



Mexican Enchilada Cups

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 10 / **Cook Time** 15 / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

bake: to cook food with dry heat, as in an oven.

chiffonade: to cut leafy herbs or vegetables, like basil or spinach, into tiny ribbons by stacking a few leaves, then rolling them into a tube shape and slicing them across the tube; also, the name of this type of cut.

grate: to reduce food, like a carrot, to very small shreds or pieces of the same size by rubbing it on a tool with an outside surface that has holes with cutting edges (a grater).

knife skills: Bear Claw (growl), Pinch, Plank, and Bridge (look out for trolls).

tear: to pull or rip apart a food, like basil leaves, into pieces instead of cutting with a knife; cutting breaks cell walls more, so herbs can discolor faster.

Equipment

- Oven
- Muffin pan
- Cutting board
- Kid-safe knife
- Large mixing bowl
- Dry measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- Can opener
- Grater

- Wooden spoon
- Round cookie cutter, clean jar lid, kid-safe knife, or clean kid-safe scissors

Ingredients

Mexican Enchilada Cups

- 1 C frozen, thawed corn
- 2 T black beans, from 15-oz can used for refried beans ****(for LEGUME ALLERGY sub diced avocado)****
- 1 C fresh spinach leaves
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp mild chili powder ****(for NIGHTSHADE ALLERGY sub ground cumin)****
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/8 tsp ground black pepper
- 2 green onions
- 1 15-oz can diced tomatoes, drained ****(for NIGHTSHADE ALLERGY sub 1 15-oz can beets, drained and diced)****
- 1 small handful (about 3 T) fresh cilantro leaves
- 12 small flour or corn tortillas ****(for GLUTEN ALLERGY use corn tortillas)****
- 6 to 10 oz cheddar or Monterey Jack cheese ****(Omit for DAIRY ALLERGY or sub dairy-free/nut-free cheese, like Daiya brand)****
- vegetable oil to grease pan

Food Allergen Substitutions

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Legume: Substitute diced avocado for black beans.

Nightshade: Substitute ground cumin for mild chili powder. For 1 15-oz can of drained diced tomatoes, substitute 1 15-oz can drained beets, diced.

Gluten/Wheat: Sub corn tortillas for flour tortillas.

Dairy: Substitute dairy-free/nut-free cheese, like Daiya brand.

Instructions

Mexican Enchilada Cups

preheat + chiffonade + tear

Preheat your oven to 350 F. Have your kids stack **1 cup fresh spinach leaves** and roll them into a tube shape, then slice across them to make tiny ribbons or a "chiffonade" cut. Add them to a large mixing bowl. Next, tear up **1 small handful of cilantro leaves** (about 3 tablespoons) and add them to the bowl.

drain + add

Open and drain **1 can of diced tomatoes** and add them to the spinach bowl.

slice + measure

Have your kids slice **2 green onions** into small pieces and add them to the spinach bowl. Then, measure and **1 cup thawed frozen corn, 2 tablespoons black beans, 1 teaspoon cumin, 1 teaspoon mild chili powder, 1/2 teaspoon salt,** and **1/8 teaspoon black pepper.**

grate + mix

Grate **6 to 10 ounces of cheese** and add to the bowl. Mix all of the ingredients in the bowl together until well combined.

grease + cut + fill

Grease the wells of a muffin pan with vegetable oil. Using a round cookie cutter, clean jar lid, kid-safe knife, or clean kid-safe scissors, cut **12 small flour or corn tortillas** into circles that fit into the wells of the muffin pan, leaving enough room for the tortilla circles to fill the sides of the wells (making little cups!). After placing the tortillas in the wells, fill with the black bean and veggie mixture. Sprinkle a little extra grated cheese on top, if you like!

bake + enjoy

Bake your enchilada cups in your preheated oven for about 15 minutes until the cheese is melted. Remove, cool slightly and enjoy them warm with Kid-made Refried Beans, Sweet Garden Pea Guacamole, and Melon Agua Fresca! "Buen Provecho!" ("Enjoy" or "Bon appetit" in Spanish.)

Featured Ingredient: Black Beans!

Hi! I'm Black Bean!

"My full name is "black turtle bean" because of my hard outer shell, but you can just call me "black bean." I'm a variety of common bean, although I'm anything but common! I bring a distinctive shiny look, sweet taste, and meaty texture to Latin American, South Asian, Cajun, and Creole cuisines."

History

Globally, there are 13,000 known varieties of beans. They include the white bean, like the Italian Cannelini, Great Northern, and Navy Bean; the black turtle bean (usually shortened to black bean); and the pinto bean. What kind of beans are you using today?

Beans were one of the first foods gathered, according to archaeologists. Our hunter-gatherer ancestors used beans as food tens of thousands of years ago. They were grown around 7,000 years ago in the Middle East.

In ancient Greece, public officials were elected if they picked the single white bean from a bunch of black beans.

In the 15th century, Spanish explorers brought beans to Europe when they returned from voyages to the New World. Then, Spanish and Portuguese traders took them to Africa and Asia to sell.

Beans are now prevalent worldwide, primarily due to their use as an inexpensive, plant-based protein.

Today, the largest commercial producers of common dried beans are India, China, Indonesia, Brazil, and the United States.

North Dakota grows forty percent of the beans in the US, more than any other state!

Brazil grows the most beans in the world.

In Nicaragua, newlyweds are given a bowl of beans for good luck.

Anatomy & Etymology

Did you know: Beans are technically a fruit!

Beans are legumes, so they have seeds that dry in the seed pod. Other legumes include lentils, peas, peanuts, and soybeans.

Beans plants leave the soil better and healthier than before they were planted. Most plants deplete the soil, but not beans. This is because they have nodules on their roots that add nitrogen, which the soil needs.

The world's tallest bean plant was over 45 feet tall! That's the equivalent of three average-sized giraffes stacked on top of one another. The plant was grown in the USA in 2003.

The word "bean" was first used before the 12th century. It comes from the Old English "bēan," from the Proto-Germanic "bauno," and is related to the Dutch "boon" and German "Bohne."

How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

Beans are harvested at full maturity when their pod reaches about six inches long, and the leaves turn brown and fall off about 75 days after the beans are planted.

When harvested, the shells are broken open, and the beans are collected as long as they are dry. If they're not thoroughly dried, they can be hung up to finish drying before they're popped from their shells.

We can't eat raw, uncooked beans. Why? Because beans have something called lectins that are poisonous, and the only way to remove most of these lectins is to cook the beans.

If you're using dried beans, soak them before cooking to remove "antinutrients," compounds that block the absorption of nutrients.

Dried beans are generally available in prepackaged containers as well as bulk bins; both canned and dried beans are available throughout the year.

Canned beans can stay fresh for years!

Combine the creamy texture of beans with a whole grain such as brown rice, and you have a virtually fat-free high-quality protein meal.

Beans are made into burgers, dips, brownies, cakes, dips, fudge, muffins, pies, and drinks (coffee and cocoa beans). They can also be used in jewelry, toys, and musical instruments. "Bean bag chairs" are made with polystyrene "beans," but the small bean bags for play are sometimes made with real dried beans.

Nutrition

Beans are complex carbohydrates and high in fiber, which keeps our digestion strong and smooth and our tummies happy.

Beans are excellent sources of iron, magnesium, and potassium. The body needs these minerals to grow, develop, and stay healthy.

Beans supply several B vitamins to our diet, especially folate (B-9). These vitamins contribute to healthy brain function, formation of red blood cells, increased energy, and decreased cancer and cardiovascular disease risk.

The fiber and protein in beans are good for stabilizing blood sugar. They are popular with vegans and vegetarians because they replace some of the nutrients found in meat.

Beany Expressions:

Bean counter = an accountant

Bean feast = a party with food and drink

Bean pole = describing someone tall and thin

Cool beans = when something is cool

It doesn't amount to a hill of beans = when something doesn't add up to much

Full of beans = full of energy, enthusiasm

Hasn't got a bean = doesn't have any money

Has-been = once was something, maybe famous or rich, and now those days are gone

Not worth a bean = not worth anything

Spill the beans = dish the dirt, tell the truth