

15 Secrets for an Amazing Taco Seasoning Recipe



Are you a fan of fresh homemade tacos? Anyone can tell you that the secret to a seasoned taco shell is the type of spice mix you're using in your recipe. Spices bring out the best of the flavor in the meat and vegetables.

What's the secret to a flavorful spice mix for your taco evening? Most premade spice mixes don't manage to get it right, and they end up tasting relatively mediocre compared to a taco from your favorite Mexican grill or fast food joint. The secret to any good spice mix – is to blend it yourself.

We have a few tricks up our chef sleeves for the perfect taco spice recipe. Have you tried to make your tacos taste like Taco Bell, but can't seem to get it right? We have a spice recipe that produces perfect seasoning that mirrors the spice used by this famous fast food chain, give it a try and see for yourself.

1. Try the Basics and go Fresh

Here's a secret recipe for a typical taco spice mix that breathes life into your taco's. Blend these ingredients and store them in a mason jar in the back of your fridge to keep them fresh. Spices tend to last for quite a while.

Spices come dried and crushed in most cases, so they're easy to blend by whisking in a large mixing bowl – remember to wear cloth or mask around your mouth and nose, or you could be in for a sneezing fit when you whisk the ingredients.



2. Ingredients Matter

The spices you choose play a significant role in the final taste of the taco mix. For instance, swapping smoked paprika for regular paprika can change the entire flavor of the spice. Experiment with different combinations until you find a spice mix you think works for your taste.

Wherever possible, always shop for your spices at a spice merchant. While spices do last a long time when stored correctly, they are at risk of damage during transportation from the spice manufacturer to the store. If the spice suffers exposure to high levels of heat during transport, it might affect the final taste and constituency.

We recommend that you search for a spice dealer in your area. If you manage to find one local to you, the dealer can mix your taco spice at their shop under your directions. All you need to do is return home and place the spices in storage in the fridge to keep them fresh and full of flavor.

2-tablespoons all-purpose flour.

2-teaspoons chili powder.

1-½-teaspoons dried minced onion.

1-teaspoon smoked paprika.

¾-teaspoon crushed beef bouillon cube.

¼-teaspoon garlic powder.

¼-teaspoon cayenne pepper.

¼-teaspoon white sugar.

1-¼- teaspoons salt.

This seasoning mix works brilliantly on taco's, but it also makes an excellent addition to any beef or chicken recipe that needs a little flair. Try it with your bolognese recipe, or sprinkle it over your shredded chicken when you decide to make a curry.



3. Cocoa Powder

Our first secret ingredient for your taco spice mix isn't a spice. You'd probably never think about adding cocoa powder to your spices, but it's worth considering. Take your regular taco spice mix and add 2-teaspoons of cocoa powder, it delivers a slightly sweet, rounded taste to the spice that has a creamy texture.

We prefer to use organic, dark cocoa for our spice. Unlike its milk-chocolate cousin, dark cocoa is healthy for you. The powder contains high levels of antioxidants that assist your body with removing free-radicals from your bloodstream. These antioxidants are only available in the dark cocoa version of the product, and you can even use this addition to your recipe for seasoning enchilada sauce.

Cocoa powder won't overpower your spice mix with a chocolate flavor. When used in the right ratio, cocoa powder adds flavor depth to the characteristics of the other spices and accentuates their aroma.



4. Homemade is Heavenly

Buying your spice mix from the store means that you're relying on someone else to manage the flavors in your taco's. We don't know about you, but we would prefer to have control of the spices we put in our food. After all, you wouldn't expect someone else to follow your recipe and produce the same result as you would you?

Making spice is a fun experiment. When you find a secret blend that you think is perfect, it becomes your trademark. Can you imagine your friends lining up at your front door for taco night? Who needs Taco Bell when your version tastes even better? Skip the store-bought powders full of MSG and other harmful ingredients and make your own.

The best part about making a spice mix is that there's no complicated recipe to follow, no cooking time, and very little leftover mess in the kitchen. All you need to make a fragrant secret spice is the ingredients, a mixing bowl and a whisk – don't forget the mason jar for storage.



5. Save Money with Homemade Seasoning

Have you seen the prices of fresh spices at the store recently? They're a dollar! No, that's not intended to be a joke. While a dollar may not seem like a heavy price for a bag of spice, it adds up over the course of the year to a sizable expense.

Cut your spice budget into a fraction of what you'd spend on store-bought spice by making your own. Buying bulk spice and mixing it yourself can save you quite a bit of money, especially if you find yourself using spices regularly. Most households use spices in almost every dish they cook. Buying in bulk allows you to mix your taco spice and store the extra spices for use in other recipes.

Spice wholesalers typically move a lot of their product. Therefore, they offer their spice at a discounted price to the pre-made bottle and packets of seasoning you find at the grocery store.



6. Add Some Cornstarch

Cornstarch is a secret ingredient you'd likely never expect to find in a spice mix. However, cornstarch is an essential component of our taco mix. We love this addition and won't mix up a batch of spice without it taking its rightful place in the list of ingredients.

Adding cornstarch isn't so much for its flavor. The stuff is pretty bland. However, it's a real win when it comes time to cook your mince or chicken. Cornstarch absorbs the moisture in the meat and turns it into a creamy sauce that's full of flavor from the other spices. If you've ever enjoyed a taco and noticed that the meat seems to have a cream-sauce appearance, that's cornstarch working its magic.

The next time you visit a taco stand, ask them if they use cornstarch in their recipe, the chances are they do – especially if they make a delicious taco. Try this ingredient in your spice mix, and you'll be surprised at the delicious results.



7. Try Out Dried Mushroom Powder

This ingredient may not seem like something you'd expect to find in a taco mix, but we assure you that it's well worth your while to include it in your recipe. Adding powdered mushrooms to your mix gives the spice a burst of flavor that complements the other spices.

If you use plenty of mushrooms in your cooking, then you may notice how they accentuate the other flavors of the meal while providing a creamy taste that's ever so smooth. Try making a bolognese without mushrooms, and it doesn't even taste like the same meal.

Some manufacturers make mushroom powder, but we feel that it's more cost effective to make your own. Plus, if you decide to make a mushroom powder, you can use any species of mushroom, or a blend of mushrooms, that you prefer.

Our favorite are oyster mushrooms. We dry them out in the sun until they're crisp and then grind them into powder using a coffee grinder.



8. Tomato Ketchup

Ketchup is a staple on the tables of diners across the country. Can you even name a more popular sauce? Surprisingly enough, it makes a fantastic addition to the spice mix as well. It's crucial that you don't add the ketchup to your fresh spice mix that you intend on storing in the fridge, that would work out to a culinary nightmare.

When you're prepping the taco meat, add the spice mix to 2-tablespoons of tomato ketchup in a medium mixing bowl. Whisk the ingredients together and then use it to season your meat before you add it to the skillet or saucepan. Remember to whisk the spices properly, or you'll end up with a disproportionate amount of seasoning to ketchup ratio.

Tomato ketchup is surprisingly healthy – provided that you choose a brand that doesn't use sugar in their recipe. We recommend sourcing a bottle of sugar-free tomato ketchup from your local health food store to use in your spice recipe.



9. Diced Pineapple

Here's another secret ingredient that most people would never consider adding to their taco spice mix. Diced pineapple is a flavorful addition to any recipe. We first came across this idea on a trip to India. Pineapple served on skewers with a dash of curry powder is a tasty street food found on every street corner in the country. We had to give it a try – and we found it to be a delicious combination.

When we returned home to the U.S, we decided to give pineapple a try in our taco seasoning. The results were spectacular. The pineapple amplifies the taste of the seasoning, creating a flavor explosion that's magnificent.

During your meal prep, peel a pineapple and remove the core from the fruit. Dice up the pineapple into small chunks and throw in your seasoning. Make sure you mix the ingredients quickly, as pineapple tends to absorb the spices rapidly. Add the pineapple to the meat while you're cooking and admire the fragrant aroma that wafts from the skillet as it cooks.



10. Beef bouillon and Chicken stock

Have you tried to cook a lasagna or beef bolognese without beef stock? If you did use this approach, the chances are that you ended up with a bolognese that tasted like cardboard instead of beef. The addition of a cube of beef bouillon makes a world of difference in any meal using ground beef.

Break up the stock cube and whisk it into your spice mix. If you've bought a premade spice mix from a spice wholesaler, you'll have to wait till you get home to add the bouillon. Mix a ½-pound of spice mix with one cube of stock for the best results.

Therefore, it would make sense to add it to your taco spice mix as well. We use two different taco spice recipes. The first one has the addition of beef stock for ground mince dishes. The second taco spice includes a cube of chicken stock for poultry dishes.



11. Brown Sugar

Sugar isn't only for baking. Sweeten up your spice mix with the addition of some light brown sugar. Add a tablespoon of light brown sugar to your ready-made spice mix and give it a sweet touch that tastes fantastic on taco meat. Sugar mixes well with the other spices, and it won't clump up when you store it in the fridge – provided that you've mixed it in well with the other ingredients.

The addition of sugar caramelizes the other ingredients in the taco mix, giving them a sweeter flavor that's out-of-this-world. If you enjoy onions in your taco recipe, then the addition of sugar to the spice is a must if you want to experience caramelized spicy onions with your favorite Mexican meal.

We recommend this sugar spice mix for beef and fish tacos, for some reason – it doesn't seem to have the same taste effect with chicken taco's, stick to your regular spice mix instead.



12. Sriracha

We love this hot sauce from Thailand. The spicy undertone has a hint of garlic, and it may surprise you to learn that jalapenos are the peppers in this sauce. The reason why we choose Sriracha is that the manufacturer uses less vinegar in the recipe than found in other hot sauces. The result is a flavorful spicy taste that works well with your taco spice recipe.

Once again, we don't recommend adding Sriracha sauce to your dry powder mix. Its best to add a teaspoon to a medium mixing bowl, pour in the spices and then whisk everything together until well-blended. The heat from Sriracha isn't that hard to handle, and it's not like it has a high rating on the Scoville scale. Instead, the sauce focuses on an aromatic blend of chili and garlic that tastes and smells terrific.

Rub the Sriracha spice mix into the meat and send it to the skillet to cook. Sriracha is a fantastic addition to beef and chicken taco meat.



13. Choose a Top Brand Chili Powder

Did you know that chili spice doesn't contain much chili? The powder is a blend of various spices to form a flavorful and spicy mix. Chili powder contains many of the spices you find in traditional taco spice mix but in different ratios. Cumin and garlic powder are prime examples of spices used in chili powder mixes, they take the edge off of the sharp chili taste and round it out with subtle hints of other flavors.

Taco spice is broken down into two different flavor essentials – earthiness and heat. These characteristics are an essential feature to pay attention to when making your spice mix. Don't overdo the chili and leave the rest of the spices to a minimum. It's best to use an even blend of everything, with chili powder and cumin as the base.

Choose a top-brand chili powder that's available from a spice merchant, skip the store-bought stuff and create a spice mix that full of magical flavor.



14. All-Purpose Flour

No, we're not baking a cake – we're making chili spice! Did you ever imagine that flour is a vital component of taco spice? All-purpose flour works much in the same manner as corn flour when added to taco seasoning.

The flour soaks up the juices of the meat and provides a creamy taste and texture to the chicken or beef in the taco. We prefer the starchy constituency of all-purpose flour. We find that it has a higher capacity for containing flavor than using whole-wheat flour.

Your spice merchant probably doesn't keep all-purpose flour on hand to mix with their spices, so it's going to be up to you to add it to the mix. Add 10-tablespoons of flour to every ¼-pound of the spice mix. You'll notice the white tinge it gives to all the other ingredients. It's safe to store the mixed flour spice in the fridge as it won't clump up on you.



15. Make Seasoning the Taco Bell Way

We know you've all been waiting for this recipe. Our secret taco spice mix will make your taco's taste like you unwrapped your favorite Taco Bell meal and took a small bite of heaven. Follow this recipe to create a clone of the spices used by this famous fast food franchise.

INGREDIENTS

- 1-tablespoon cornstarch.
- 1-tablespoon all-purpose flour.
- 1-teaspoon beef bouillon granules.
- 1-tablespoon dried onion flakes.
- 1-teaspoon ground cumin.
- 1-teaspoon chili powder.
- 1-teaspoon paprika.
- ¼-teaspoon cayenne pepper.
- ¼-teaspoon granulated sugar.
- ½- teaspoon onion salt.
- 1-teaspoon garlic salt.

Place all of the spices in a medium sized mixing bowl. Whisk together until well-combined. Store in a mason jar in the fridge for up to a year or more. When it comes time to use the spice, add a tablespoon to every ½-pound of ground beef. Mix the seasoning into the meat with your hands before frying it on the skillet. Presto! You have imitation Taco Bell that tastes even better than the real thing.

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