

Smoked Guacamole with Chia Seed Totopos

Recipe adapted from *How To Grill Vegetables: The New Bible for Barbecuing Vegetables over Live Fire*, Workman Publishing

A celebration of all the ways to grill green, *How To Grill Vegetables* delivers recipes for everything from starters to sides to desserts, alongside a complete step-by-step handbook to mastering the techniques of grilling vegetables.

“Avocados may not be the first vegetable you think of for smoking or grilling. After all, as oceans of guacamole and acres of toast suggest, avocados are splendid raw. But wood smoke imparts haunting umami flavors that take guacamole from average to astonishing. To reinforce that smokiness, I like to add chipotle chiles along with the customary jalapeños. For dipping, I propose Chia Seed–Grilled Totopos (tortilla chips) – the recipe follows,”
Steven Raichlen

Smoked Guacamole with Chia Seed Totopos

Serves 4

Ingredients

2 ripe avocados (gently yielding when squeezed between your thumb and forefinger)
3 tablespoons fresh lime juice (from 1 to 2 limes)
1 luscious ripe red tomato
1 jalapeño pepper
1 clove garlic, peeled (optional)
1 teaspoon minced canned chipotle chile in adobo
⅓ cup chopped fresh cilantro leaves
Coarse salt (sea or kosher) and freshly ground black pepper
Grilled Chia Seed Totopos (recipe follows) or other chips, for serving
Vegetable oil for oiling the cooking grid

Method

Set the EGG for indirect cooking with the convEGGtor at 300°F/149°C. Add wood chunks or chips to the coals if desired.

Halve and pit the avocados, but leave the skin on. Rub the cut sides of the avocados with a bit of the fresh lime juice to keep them from discoloring; set the remaining juice aside. Cut the tomato in half widthwise. Cut the jalapeño in half lengthwise. Remove the seeds for milder guacamole; leave them in if you like more heat. Place the avocado, tomato, and jalapeño halves, cut sides up, on a wire rack over an aluminum foil pan filled with ice. (This keeps them cool during smoking.)

Place the ice-filled pan with the vegetables on the cooking grid. Place the garlic clove (if using) atop one of the tomato halves. Lower the lid and smoke-roast (indirect grill) the vegetables until infused with wood smoke, 10 to 15 minutes. Don't overcook – you want the avocados and tomatoes to remain cool in the center.



Transfer the smoked vegetables to a cutting board and let cool. Scoop the avocado flesh out of the skins with a spoon (optional: save the skins for serving). Dice the tomato, discarding the stem end. Stem and mince the jalapeño and garlic (if using).

Traditionally, guacamole would be made and served in a pumice stone mortar called a molcajete. If you have one, add the jalapeño, garlic, and chipotle chile and grind to a paste with the stone pestle (the latter is called a temolote). Work in the avocado, leaving it a little chunky. Work in the tomato, cilantro, lime juice, and salt and pepper to taste: The guacamole should be highly seasoned. Alternatively, chop the vegetables by hand and mash in the avocado with a fork. Or use a food processor: Combine the jalapeño, garlic, and chipotle in a food processor and finely chop, then add the avocado and pulse the processor in short bursts to coarsely chop. Work in the tomato, cilantro, lime juice, and salt and pepper—again, running the processor in short bursts: The guacamole should remain chunky.

Transfer the guacamole to a bowl (or serve directly in the molcajete or the smoked avocado skins). Serve with Chia Seed-Grilled Totopos.

Variation: Wood-Grilled Guacamole

You can also make guacamole with grilled avocados – preferably seared over wood or a wood-enhanced fire. Set the EGG for direct grilling without a convEGGtor at 450°F/232°C. Start grilling while the fire is still smoky or add 1 to 2 hardwood chunks or 1½ cups wood chips (unsoaked) to the coals. Brush or scrape the grill grate clean and oil it well. When the wood starts smoking, arrange the avocado halves and tomatoes (cut sides down), and jalapeño and garlic on the grate. (Thread the jalapeño halves and garlic on a small bamboo skewer.) Grill just long enough to infuse the ingredients with wood smoke, but not long enough to cook them, 2 to 4 minutes. Transfer the ingredients to a cutting board to cool, then prepare the guacamole as described in the main recipe.

Grilled Chia Seed Totopos (Tortilla Chips)

Grilled tortilla chips are more flavorful – and healthier – than the traditional fried chips. These have the added flavor of fire-toasted chia seeds.

Ingredients

Vegetable oil for oiling the cooking grid

4 small (6-inch) flour or corn tortillas

Extra virgin olive oil or toasted (dark) sesame oil, for brushing

3 tablespoons chia or sesame seeds

Coarse salt (sea or kosher) and freshly ground black pepper (optional)

Method

Set the EGG for direct grilling without a convEGGtor at 400°F/204°C. Brush or scrape the cooking grid clean and oil it well.

Lightly brush the tortillas on both sides with olive oil and sprinkle with chia seeds and salt and pepper (if using).



Arrange the tortillas on the grid and grill until lightly browned on both sides, 1 to 2 minutes per side. Do not let them burn. Transfer the hot tortillas to a cutting board and immediately cut each into 6 wedges. Transfer the wedges to a wire rack—they'll crisp upon cooling. I eat them right away, but any stragglers can be stored at room temperature in a resealable plastic bag or airtight container for a day or so.

