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Tasty Baked Chicken Taquitos

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Taquitos! They are fun to say and fun to eat, and kids like them. These are filled with chicken, cheese, and seasonings, and then baked until they are perfectly crisp.

I only liked taquitos for a short time. A taquito is a taco that is wrapped up like a mini burrito and then baked or fried. It just seemed like too much work to make taquitos when you could just layer the same fillings between a few tortillas and make quesadillas much faster.

But I've grown to like them over time. Like quesadillas, taquitos are a great way to use up chicken or vegetables that you have left over. But unlike quesadillas, which need to be watched over while cooking on the stove, taquitos don't need much attention once they are made and in the oven.

My kids have grown up eating Tex-Mex, so tacos and quesadillas are nothing new to them. But they haven't had many taquitos, so this was a chance for me to introduce them to similar flavours in a slightly different way.

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How to make the stuffing

These chicken taquitos are made with my standard filling for chicken taquitos for kids. It is very soft and very bendable. My base is shredded chicken, two kinds of cheese (the cream cheese really helps the filling stick together), and some mild green chiles.

If it were just me, I'd use more spicy ones, but there are kids around.

Have extra veggies? Just put them in. Different protein? It's likely to work. Just make sure to cut anything you add into small pieces and mix it really well with the cheese.

Taquitos: How to Make Them

I like to make taquitos with corn tortillas because they get nice and crispy when baked. But the problem with corn tortillas is that when you fill and roll them, they tend to tear.

I've found that wrapping a few tortillas (I do four at a time in two-by-two stacks) in wet paper towels works great. Then heat them for about 20 seconds on HIGH. This basically steams the tortillas, which softens them and makes them easy to work with.

Brush the taquitos with vegetable oil and bake them as soon as you can after rolling them. This will stop them from getting too dry and cracking. Don't worry if your taquitos still have a few cracks in them. They will still be delicious.

How to Freeze Taquitos

These taquitos are great when frozen. Let them cool to room temperature after you bake them. Then lay them flat on a baking sheet and freeze them. Once they are frozen, put them in a bag that can be frozen and take out as much air as you can. They stay good for about a month.

For the best results, heat frozen taquitos in a 350°F oven for 15 to 20 minutes, or until they are warm all through. You can also reheat three taquitos at a time in the microwave for 90 seconds on high, but they will be a bit soggy than if you heated them in the oven.

The Dad added: Sour Cream Sriracha Dipping Sauce

Since the taquitos aren't very spicy, I like to make a quick dipping sauce with sour cream and sriracha, which gives it some real heat.

It's a great sauce for a lot of different things, but it goes especially well with crunchy, cheesy taquitos.

Ingredients

For the taquitos:

- 2 cups of cooked chicken shreds (about 1 pound)
- Cream cheese, 4 ounces
- 1 cup of grated cheddar cheese (4 ounces)
- 4 ounces of mild green chilies in a can
- 1 teaspoon of mild chilli powder
- 1 teaspoon of cumin powder
- 1/2 teaspoon of powdered garlic
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 18 to 20 corn tortillas (6 inches)
- Vegetable oil, for brushing

For serving:

- Fresh cilantro
- Sour cream
- Mild salsa

DAD ADD: Sriracha Cream Sauce

- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1 tbsp of Sriracha hot sauce

Instructions on how to make Baked Chicken Taquitos

1. Set the oven temperature to 350°F:

Oil a baking sheet with a rim.

2. To make the taquito filling:

Mix the shredded chicken, cream cheese, cheddar cheese, green chilies, and seasonings together in a medium bowl. Combine really well.

Taste the food and feel free to change the seasonings to your taste. This simple version should be easy for kids to understand.

3. To make the tortillas:

Wrap each stack of two corn tortillas in a damp paper towel. To make them more bendable, heat them on high for 20 seconds.

4. Put together the taquitos:

Fill each tortilla with two heaping tablespoons of the chicken filling and roll it up tightly. A small cookie scoop like this one works well for this. They should be long and look like cigars.

Brush the corn tortillas with vegetable oil right away to keep them from breaking, and put them seam-side down on the lightly oiled baking sheet.

Repeat until you've used all of the fillings. 18 to 20 taquitos should be given to you.

5. To bake the taquitos:

As soon as possible, bake the taquitos so that the tortillas don't break too much. Bake them for 20 to 25 minutes, or until they are golden brown and crispy.

If some of your tortillas break badly, you can try again with a new tortilla and just move the filling over. Still, a few cracks are fine, and the taquitos can still be picked up and eaten. They still taste great!

6. Preparing the cream sauce:

Stir the sour cream and sriracha together while the taquitos are in the oven. Taste and make changes until you like it. This can be made a long time in advance and stays good for a few days in the fridge in a

covered container.

7. Serve:

Right away, serve with the cream sauce. You can freeze leftovers for up to a month and heat them in a warm oven.

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