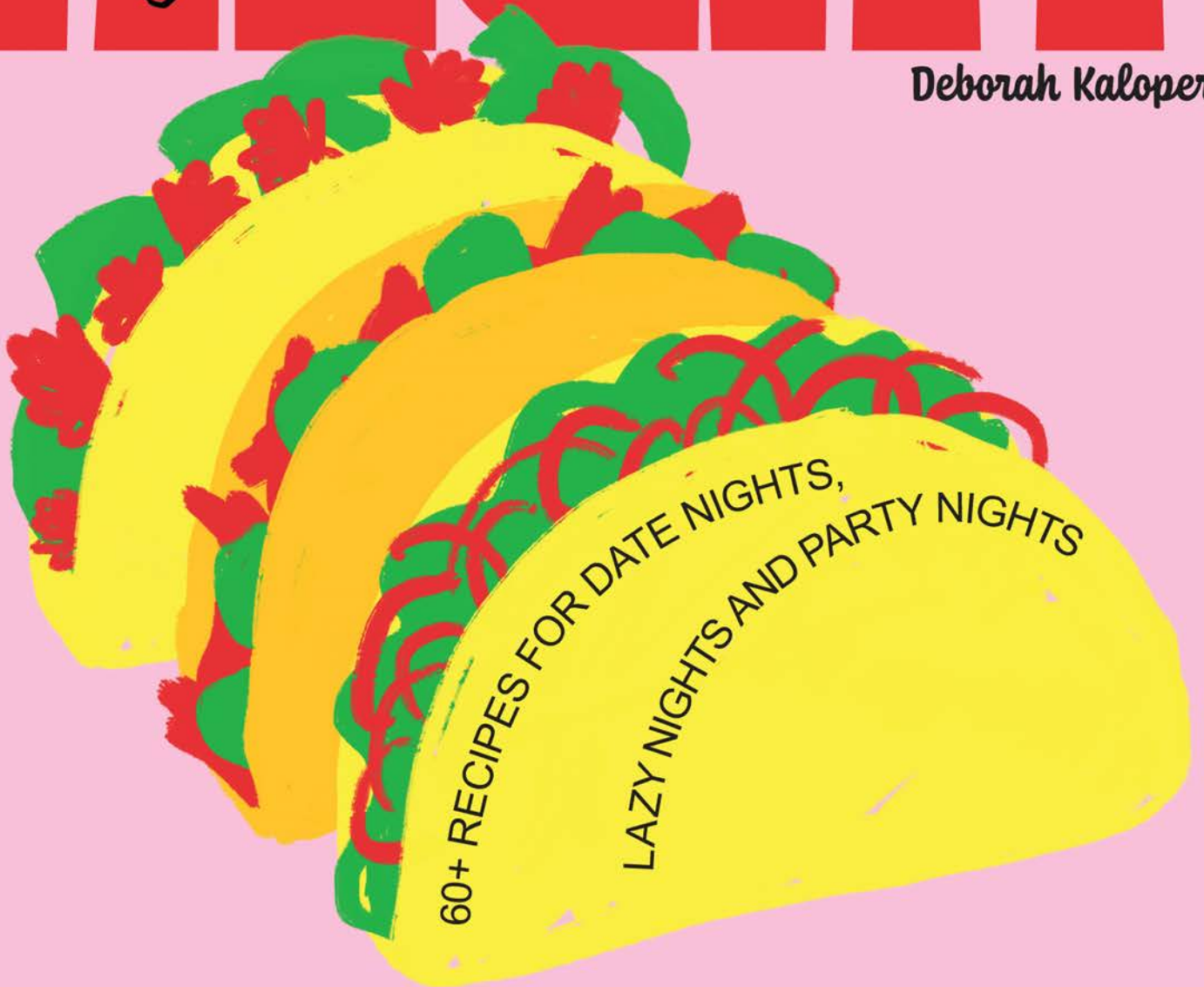


# TACO NIGHT



Deborah Kaloper



## FLOUR TORTILLAS

### BASICS

**600 g (4 cups) plain (all-purpose) flour**

**2 teaspoons fine sea salt**

**1½ teaspoons baking powder**

**125 g (4½ oz) lard or butter, finely diced**

**330 ml (11 fl oz) warm water**

Sift the flour, salt and baking powder together into a large bowl.

Add the diced lard or butter and crumble it through the flour until the mixture becomes sand like. Slowly add the water, little by little, while kneading the mixture together until it forms an elastic dough.

Divide the dough into 18 equal portions, roll into balls, then cover with a clean tea towel and leave to rest for 30–40 minutes.

Place a ball of dough between two pieces of waxed baking paper and use a rolling pin to roll it out into an 18 cm (7 inch) round tortilla. Continue rolling out all of the tortillas, then cover with the tea towel until ready to cook.

Heat a large flat cast-iron frying pan or comal over medium–high heat. Add a tortilla and cook for 1–1½ minutes on each side, until the tortilla is slightly dry to the touch, with lightly browned bubbles on the surface; it should feel dry, but still be soft and pliable.

While cooking the remaining tortillas, keep the cooked tortillas warm by stacking them on top of each other and covering them with the tea towel.

Serve immediately.

### NOTE

For a fresh twist, try making chilli flake or marigold petal tortillas. While rolling out the tortillas, sprinkle the top of the dough with a pinch of chilli flakes, or edible marigold petals.

## CORN TORTILLAS

### BASICS

**220 g (2 cups) masa harina**

**375 ml (1½ cups) warm water**

**2 teaspoons fine sea salt**

Place the ingredients in a large bowl and, using your hands, mix together until a dough forms. It should be pliable, almost like a play dough; add a little more water if it's a bit dry.

Knead the dough for 1–2 minutes, then divide into 16 equal portions. Roll into balls, then cover with a clean tea towel and leave to rest for 20–30 minutes.

Place a ball of dough between two pieces of waxed baking paper and use a rolling pin to roll it out into a 15 cm (6 inch) round tortilla. (If you have a tortilla press, place a piece of waxed baking paper on the base plate, then place the dough ball in the centre and add another piece of waxed baking paper on top. Close the tortilla press and press the handle down to sandwich and flatten the dough into a tortilla.)

Continue rolling or pressing until all the balls have been flattened to size. Cover with the tea towel until ready to cook.

Heat a large flat cast-iron frying pan or comal over medium–high heat. Add a tortilla and flip after 10 seconds, then cook for 45–60 seconds. Flip again and cook for a further 35–50 seconds. The tortilla should feel dry, but not stiff or crumbly, and should be just lightly changed in colour.

While cooking the remaining tortillas, keep the cooked tortillas warm by stacking them on top of each other and covering them with the tea towel.

Serve immediately.

### NOTE

To make beetroot or spinach corn tortillas, replace 60 ml (¼ cup) of the water with fresh beetroot (beet) juice or spinach juice, for a colourful twist.

MAKES ABOUT 3½ CUPS

## ROASTED CORN *and* BLACK BEAN SALSA

SALSAS, PICKLES & SAUCES

**2 corn cobs, husks and silks removed**

**125 g (½ cup) cooked black beans**

**1 fresh green jalapeno chilli, finely diced; leave the seeds in if you like the heat**

**1 small red bird's eye chilli, seeds removed (optional), thinly sliced**

**½ red onion, finely diced**

**125 g (4½ oz) cherry tomatoes, quartered**

**¼ cup finely chopped coriander (cilantro) leaves**

**¼ cup finely chopped mint leaves**

**zest and juice of 1 large lime**

**1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil**

Place a chargrill pan over medium–high heat. Grill the corn cobs, turning on all sides, for 7–10 minutes, until slightly blackened and just cooked.

Allow the corn to cool slightly, then carefully remove the kernels from the cobs using a sharp knife.

Place all the ingredients in a bowl, toss to combine and season with sea salt and black pepper to taste.

Refrigerate in a clean airtight container until required; the salsa is best served on the day it is made.

MAKES ABOUT 2¾ CUPS

## TOMATILLO SALSA VERDE

SALSAS, PICKLES & SAUCES

**500 g (1 lb 2 oz) tomatillos, husks removed, rinsed**

**½ onion**

**3 garlic cloves**

**3 fresh green jalapeno chillies, stems removed, seeds scooped out**

**1 teaspoon sea salt**

**1 cup roughly chopped coriander (cilantro) leaves and stems**

For a fresh salsa verde, roughly chop the tomatillos and onion and place in a food processor. Peel the garlic and add to the processor, along with the remaining ingredients, and blend until well pureed.

For a roasted salsa verde, place the tomatillos, unpeeled onion and unpeeled garlic cloves on a baking tray. Cut the chillies in half lengthways and add to the tray, then place the tray under an oven grill (broiler) on high heat. Grill for 9–10 minutes, until the ingredients are slightly charred and beginning to blacken in spots, then turn them over and cook for a further 6–7 minutes, until charred. Remove from the heat and leave to cool slightly. Peel the onion and garlic, then place in a food processor with the chillies. Add the remaining ingredients and blend until pureed. Use straight away, or cool before refrigerating.

The salsa verde can be refrigerated in a clean airtight container for 5–7 days.



# HONEY-CHIPOTLE SALMON

## SEAFOOD

4 salmon fillets, skin and bones removed, cut into 3 cm (1¼ inch) cubes

### LIME CHIPOTLE MARINADE

3 chipotle chillies in adobo sauce, finely chopped, plus 3 tablespoons of the sauce

3 tablespoons olive oil

2 garlic cloves, minced

2½ tablespoons honey

2 tablespoons lime juice

¼ teaspoon chilli flakes

### TO SERVE

shredded purple cabbage

8 warm Corn tortillas (page 15)

½ ripe papaya, diced

75 g (½ cup) crumbled feta

Avocado crema (page 60)

Chipotle mayo (page 122, optional)

coriander (cilantro) leaves

Preheat the oven to 200°C (400°F). Line a baking tray with baking paper.

Toss together the lime chipotle marinade ingredients in a bowl with a little sea salt and black pepper and mix until well combined. (Alternatively, blitz in a small blender until a sauce forms, then tip into a bowl.)

Gently toss the salmon cubes through the marinade, coating evenly. Spread the salmon on the baking tray and roast for 5–6 minutes.

Remove the tray from the oven and, using a spatula, turn the salmon cubes over. Roast for a further 6–7 minutes, until perfectly cooked through.

To serve, place a little shredded cabbage on a warm tortilla, then top with some salmon, papaya and feta. Drizzle with avocado crema and chipotle mayo (if using), then scatter over some coriander and serve immediately.



# STREET-STYLE CHICKEN *with* CHICKEN SKIN CHICHARRONES

CHICKEN, DUCK & TURKEY

500 g (1 lb 2 oz) boneless chicken thighs, skin on

olive oil, for brushing

## HERB CITRUS MARINADE

3 tablespoons orange juice

3 tablespoons lime juice

3 tablespoons lemon juice

2 garlic cloves, minced

1 teaspoon sea salt

½ teaspoon cracked black pepper

½ teaspoon onion powder

½ teaspoon ground cumin

½ teaspoon dried oregano (not Mexican)

## TO SERVE

6-8 warm small Corn tortillas (page 15)

1 small white onion, diced

coriander (cilantro) leaves, chopped

Red chilli sauce (page 42)

Tomatillo salsa verde (page 28)

lime wedges

Remove the chicken skin from the thighs and reserve for the chicharrones.

Mix the herb citrus marinade ingredients together in a large glass bowl. Add the chicken thighs and toss to coat, then cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours, or overnight. Bring to cool room temperature 30 minutes prior to cooking.

Preheat the oven to 200°C (400°F). To make the chicharrones, pat the reserved chicken skin dry with paper towel. Place on a wire rack set over a baking tray and very lightly season with sea salt and black pepper. Transfer the tray to the oven and roast the chicken skin for 18–20 minutes, until golden brown and crispy. Remove from the oven and set aside.

Place a chargrill pan or cast-iron frying pan over medium–high heat and brush generously with oil. Remove the chicken thighs from the marinade, discarding the marinade. When the pan is hot, fry the chicken for 5–6 minutes on each side, until cooked through.

Transfer the chicken to a plate, lightly cover and leave to rest for 3–4 minutes, before slicing into strips.

To serve, place some chicken strips on a warm tortilla, then top with a little onion, coriander, chilli sauce and salsa. Crumble some chicken skin chicharrones over for a delicious crunchy topping and serve immediately, with lime wedges.

