

Fish Tacos

From Simple to *Exciting!*



TIP: This recipe shows how to take fish tacos from simple to exciting by using your choice or a combination of the added optional ingredients you see below, any of which you can substitute with other ingredients to suit your taste. As always, your imagination is your only limit!

Preparation Time: 5-10 minutes, depending on the number and type of “simple to exciting” ingredients

Cooking Time: 5-10 minutes, depending on type of fish

Ingredients (for 1-2)

1/2 Pound of Fish Fillet

Garlic Powder

Ground Cumin

Salt

Olive or Vegetable Oil

1 Lime (or Lemon)

1 Large Tortilla (I'm using a multigrain tortilla, but any tortilla will work)

Grated Cheese (I'm using a Mexican cheese mix, but any cheddar type cheese will work)

Optional "Simple to Exciting!" Ingredients

(use your choice or a combination of these- or substitute with any other ingredient(s) to suit your taste)

Handful Fresh Cilantro (adds a lemony herb flavor that compliments cumin)

1/2 Ripe Avocado (adds both creamy flavor and texture)

Balsamic (or your favorite) **Vinegar** (adds sweet & sour flavor)

Sour Cream (I'm using fat free sour cream, but any sour cream or plain yogurt will work)

Hot Sauce

Slice of Papaya

1/2 Red (or any) Onion

6 Baby Bell Peppers (can be substituted with any bell pepper)

2 Garlic Cloves



Equipment

10-12 Inch Frying Pan

Spatula

Plastic Bag

Large Sharp (Chef's) Knife

Small Sharp (Paring) Knife

Tablespoon

Cutting Board

Microwave Safe Dinner Plate (shown in the picture above)

Microwave Oven



1. Cut a **lime** (or **lemon**) in half. Then rinse and shake dry a **handful of fresh cilantro** and **baby** (or any) **bell peppers**.

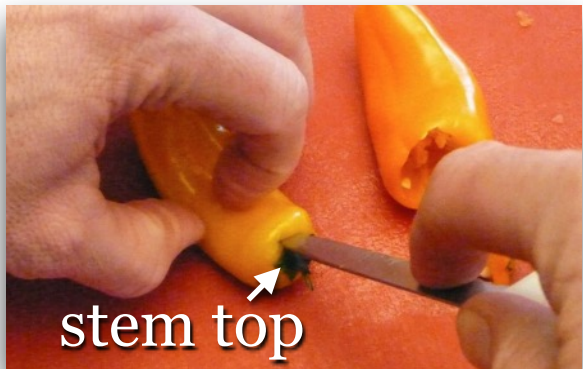


2. Prepare the **fresh ingredients** as follows:

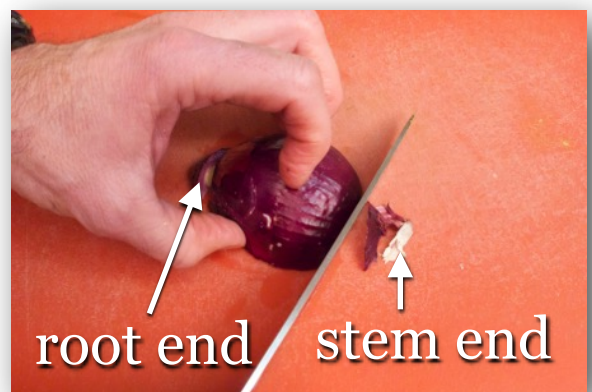
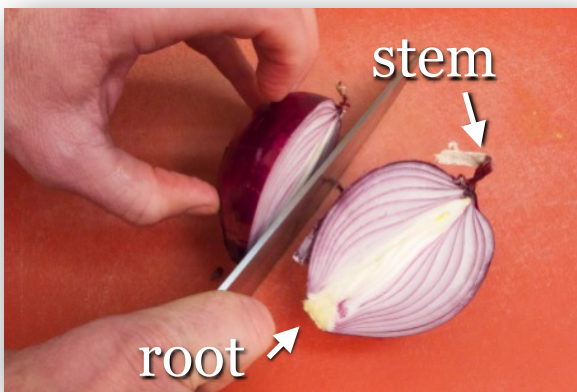
Cilantro: Twist and remove the bottoms of the **cilantro stems**. Then bunch and hold the **cilantro** to the cutting board with curled fingers and chop it into smaller pieces about as shown in the two bottom pictures below.



Baby (or any) Bell Peppers: Cut around and remove the **stem tops**. Then cut the **peppers** into slices about 1/4 inch (6 mm) wide.



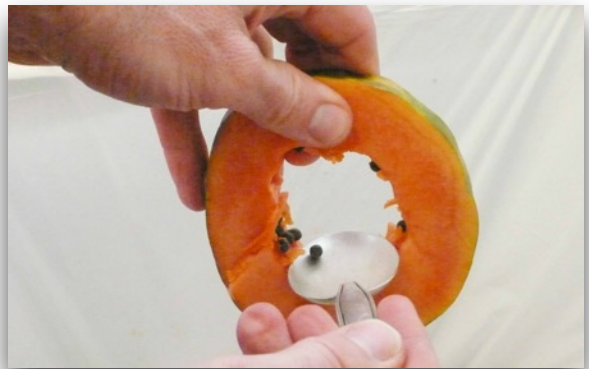
Red (or any) Onion: Cut an **onion** in half lengthwise, cut off the **stem and root ends** from **one of the onion halves**, and peel off the **onion skin**.



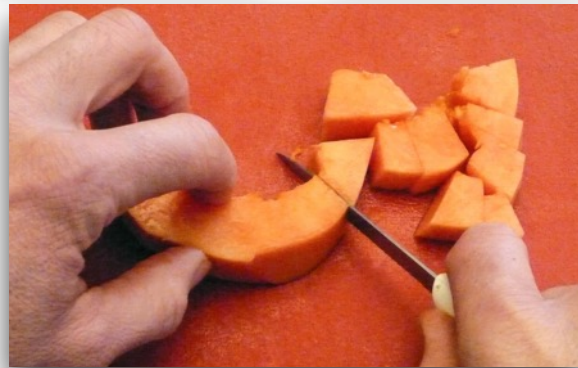
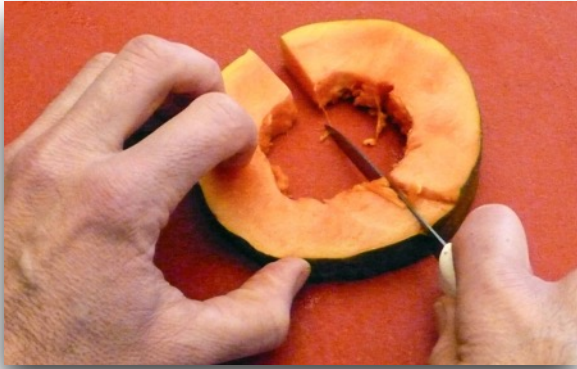
Finish by cutting the **onion half** into cross section slices about 1/4 - 1/2 inch (6-12 mm) wide.



Papaya: Cut a 3/4 - 1 inch (18-24 mm) wide cross section slice from the **papaya**, and use a spoon to remove the **seeds** right over a trash can. Then...



...cut the slice in half, remove the **skin** from each half, then cut the halves into bite-sized pieces.



Garlic: Pull **2 garlic cloves** from a **garlic bulb**.



Cover one **garlic clove** a time with the flat side of a wide bladed (chef's) knife. Press on the top flat side of the knife with the heel of your hand until you hear and feel the **garlic skins** pop open.



Peel off the **garlic skins**. Then hold the **garlic cloves** securely to the cutting board with curled fingers, and let the side of the knife blade touch and glide along your curled knuckles as you cut the **garlic** into thin slices about 1/8 inch (3 mm) wide.

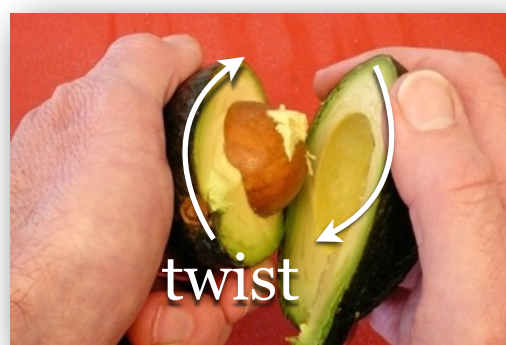


Finish by chopping the **garlic slices** into smaller

pieces about as shown below.

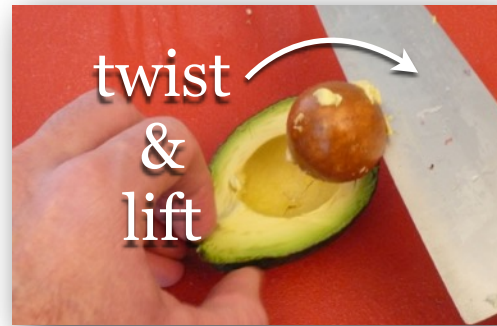
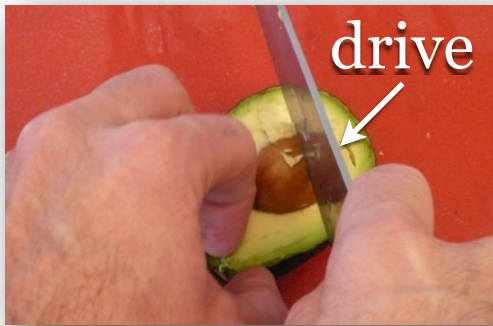


Avocado: Cut the **avocado** in half lengthwise around its **seed**, and twist the **two avocado halves** apart.



Remove the **seed** by holding the **avocado half** with the **seed** still attached seed-side up on the cutting board - making sure your fingers are not in the intended knife path - and driving the long,

sharp edge of the knife blade into the **seed**. Twist and lift the **seed** from the **avocado half**. Remove the **seed** from the knife by pinching down on the **seed** from the back, dull side of the knife blade as shown in the bottom middle picture below.



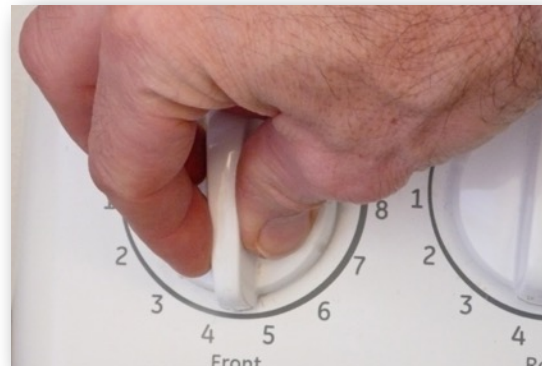
Cut **one of the avocado halves** lengthwise in half again and peel off the **skin**.



Finish by cutting each **avocado quarter** lengthwise into slices 1/4 - 1/2 inch (6-12 mm) wide.



3. Put the frying on the stove, and turn on the burner to MEDIUM heat.



4. While the pan warms, add a good shake of **ground cumin** and **garlic powder** and **light dash of salt** to a plastic bag, and...



...put the **fish** in the plastic bag, twist the top of the bag closed and shake until the **fish** is evenly coated as shown in the bottom middle picture below.



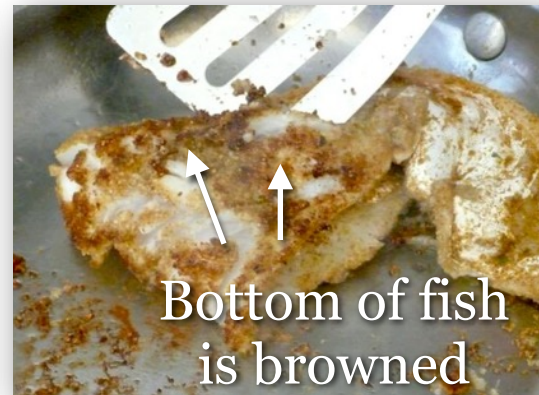
5. Check the frying pan for proper cooking temperature by running tap water on your fingers and flicking the water in the pan. The pan is ready for cooking if the water sizzles when it hits the pan surface and quickly evaporates. (**NOTE:** If the water sizzles and evaporates in a puff as soon as it hits the pan, move the pan to a cool burner for a few minutes. Turn down the heat setting a few notches on the burner you originally used, and heat the pan again. If the water doesn't sizzle, keep heating the pan until it does.)



6. When the pan is warmed, pour enough **olive** or **vegetable oil** into the pan to coat the pan surface evenly and also allow for slight pooling when the pan is tipped as shown in the picture to the right below.



Put the **fish** in the pan, cook for 3-5 minutes (or longer, depending on fish type and thickness) until the **bottom side** is browned as shown in the picture to the right below. Then...



...turn the **fish**, cook for another 3-5 minutes, and add all the **chopped fresh ingredients EXCEPT FOR AVOCADO SLICES**,...



...add a **good shake of ground cumin** and **garlic powder**, squeeze on the **juice of 1 lime** or **lemon**,...



...add an optional **shot of balsamic** (or any) **vinegar**, and **half the chopped cilantro**. Mix the **chopped ingredients** with a spatula, cook for a few minutes, and...



...check for doneness by using a spatula to cut into the thickest piece of fish in the pan and comparing what you see with the following **Safely Cooked Fish** and **UNSAFELY UNDERCOOKED FISH** photos on this and the next page.



Safely Cooked Fish

Fish is safely cooked to proper doneness when the flesh inside is uniformly opaque as shown above.



UNSAFELY UNDERCOOKED FISH

*This fish is NOT safely cooked through as some of the flesh is still translucent. If your fish looks like this, keep cooking until it looks as shown in the **Safely Cooked Fish** photo above.*

7. When the **fish** is safely cooked to doneness, put a **tortilla** on a *microwave safe plate*, and cover **half of the tortilla** with **grated cheese**. Then...



...put the **tortilla** in the microwave oven, and cook for about 30 seconds until the **cheese** has melted.



8. Put the **cooked fish** on the **warmed tortilla**, and add an optional **shot of balsamic** (or any) **vinegar**,...



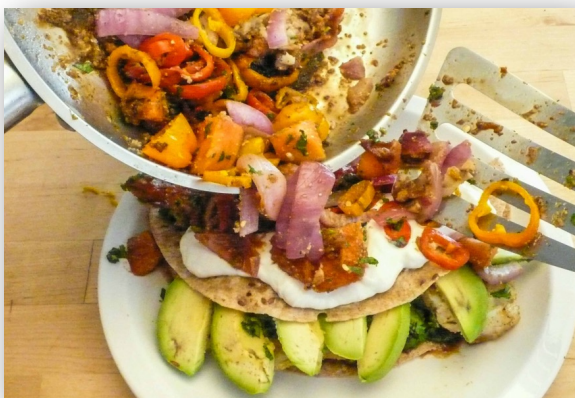
...**chopped cilantro**, and **sliced avocado**. Then...



...fold the **tortilla**, top with a **spoonful of sour cream** (or plain yogurt),...



...**cooked vegetables**, an **optional shot of hot sauce**, and serve warm.



9. To make cleanup as easy as possible, let the pan cool for a few minutes. Then add warm tap water and squirt of dish detergent to the pan, and let the pan sit with the spatula in it, if necessary, for at least 10 minutes. After at least 10 minutes,...



...finish cleaning the pan and spatula with a dish brush and/or sponge, and rinse clean.

