

# CHOPSTICKS AND CHEESECAKE

*Food, glorious food.*



## Summertime Fish Tacos with Amazing Homemade Avacado Salsa, Slaw and Taco Sauce

The sun is shining, which is a rare occurrence in fair old Ireland! These fish tacos are perfect to enhance that summer mood and perfect for weekend dining. Enjoy these zesty little treats, grab a bottle of beer and soak up the good weather while you can!

A bit of effort is required to make to accompanying avocado salsa, red cabbage slaw and taco sauce but it's worth it for the fresh, non processed end result!

I made this dish for three and used:

- 1 fresh cod fillet per person
- a packet of mini tortillas/soft taco shells

For the fish marinade:

- the juice of one lime
- a few pinches of chilli powder
- a few glugs of olive oil
- a few pinches of garlic powder
- coriander, chopped
- Rock salt and pepper

For the avocado salsa:

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- half a red onion, diced
- a large clove of garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon on natural yoghurt

For the red cabbage slaw:

- Red cabbage, sliced length ways, white parts removed
- 4 scallions, chopped
- 1 tablespoon of mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon of apple cider vinegar
- 1/2 teaspoon of olive oil
- salt and Pepper
- 1 large clove of garlic, diced

For the taco sauce:

- 8 tablespoons of natural yoghurt
- 7 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 1/2 tablespoon of sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1/2 teaspoon ground oregano
- 1/4 teaspoon of ground cayenne pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon of onion powder
- 1/4 teaspoon of garlic powder

**Step 1:** Gather all the ingredients needed to make the marinade.



**Step 2:** If you can marinate the fish for a few hours, great, if not, half an hour at least! Place the fish in a bowl big enough for them to lie flat.



**Step 3:** In a small bowl, mix together lime juice, chopped coriander, salt, pepper, olive oil, garlic powder, and chilli powder.



**Step 4:** Pour the mixture over the fillets, coating well. Cover and place in the fridge to marinade.



**Step 5:** Next, get to work on the red cabbage slaw. Add the cabbage, scallions and garlic to a large bowl....



...before gathering the rest of the ingredients needed.



**Step 6:** Combine all ingredients together well in the large bowl before storing in the fridge.



**Step 7:** Round up everything needed for the taco sauce.



**Step 8:** Mix everything together in a bowl, and again, store in the fridge.



**Step 9:** For the avocado salsa, use the same method of prep I used for the guacamole in my [fajitas recipe](#), but with the added chopped tomatoes. The end result should look a little something like this:





**Step 10:** Heat a pan over a medium heat and add the cod fillets, no need for oil as the fish is already marinated in it! Fry until cook through, about 4 minutes each side.



**Step 11:** Shred the fillets into chunks with a fork, add a sprig of coriander for decoration!



**Step 12:** Set up your taco station! Put the avocado salsa, slaw and taco sauce in bowls and heat the mini tortillas/soft tacos as per the instructions on the packet. Throw a bit of coriander in a bowl for good measure too, and some jalapenos if you want to add a bit of heat!





**Step 13:** Enjoy! Place a bit of everything along the centre of the mini tortilla...



...before folding the sides in and enjoying!



Enjoy, and have a great weekend!

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## Garlic Roasted Potatoes

Such a delicious accompaniment to a Sunday roast dinner, and so easy to make, there's no excuse not to give these a try!

You'll need:

- 1 large or 2 medium sized potatoes per person, cut into even sized chunks
- 1/2 or a whole clove of garlic per person, depending on how garlicky you like things to taste
- A good few glugs of olive oil (I used extra virgin)
- Rock salt
- Pepper
- Dried or fresh parsley
- Onion salt/granules



**Step 1:** Preheat the oven at 200°C/180°C fan/Gas mark 6. Cut peeled potatoes into even sized chunks and place in a large bowl.

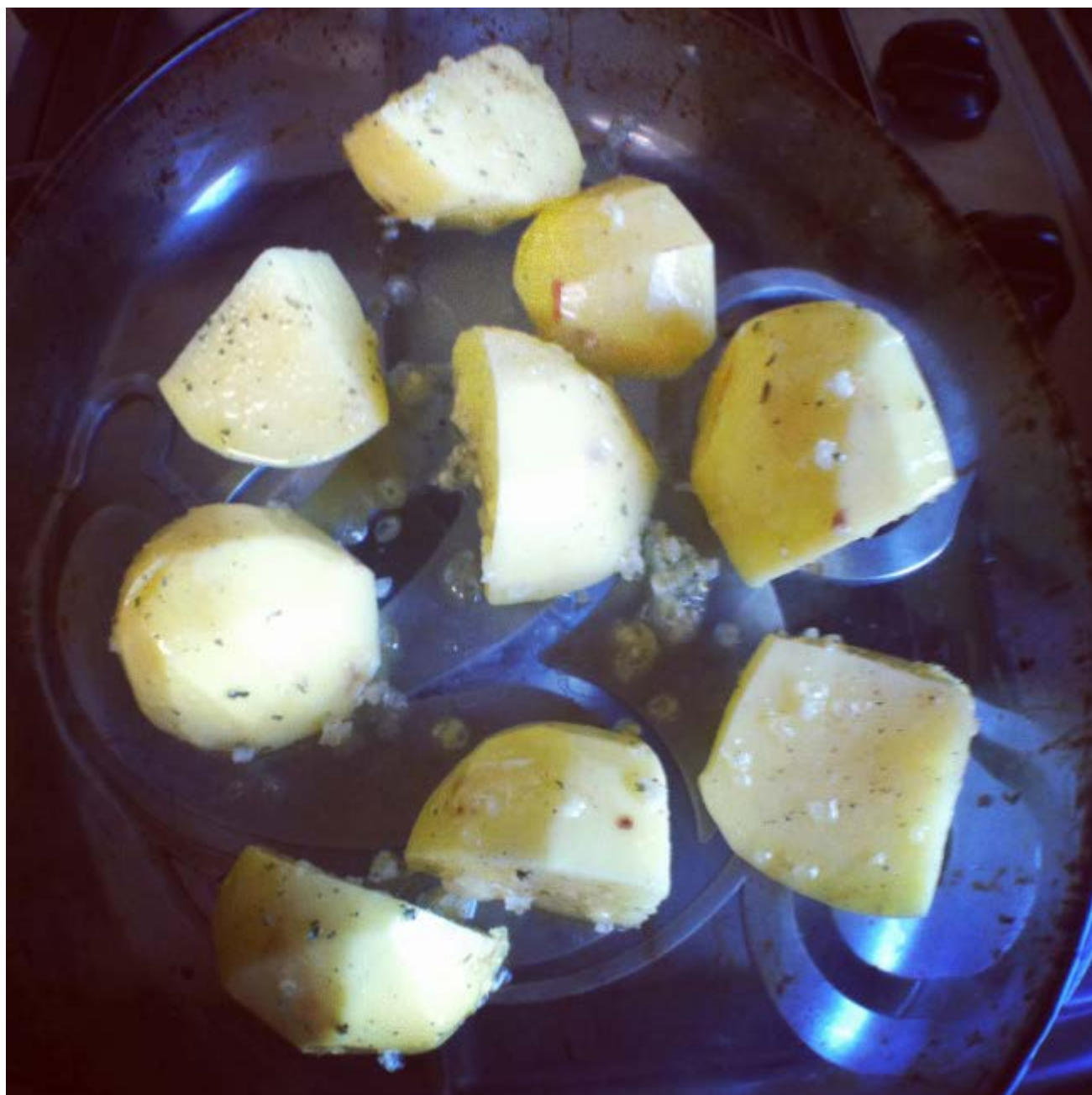


**Step 2:** Pour in a few glugs of olive oil, enough to coat the potato chunks very well. Sprinkle the rock salt, pepper, onion salt/granules and parsley to taste. Stir everything around in the bowl to make sure the potatoes are covered in all ingredients.



**Step 3:** Place potato chunks on an oven proof dish. Drizzle a little extra olive oil if needed.





**Step 4:** Cook for about 45 – 50 minutes until beautifully crisp and golden! Flip once or twice throughout cooking.



**Step 5:** Enjoy!! I served mine with a fillet steak and some lemon and butter sauce! Yum!



In other deliciously good news, only about 2 weeks left until I finish my final year in college and will have more free time! So get ready for lots of fresh, summer recipes coming your way!

Speaking of summer and food delights, my college will be hosting the Dublin Gastronomy Symposium in June, a must for food enthusiasts! After a very successful launch in 2012 the second Dublin Gastronomy Symposium will be held at the School of Culinary Arts & Food Technology, Dublin Institute of Technology, Cathal Brugha Street on the 3th and 4th June 2014. The symposium provides a forum for researchers, gastronomes and enthusiasts to hear about and discuss every aspect of food and drink. Full details and registration form are available at <http://arrow.dit.ie/dgs/> and early booking is advised.

Happy Thursday and enjoy!

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## Lemon Cheesecake

So in the midst of all these college assignments, I'm finally finding a few minutes to throw up this amazing lemon cheesecake recipe. Perfect for parties, after dinner dessert, or a dinner replacement. Again, a really simple recipe, minimum effort required so can be easily done by any kitchen newbie!

### For the base:

- 10 ounces of digestive biscuits
- 4 and a half ounces of butter

### For the filling:

- 1 block of vanilla ice cream
- 1 packet of lemon jelly mixed with 1/4 pint of boiling water (allow to cool before using)
- 1 lemon, juice and rind
- 8 ounces of cream cheese



Use a springform cake tin for this recipe, about 8 and a half to 9 inches.

**Step 1:** Allow ice cream to melt in a large bowl.



**Step 2:** Crush digestive biscuits in a ziplock bag with a rolling pin, or weapon of choice! Add to a



bowl.

**Step 3:** Melt the butter and mix in with digestive biscuits.



**Step 4:** Press the biscuit and butter mixture into the bottom of the springform tin, and put it in the fridge while you go about making the filling.





**Step 5:** Add cream cheese to the melted ice cream (and mix well!)



**Step 6:** Juice a lemon, while saving the rind.....



... then add both to the the ice cream/ cream cheese mixture.



**Step 7:** Add the cooled lemon jelly to the mixture and mix everything together.



**Step 8:** Pour the filling mixture over the biscuit base and allow to set in the fridge over night.



**Step 9:** The next day, remove the cheesecake from fridge and springform tin. Sprinkle with some additional lemon zest, if you have a spare lemon hanging around!



**Step 10:** Enjoy!!



A perfect treat!





Hope you enjoy!

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## Chicken Noodle Soup

So I've experimented with different varieties of this soup over the past year or so, and this one was

declared the winner all round! It's flavoursome, filling and packs a punch thanks to the chillies. This recipe is quick, easy and requires very little effort, with amazing results. Perfect for busy schedules!

In this recipe, I cook a chicken breast as part of the process because I think it adds to the flavour of the stock, but it also works great with leftover chicken from a roast, etc. If you're doing this, just skip steps 1, 2 and 4!

This makes 3 – 4 large servings, you'll need:

- 1 chicken breast, whole (or leftover cooked chicken)
- 750ml chicken stock
- A few pinches of Chinese Five Spice Powder
- A drop of olive oil and sesame oil
- 4 scallions, chopped
- 1 clove of garlic, minced
- 1 large red chilli or 2 smaller ones, seeds removed if you prefer a less spicy option
- 1 can of sweetcorn (I was all out, so instead used a small bowl full of frozen sweetcorn)
- 1/2 teaspoon fish sauce
- 1/4 teaspoon rice vinegar
- 1.5 tablespoons of light soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon of dark soy sauce
- Enough noodles to serve 2 (rice or egg, I've used both depending on what's in the press, and both work great)

**Step 1:** Mix up around 750ml chicken stock in a jug. I used Knorr Stock Pot.



**Step 2:** Add the stock to a large saucepan and bring to the boil. Add the chicken breast, turn down to a medium heat, cover and cook for about 20 minutes.



**Step 3:** While chicken is cooking, gather all the other ingredients needed. Chop everything that needs chopping!



**Step 4:** While still in the saucepan, cut into the middle of the chicken breast to ensure there is no pink. When fully cooked, remove chicken breast to a plate and return the stock to the jug (there'll now be lots of yummy chicken flavour added to it now!)



**Step 5:** Shred the chicken into strips with a fork/knife and sprinkle about 3 – 4 pinches of Chinese Five Spice across it.



**Step 6:** Using the same saucepan you used to cook the chicken, add a drop of sesame oil and olive oil. Add the scallions and garlic and cook on a low heat until they have softened.



**Step 7:** Add the shredded chicken and mix together well.





**Step 8:** Add the chicken stock, sweetcorn, chillies, light soy sauce, dark soy sauce, fish sauce and rice vinegar. Stir well and bring back to the boil.



**Step 9:** Add the noodles. I used these Amoy noodles, they come in 2 x 1 person servings, so I added both.



Break up noodles in the soup and cook for a further 3 – 5 minutes on a medium – high heat.



**Step 10:** Enjoy!



My fiance thinks this soup is pretty much the best thing since sliced bread, give it a try and see for yourself! Eat with chopsticks and a spoon, or just a spoon if you're a chopstick amateur.



Hope you enjoy!

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P.S – If you have any left over, store in the fridge! The noodles tend to soak up some of the liquid so add some more chicken stock or even boiling water before heating up.

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## Lemon Chicken Curry

It's been a busy few days here, final year college work is piling up steadily, so it's taken me longer than I would have liked to post this recipe but better late than never!

This is one of my favourite curry recipes. There's many out there, but this one gives you a delightful hit of sourness as a result of the lemon, which ties in great with the heat of the curry!

I made this dish for 2 and used:

- 2 breasts of chicken
- Cooking oil, I used vegetable
- 1/2 an onion, chopped in strips
- 1/2 a red pepper, chopped in strips
- 1/2 teaspoon of chilli powder
- 1/2 teaspoon of turmeric
- 1/2 teaspoon of cinnamon
- 1 large clove of garlic, crushed
- 2 tablespoons of soy sauce
- 1 heaped tablespoon of hot curry powder
- 150ml of vegetable stock
- 2 small or 1 large red chilli
- 1 tablespoon of natural yoghurt (not pictured, as it was added as an afterthought)
- The juice of half a lemon
- Salt and pepper
- A couple of sprigs of coriander, chopped



**Step 1:** Combine the chilli powder, turmeric and cinnamon in a small bowl and chop the chicken breasts into bite sized pieces.





**Step 2:** Coat the chicken with the powder mix.



**Step 3:** Add a little oil to a wok and on a medium setting, let it heat up for a minute or 2. Add the chicken, the garlic and the soy sauce. Stir around to ensure the chicken is coated in the garlic and soy sauce and saute until cooked through.



**Step 4:** Remove the chicken from the wok, transfer to a bowl and cover with tin foil. Put the onion and red pepper into wok and fry lightly for 2 – 3 minutes. Add the vegetable stock, curry powder, red chillies and a small sprinkle of salt and pepper. Bring to the boil, then return to a simmer.



**Step 5:** Add the yoghurt and lemon juice.



**Step 6:** Return the chicken to the pan. Add the chopped coriander. Give everything a good stir! Simmer for about 5 minutes.



**Step 7:** Enjoy! Serve with a sprig of coriander to garnish, some rice, naan bread and a small ramekin of natural yoghurt.



This dish is super quick to make, so perfect for busy evenings. but also a great replacement for your Saturday night take away!



Hope you enjoy!

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## **[Authentic Chicken Fajitas with Homemade Salsa, Guacamole and Spice Mix](#)**

If you suddenly find yourself in the mood for fajitas, you may tell yourself that reaching for the old trusty meal kit box from the Mexican section of the supermarket is the easiest option. While this might be true, putting in a small bit of effort and taking the time to make your own salsa, guacamole, and spice mix for

the meat and vegetables will have you tossing away the meal kit boxes for good! These 10 simple steps are sure to change your mind! It may be slightly more time consuming, but trust me, the results are worth it. The fajitas will taste like they're supposed to – fresh and filling, with a delicious hint of citrus and heat.

To make fajitas for 2, you'll need:

- 2 chicken breasts, cut into strips or cubes
- As much onion and bell peppers and you fancy, all chopped in strips
- 4 large corn or flour tortillas
- A drop of cooking oil
- A jar of jalapenos
- Some grated cheese, I used Mozzarella

For the Salsa:

- 2 tomatoes, diced (I used plum tomatoes as they were all I had to hand, but I recommend using regular tomatoes if you have them)
- 1/4 of a medium sized red onion, diced
- 1/2 a large clove of garlic, crushed
- The juice of half a lime
- A few drops of Tabasco sauce

For the Guacamole:

- A ripe avocado
- 1/4 of a medium sized red onion, diced
- 1/2 a large clove of garlic, crushed
- The juice of half a lime
- 1 tablespoon of natural yoghurt
- A few drops of Tabasco sauce

For the Fajita Spice Mix (this will yield an amount that will suffice for the next time you make fajitas):

- 1 tablespoon of cornflour
- 2 teaspoons of chilli powder
- 1 teaspoon of salt
- 1 teaspoon of paprika
- 1 teaspoon of sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon of crushed chicken stock cube
- 1/2 teaspoon of onion powder
- 1/2 teaspoon of garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon of cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon of cumin

**Step 1:** Make the salsa and guacamole first, set aside the ingredients needed for them.



**Step 2:** Ensure the tomatoes and onions are chopped as finely as you can, and combine all ingredients needed for the salsa in a bowl. If it's too chunky for your liking, give it a quick blitz with a hand blender. Cover with tin foil and leave at room temperature for around 30 minutes if you can, it really lets the flavours combine!



**Step 3:** Remove the flesh from the avocado (keep the pit!), chop it up and throw it in a bowl along with the other ingredients needed to make the guacamole, minus the yoghurt.





**Step 4:** Blitz the guacamole with a hand blender and mix in the tablespoon of yoghurt. Pop the pit in, this will help it from turning brown as you cook the chicken, if you plan to take your time! Cover with foil, and put in the fridge.



**Step 5:** Combine everything needed to make the spice mix in a bowl.....



...and mix together!



**Step 6:** Put your cooking oil in a wok or frying pan (I find a wok works best), and put on a medium heat.

Chop up the onion and peppers.



**Step 7:** Add the chicken to the wok, and seal on all sides, before adding a few spoons of the fajita mix and coating the chicken. Stir around to ensure even distribution. Cook the chicken at a medium heat.



**Step 8:** Wait until the chicken is a couple of minutes away from being fully cooked before adding the vegetables. This way, they'll maintain a bit of a bite, which is essential in fajitas. However if you prefer your vegetables softer, throw them in the wok earlier. Lob in another spoon of spice mix to coat the veg.



**Step 9:** While your chicken is cooking, set up your “fajita station”. Put the salsa, guacamole, jalapenos and cheese in separate small dishes or ramekins....



.... warm the tortillas in the microwave as per the instructions on the packet, and transfer the fully cooked chicken and veg into a bowl.



**Step 10:** Enjoy!



If you need a little fajita construction inspiration: spread a little salsa all over each tortilla, before adding the chicken and veg in a line straight down the middle, dollop some guacamole along the chicken, throw a few pinches of cheese all over before adding as many jalapenos you think you can handle! Fold and devour!



You can of course, change this recipe up by using beef steak or mince instead of chicken. Simply change the chicken stock cube to a beef one when making the spice mix! For those of you who aren't a huge fan of spice or heat, some sour cream can help!

Hope you enjoy!

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## Healthier Than Fried But Still Tasty Oven Chips

I for one, HATE deep fat friers. It can't be denied that frying food in such a manner results in often yummy food, but these results are usually quite unhealthy. Apart from the obvious fatty reasons associated with deep fat friers, more than anything I just can't stand the smell of the things, the oily stench seems to cling to your skin, hair and clothes for hours afterwards, or at least until you wash it off!

There ain't nothing like some homemade chips (or fries, depending on where you're from!), but since I refuse to make them in the deep fat frier, I settled on this oven cooked alternative! Just as tasty, but without all the fattiness and smells, you'll never go back to fried chips once you try this recipe! They're super easy to make too.

You'll need:

- 2 medium potatoes per person, or more if you're hungry
- Olive Oil (I use extra virgin)
- Rock Salt
- Pepper
- Garlic Salt/Powder
- Onion Salt/Powder

**Step 1:** Preheat your oven, using a high temperature, 240°C, 220°C fan oven, gas mark 9. Bring a large pot of boiling water to the boil, adding a little salt and pepper to the water. Meanwhile, chop up the potatoes into roughly even chip shaped sizes.





**Step 2:** Once the water in the pot is boiling, add the chips. Leave for 5 minutes, with the heat high.



**Step 3:** Drain chips of all water.



**Step 4:** Pour a few glugs olive oil on to an oven tray. Empty chips on to the tray and sprinkle an ample amount of salt and pepper. Then throw on a couple of pinches of the garlic and onion salt. Use a slotted spoon to move the chips around the tray, ensuring they are all evenly coated in the oil and spices.



**Step 5:** Cook for about 20 – 25 minutes, until the chips are lovely and golden brown. Make sure you use turn the chips once or twice while cooking! Why not serve with my delicious [barbecue sauce](#)? Yum!



As with a lot of my recipes, you of course have the freedom to add your own favourites to the chips, instead of the garlic and onion salt! You could try:

- A few sprigs of fresh rosemary and crushed garlic cloves
- Rock salt and some chopped up red chillies
- Parmesan and bacon pieces
- A few pinches of chilli or cayenne powder for a little kick

Hope you enjoy!

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