



Go to advanced recipe search

Search Food Network Canada

Entire Site



Sign In/Sign Up

Recipes & Menus

Guides & Articles

On TV

Video

Blog

Newsletter

Contests

## Community

Blogs » Ask an Expert » Creative Entertaining: Backyard Mexican Fiesta, with Recipes!



### Creative Entertaining: Backyard Mexican Fiesta, with Recipes!

Posted by : Rana Florida, Fri, Jun 08 2012

Share:

My Community | My Recipes | Blogs | Lifestyle Blog Network

By: Rana Florida



Everyone loves tacos! From food trucks to gourmet eateries, this Mexican street snack is all the rage. So why not turn a traditional backyard bbq into a fun and flavourful authentic Mexican grill?

This evening begins by welcoming guests with cool and tangy margaritas. Chunky guacamole with organic chips for dipping is the perfect appetizer. Then, guests can step up to a make-it-yourself seafood taco bar with fresh salsa and spicy rice. For dessert, indulge in warm cinnamon churros oozing with sugary sweetness or a refreshing mango, kiwi, and pineapple salad with mint and granadilla. For the kids, Mexican adorned vanilla and chocolate mini cupcakes. Heat up your grills for this modern day fiesta! *See the Party Planner on HGTV.ca!*



Browse Blog Posts



Hosts & Interviews



Cooking Club Challenge



News



Ask an Expert



Shopping



Bake Off

View all Blog posts

Advertisement

BAKING RESULTS YOU'LL LOVE TO SHARE EVERY TIME.



**KitchenAid**  
Even-Heat™ Technology

Learn More

Follow Foodnetwork.ca



Find us on Facebook



Food Network Canada

Like



Food Network Canada

Catch up on this full episode of Donut Showdown and watch donut-makers create donuts with a "Harvest" theme!

Watch now:  
<http://foodtv.ca/l4pPm>

Video - Food Network Canada - Harvest  
foodtv.ca

Donut-makers Leigh from Portland, Kamal from Atlanta and Isabelle from



Everyone loves tacos! From food trucks to gourmet eateries, this Mexican street snack is all the rage. So why not turn a traditional backyard bbq into a fun and flavourful authentic Mexican grill?

This evening begins by welcoming guests with cool and tangy margaritas. Chunky guacamole with organic chips for dipping is the perfect appetizer. Then, guests can step up to a make-it-yourself seafood taco bar with fresh salsa and spicy rice. For dessert, indulge in warm cinnamon churros oozing with sugary sweetness or a refreshing mango, kiwi, and pineapple salad with mint and granadilla. For the kids, Mexican adorned vanilla and chocolate mini cupcakes. Heat up your grills for this modern day fiesta! *See the Party Planner on HGTV.ca!*



All recipes by Chef Jason Smidt of Jay Exclusive Caterers

## MENU



### Starter

Guacamole with organic pita chips

### Taco Bar

Fish & shrimp taco bar  
 Fresh corn tacos  
 Chili, lime marinated grouper and shrimp  
 Pickled red and white cabbage  
 Sour cream  
 Cilantro  
 Black beans  
 Pureed tomato salsa

**KitchenAid**  
 Even-Heat® Technology

[Learn More](#)

Follow Foodnetwork.ca



Find us on Facebook



**Food Network Canada**  
 Catch up on this full episode of Donut Showdown and watch donut-makers create donuts with a "Harvest" theme!

Watch now:  
<http://foodtv.ca/14oPm>

**Video - Food Network Canada - Harvest**  
 foodtv.ca

Donut-makers Leigh from Portland, Kamal from Atlanta and Isabelle from

32,889 people like Food Network Canada.



Facebook social plugin

Food Network Canada on Facebook

### Cooking Club Challenge

April's Cooking Club Challenge: Green Chili Cheese Burgers

### Blogs

Anna Olson's Bake Off: Jam-Filled Doughnut Muffins

[Read More](#)

### Recently Added Blog Posts

- Top Chef Canada Episode 7: Guest Judge David Rocco  
Tue, Apr 30 2013
- Top Chef Canada Season 3: Taking the Challenge Home - Episode 7  
Tue, Apr 30 2013
- Top Chef Canada Season 3: Episode 7 Recap  
Tue, Apr 30 2013
- Top Chef Canada: Taking the Challenge Home; Week 6  
Mon, Apr 29 2013

[View all blog posts](#)

### Tags

- Amanda Garbutt (39) Anthony Sedlak (37)
- Ask a Chef (71) Ask a Dietitian (101)
- Ask a Host (53) Ask an Expert (44)
- Baking (40) Behind-the-Scenes (128)
- Books (163) British Columbia (73)
- Chatter Box (66) chuck hughes (74)
- Community (425) Competitors (42)
- Craig Moy (35) David Adjei (38) Events (89)

Add your favorite margarita mix, the juice from a quarter lime, good quality Tequila, and a splash of Triple Sec to the blender, along with a few ice cubes. Mix a bit of your best coarse salt flakes with regular Kosher salt and rim your glass. Whizz your Margarita in the blender until nice and frothy, pour into the glass and add a lime disk garnish. For Virgin version, same recipe but hold the alcohol.

### **Guacamole with organic pita chips**



#### **Ingredients**

- 4 ripe avocados
- ½ vine tomato, seeded and diced
- ½ Jalapeno pepper, finely diced
- ¼ Vidalia onion, finely diced
- 1 zest and juice of a large lime (or more to taste)
- ¼ cup coarsely chopped cilantro leaves
- Salt and pepper

#### **Directions**

Half and pit the avocados, scoop flesh out with a spoon into a medium sized mixing bowl. Add tomato, Jalapeno, onion, lime zest and juice, and cilantro. Roughly break up the avocado with a spoon, combining all ingredients. Season with salt and pepper. Enjoy with your favorite organic pita chips.

### **Fish & shrimp tacos**



#### **Ingredients**

Seafood

## Ingredients

### Seafood

- 1 pound white flaky fish, such as Grouper or mahi mahi
- 1 pound peeled and de-veined jumbo shrimp
- 1/4 cup canola oil
- 1 lime, zested and juiced
- 1 tablespoon Ancho chili powder
- ½ Jalapeno pepper, coarsely chopped
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro leaves
- 8 flour tortillas

### Directions

Place fish and peeled shrimp in a medium size dish. Whisk together the oil, lime juice, Ancho powder, Jalapeno and cilantro, and pour over the fish and shrimp. Marinate for 15 to 20 minutes.

Remove the fish from the marinade, lightly salt both sides. Place on a hot grill, flesh side down. Grill the fish for 4 minutes and the shrimp for 2 minutes on the first side and then flip for 30 seconds and remove. Let the fish rest for 5 minutes then flake off the flesh with a fork. Place the tortillas on the grill and grill for 20 seconds. Divide the fish among the tortillas and garnish with any or all of the garnishes.

## Pureed tomato salsa



## Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons peanut oil
- 1 small red onion, coarsely chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped
- 4 large ripe tomatoes, chopped
- 1 Serrano chili
- 1 Jalapeno pepper, sliced
- 1 tablespoon dried Mexican oregano
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro leaves
- 2 large limes, zested and juiced
- Salt and pepper

### Directions

Preheat grill or use side burners of the grill. Heat oil in medium saucepan, add onions and garlic and cook until soft. Add tomatoes, Serrano and Jalapeno and cook until tomatoes are soft, about 15 to 20 minutes. Puree the mixture with a hand-held immersion blender until smooth and cook for an additional 10 to 15 minutes. Add the oregano, cilantro, lime zest and juice and season with salt and pepper to taste.

## Shredded red & white cabbage

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons peanut oil
- 1 small red onion, coarsely chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped
- 4 large ripe tomatoes, chopped
- 1 Serrano chili
- 1 Jalapeno pepper, sliced
- 1 tablespoon dried Mexican oregano
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro leaves
- 2 large limes, zested and juiced
- Salt and pepper

#### Directions

Preheat grill or use side burners of the grill. Heat oil in medium saucepan, add onions and garlic and cook until soft. Add tomatoes, Serrano and Jalapeno and cook until tomatoes are soft, about 15 to 20 minutes. Puree the mixture with a hand-held immersion blender until smooth and cook for an additional 10 to 15 minutes. Add the oregano, cilantro, lime zest and juice and season with salt and pepper to taste.

### **Shredded red & white cabbage**

#### Ingredients

- 1/4 red cabbage thinly sliced
  - 1/4 white cabbage thinly sliced
- Note: Keep cabbages separate or the color of the red cabbage will run (or prepare just one color cabbage)
- 1/2 cup white vinegar
  - 2 tablespoons sugar
  - Pinch red pepper flakes
  - 1 teaspoon kosher salt
  - 1 large dried bay leaf

#### Directions

Combine vinegar, sugar, red pepper flakes, bay leaf and salt in a small saucepan. Heat over a medium flame until sugar dissolves. Remove from heat and pour over your thinly sliced cabbage. Toss and let rest. When mixture is at room temperature toss one more time, put in an airtight container, and refrigerate until ready to use.

### **Other garnishes**

Tin of black beans lightly rinsed

Hot sauce

Sour cream

Diced tomatoes

Thinly sliced green onion

Chopped cilantro leaves

### **Dirty Mexican rice with assorted vegetables and black beans**





#### Ingredients

- 1 cup cooked long grain brown rice
- 1 large carrot finely diced
- 4 celery stalks finely diced
- 1 cup peas
- 2 corn on the cob, grilled and shucked
- 1 large red onion, finely diced
- 2 large garlic cloves, coarsely chopped
- 1 cup lightly rinsed tin of black beans
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1 bay leaf
- 4 tablespoons Mexican chili powder
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon butter
- Salt and pepper

#### Directions

Place a large saucepan on high heat, add the olive oil and butter, add all vegetables except black beans, bay leaf and cinnamon stick, and pan fry on high 3-5 minutes. Turn heat down to med-high, add bay leaf, cinnamon stick and chili powder and fry for an additional 5-8 minutes. Add rice to pan and mix in with vegetables. Add black beans and salt and pepper to taste.

#### Sautéed peppers & Onions

##### Ingredients

- 1 large red onion sliced
- 1 large Vidalia onion sliced
- 1 red, 1 yellow, 1 green bell pepper, halved, seeded, and sliced
- 1 large garlic clove, coarsely chopped
- 2 tablespoons Mexican chili powder
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

##### Directions

Place a pan on high heat, add olive oil before pan smokes, add onions and peppers and begin to pan fry, tossing onions frequently. Once vegetables start to change color add the garlic and chili powder and toss for two more minutes. Season with salt and pepper and serve.

#### Churros sprinkled with cinnamon sugar



#### Ingredients

- 1 cup water
- 2 1/2 tablespoons white sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 quarts oil for frying
- 1/2 cup white sugar, or to taste
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

#### Directions

In a small saucepan over medium heat, combine water, 2 1/2 tablespoons sugar, salt, and 2 tablespoons vegetable oil. Bring to a boil and remove from heat. Stir in flour until mixture forms a ball.

Heat oil for frying in deep-fryer or deep skillet to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C). Using a pastry bag, pipe strips of dough into hot oil. Fry until golden; drain on paper towels.

Combine 1/2 cup sugar and cinnamon and roll drained churros in mixture. Serve.

### **Mango, kiwi and pineapple salad with mint & granadilla**

#### Ingredients

- 1/2 pineapple, peeled, cored, and cut into chunks
- 4 kiwi fruits, peeled and cut into quarters
- 2 mangoes peeled, flesh cut into chunks
- 1/2 cup mint leaves
- 4 granadilla halved with fruit scooped out
- Raspberries if desired

#### Directions

Place fruit in a bowl and mix together with mint.

### **Cupcakes by Eat My Words**

Vanilla and chocolate mini cupcakes adorned with Mexican themed decorations, such as sombreros, chili peppers, and cactus.



*Rana Florida is the writer and editor of the HGTV series [Creative Spaces](#). Rana is a lifestyle columnist and has over two decades of experience in corporate strategy, marketing and branding for Fortune 100 companies. She is the CEO of the [Creative Class Group](#), whose client list includes BMW, Microsoft, IBM, Zappos, Starwood, Philips, Nomura Financial Securities, Emaar Properties and Johnson & Johnson. Follow Rana on Twitter [@ranaflorida](#).*

#### **Related:**

- [Mexican Fiesta Party Planner on HGTV.ca](#)
- [More Menus for Summer Entertaining](#)