



Versatile Tex-Mex Seasoning, Easy Tasty and Low in Salt!

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One of the National Nutrition Month's "Bite into a healthy lifestyle" messages this year is about reducing salt in our diets. Since salt or sodium is often high in foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals, they suggest comparing the nutrition facts labels and choosing the foods with lower numbers. This is especially important since as much as 90% of the sodium in the average diet is found in processed or ready-to-eat foods.

Even the lower sodium store purchased sauces and seasoning packets are often still very high in salt. My family loves Tex-Mex foods like tacos, burritos or enchiladas. I make a simple seasoning that is salt free and rivals most of the ones available on the store shelf. The other thing I like about it is I am able to control the intensity of heat or seasoning. Feel free to increase or decrease the amounts used. You may find that half or less of this recipe meets your level of fiery-ness. Toasting the seasonings in a hot pan will intensify the flavors and clear your sinuses. Avoid this step if you have a family member who is sensitive to the oils released in this process. I do this if I am home alone as I love what it does to the flavor, but otherwise I skip it.

I use this recipe to season ground beef, shredded beef, chicken, fish, shrimp, scallops and tofu for fillings in my favorite dishes. It works very well for seasoning leftovers of any of the above protein choices, although you may want to increase the amount of water used so that the flavor has more time to cook in.

Pick your favorite or the appropriate wrap. My favorite is the small whole grain corn tortilla, but there are many choices including whole wheat flour tortillas or homemade corn chips.

Ingredients

1½ Teaspoons chili powder
1½ Teaspoons ground cumin
1½ Teaspoons chipotle chili powder
¼- ½ Teaspoon cayenne or red chili powder
½ Teaspoon garlic powder

Stir together. Add to the nearly fully cooked meat and stir. Add ½ to 1 cup of water to meat mixture to cook the flavor in without drying out the meat. Bring water to boil. Then lower the burner temperature so the water simmers, low works best on my stovetop for this. When the water has evaporated to your preferred level of moisture, somewhere between soupy and almost dry, serve in your favorite wrap with chopped onions, colored peppers, greens, tomato, salsa and cheese if desired. I like to add a slice or two of avocado as well. Enjoy!