the flour mixture and coat both sides. Then, carefully dip both sides of the beef in the egg mixture and then back into the flour mixture. Coat the remaining pieces of beef.

Step 5: Gently place one or two pieces of beef into the hot oil. Don't overcrowd the pan. Cook for 3 to 4 minutes until golden brown. Use tongs to turn the pieces of beef over and cook the other side for another 3 to 4 minutes until golden brown. Remove the beef and drain on a paper towel. If cooking multiple steaks, keep them warm on a wire rack in a 200-degree Fahrenheit oven.

Gravy

Directions

Step 1: After the beef is all cooked, carefully pour off the hot oil into a heat proof bowl. Retain any brown bits in the skillet. Add 2 tablespoons of the hot oil back into the skillet and heat over medium-low heat. Add the flour to the skillet and whisk continuously for 2 minutes until the mixture turns golden brown.

Step 2: Add the milk and stir to combine. Cook until thickened, about 2 to 3 minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste. **Note:** Cream gravy needs a lot of salt.