

Heirloom Bean and Bacon Tostada

We love to highlight vegetables and use proteins as a compliment for a satisfying and healthful combo. At Border Grill, we call it “Good for the Planet, Good for You” and follow an 80/20 rule--at least 80% plant based ingredients--building many dishes around vegetables, grains, beans, and fruit and using meat for flavor and garnish. It’s the way of the future. For this tostada, look for interesting dried heirloom beans like Christmas lima, scarlett runner, Peruvian yellow, or black calypso.

Serves 6

Heirloom Bean Salad

1 1/2 cups dried heirloom beans, a couple different varieties
3 to 4 bay leaves
1 small onion, cut into thick slices
2 cups trimmed green beans and yellow wax beans, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
4 ounces slab bacon or 4 thick slices bacon, cut into 1/16-inch batonnettes
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
3 tablespoons sherry vinegar
1/2 tablespoon honey
1/2 tablespoon Dijon mustard
1 to 2 canned chipotle chiles, stemmed, seeded, and minced
Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
3 to 4 jalapeño chiles (red and green), stemmed, seeded, and finely diced
3 green onions, trimmed and thinly sliced
6 6-inch corn tortillas, fried until crispy
1 1/2 cups frisee lettuce, torn into pieces, for serving
Crispy Avocados (see recipe), for serving

Cilantro Aioli

1 bunch cilantro
1 lime, juiced
Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
1/2 cup mayonnaise

Cooking each variety in a different pot, cover beans with water. Add bay leaves and onion slices, diving evenly between pots. Bring to a boil, and then reduce heat, simmering gently, covered, for 45 to 75 minutes or until beans are cooked through and creamy inside. Remove from heat, cool to room temperature, remove bay leaves and onion, and drain thoroughly.

Meanwhile, fill a saucepan with water and bring to a boil with a very large pinch of salt. Cook green and yellow beans until just tender, 3 to 4 minutes. Drain and scatter on a platter lined with paper towels. Set aside to chill in the refrigerator.

When all beans are ready, fry bacon in a skillet until crisp then drain on paper towels. Transfer a spoonful of bacon fat to a large mixing bowl and add olive oil, vinegar, honey, mustard, chipotle chiles, salt, and pepper. Whisk to form a vinaigrette. Add all cooked beans, jalapeño chiles, green onions, and crispy bacon and gently toss to evenly coat. Taste and adjust seasonings with salt, pepper, and vinegar as needed.

For the Aioli: To a food processor, add cilantro, lime juice, salt, and pepper. Pulse until cilantro is very finely chopped and a paste begins to form. Add mayonnaise and combine thoroughly.

To Serve: Squirt or spread a little cilantro aioli on each crispy tostada and top with frisee lettuce. Mound bean salad mixture on top and garnish with crispy avocado slices. Serve immediately.

Crispy Avocado:

2 1/2 tablespoons rice flour

1/3 cup water

1/2 teaspoon ground cumin

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1/3 cup red and white quinoa

1/3 cup poppy seeds

1/3 cup black and white sesame seeds

Rice flour, for dusting

1 ripe, firm, fresh California avocado, seeded, peeled and cut into 10 slices

Salt, to taste

Combine rice flour, water, cumin, salt and pepper to make a batter. In a separate bowl, combine quinoa, poppy seeds and black and white sesame seeds. Place flour for dusting into a third bowl.

Season avocado liberally with salt. To coat avocado, dust wedges with rice flour, shaking off all excess. Dip floured wedges into batter to coat lightly and then roll each wedge in the seed mixture, pressing gently to form a complete crust. Freeze on a rack overnight.

Heat 1 to 2 inches of vegetable oil to 375 degrees F in a small pot. In batches, fry the coated avocado wedges in the hot oil until seeds are golden and crispy, about 2 to 3 minutes, and then transfer to a rack to drain.

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