

## Taco Salad for a Crowd

Servings: 20

The amounts may be reduced to half. To save some time the beef may be cooked a day ahead and refrigerated overnight because it must be cooled completely before adding the ingredients in with it. You may want to purchase two bags of nacho chips and use one to serve on the side. When cooking the ground beef, I always try to leave it into larger- size chunks, it looks better in the salad, really you may use any size bag of nachos that you like, the 12 cups size is only estimated, you can add any amount desired in with the ground beef/salad mixture, just make sure to add them just before serving as they tend to get soggy. I sometimes add in a can of drained and rinsed black beans.

- 2 lbs lean ground beef
- 2 (1 1/4 ounce) packages taco seasoning mix (see recipe below)
- 2 cups grated cheddar cheese
- 1 red onions, chopped
- 1 yellow onions, chopped
- 2 heads iceberg lettuce, chopped
- 4 tomatoes, chopped ( I use Roma)
- 2 avocados, peeled and chopped
- 1 1/2 cups black olives, sliced
- 12 cups nacho chips, 1 large ( I use Doritos)
- 1 (8 ounce) bottles Catalina dressing

1. Brown ground beef with the chopped yellow onion (not red).
2. Add in only 1 package taco mix (and water according to the package direction); set aside to cool completely.
3. In a large bowl, mix together chopped lettuce, tomatoes, cheddar cheese (can use more than 2 cups if desired, and the cheese may be cubed small instead of shredded) avocados, red onion, olives, and the second package of taco seasoning mix.
4. Add to cooled beef mixture; toss to combine.
5. Just before serving toss with the salad dressing.

NOTE: The last step (JUST BEFORE SERVING) is to mix in about three-quarters of the package of crushed Doritos, leaving the rest on the side for your guests who want extra (they will get soggy if you mix them in too early!).

## **Kittencal's Taco Seasoning Mix**

Yield: 1 equivalent pkg.

After experimenting with many different spice combinations over the years for me this is the closest to the store-bought package taco seasoning. I always increase this recipe 10x and keep in a glass jar tightly covered in my fridge to have ready for recipes. If you like lots of heat, then adjust the cayenne pepper to taste or you may omit completely. If you can find some dried granulated tomato powder, then add about 1-2 teaspoons with the mix. I purchase mine at a bulk spice store. It really gives the seasoning a lift. The amounts stated are equivalent to one package taco seasoning mix. Don't save this mix to use only for tacos, add some in your recipes to kick up the flavor, it's even great in chili, ground beef mixture for casseroles, stew, soups, and add some into your hamburger mixture for burgers, I even add this to my Parmesan meatballs.

- 2 tablespoons mild chili powder
- 1/2-1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 2 -3 teaspoons cumin
- 1 teaspoon seasoning salt ( or use 1/2 teaspoon white salt)
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 pinch cayenne pepper ( optional or to taste)

Combine all ingredients (double or triple if desired) .

Store tightly sealed in a small glass jar until ready to use

NOTE: this is only optional, if using the mix for tacos you might want to add in some flour into the seasoned cooked ground beef to thicken, I also add in about 1-1/2 cups tomato sauce and simmer, stirring for 20 minutes over low heat.