

Flour Tortillas

Time: 1 hour

Think of the flavorless sandwich wraps you've ordered and choked down—the ones that crack like old wallpaper and taste like it, too. Think of the silly supermarket spinach and tomato tortillas trying to make up in color what they lack in flavor. And think of the bogus sizzling fajita platters and greasy quesadillas served every day in chain restaurants across the country. There seems to be no end to the heresy committed in the name of tortillas.

The divide that separates store-bought flour tortillas from flour tortillas made with Anson Mills Trigo Fuerte flour is nothing short of seismic. These are not the stiff, leathery rounds sold in a resealable package—these tortillas are supple—and in places where they aren't supple, they're crisp. And, amazingly, they actually taste like food, blooming with sweetness from the blended wheat varieties and picking up trace nuttiness from browning on the griddle.

Equipment Mise en Place

For this recipe you will need a kettle or small saucepan for boiling water; a food processor; a small offset spatula and a long metal spatula; a chef's or bench knife; a large plate or small tray; a gallon-sized zipper-lock freezer bag; a pair of scissors; a narrow French rolling pin; a heavy griddle (square or round, at least 10 inches in size, preferably well-seasoned cast iron); and a spray can of vegetable oil. A digital kitchen scale comes in handy for portioning out the dough.

Ingredients

Spring or filtered water

2 cups (10 ounces) Anson Mills Trigo Fuerte flour

1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt

1/4 cup avocado oil

Vegetable oil spray

Directions

1. Make the dough: Fill a kettle or small saucepan with water and bring to a boil. Place the flour and salt in the bowl of a food processor and pulse to combine. With the food processor running, drizzle the oil through the feed tube. Process until the oil is well distributed and the flour looks grainy, about 20 seconds. Stop the food processor and scrape around the base of the bowl with a small metal spatula or table knife. Pulse briefly to combine. Pour boiling water into a glass measuring cup to measure 3/4 cup. With the food processor running, pour the water through the feed tube and process

Baking Notes

Any dough whose chief requirement is to be paper-thin represents a queasy proposition for the one wielding the rolling pin. There isn't much play between "a tiny bit thinner" and "oops, there's a hole." But this recipe couldn't be easier to make or roll out—the dough is, quite literally, putty in your hands. Vivid details follow.

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until the dough forms a cohesive ball and chases itself around the bowl, about 20 seconds. If the dough doesn't come together, add up to 2 teaspoons more boiling water. Remove the lid from the food processor and feel the dough: It should be quite supple and soft.

2. Turn the dough out onto a work surface and knead it lightly for a minute without adding flour. If you're using a digital kitchen scale, divide the dough into 12 equal pieces, each weighing 1.3 or 1.4 ounces. If you don't have a scale, roll the dough into a fat cylinder about 8 inches long. Cut the cylinder in half with a knife or a bench knife. Reshape each half slightly, rolling it into a 4-inch cylinder. Cut each cylinder in half, creating 4 pieces of dough. Divide each quarter into 3 equal pieces, creating 12 pieces of dough. With the palm of your hand, lightly roll each piece of dough into a ball on the countertop. Flatten each ball into a 2-inch disk. Line a large plate or small tray with plastic wrap and arrange the disks in a single layer on the plate. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and let rest at room temperature for up to 2 hours.

3. Roll out and cook the tortillas: Heat a heavy 10-inch square or round griddle, preferably well-seasoned cast iron, over medium heat and let heat while you shape the tortillas. (By the time you are ready to cook the tortillas the griddle should be hot enough that you cannot hold your hand 2 inches above its surface for 10 seconds without the heat becoming uncomfortable.) Using scissors, remove the top of a gallon-sized zipper-lock freezer bag, cutting just below the zipper-lock seal. Snip along the 2 side seams and the bottom, creating 2 squares of plastic.

4. Place a dough disk between the 2 sheets of plastic and flatten it slightly with the palm of your hand. Position the tapered end of a French rolling pin in the center of the dough. Holding the end of the rolling pin in position at the center of the dough with one hand, roll away from you, pivoting from the center of the dough, until the rolling pin is about 45 degrees from the starting point. Rotate the plastic sheath clockwise about one-quarter turn and continue rolling and rotating until the dough is 8 to 9 inches in diameter. If you roll the tortilla too thinly in places, use a small offset spatula to smooth and even it out through the plastic.

5. Peel off the top layer of plastic, then drop it back lightly over the dough. Flip the entire package so the bottom sheet of plastic becomes the top and peel off the top layer of plastic. Lightly spray the griddle with vegetable oil and blot the excess with paper towels. Position the rolling pin across the top third of the tortilla and use the bottom sheet of plastic to drape the dough over the pin. Gently peel the dough off the plastic, allowing it to fall onto the rolling pin, then, using the rolling pin, lift the tortilla off its plastic backing. Lower the tortilla onto the griddle, near the edge, making sure the entire tortilla will fit and letting the tortilla grip the griddle. Unfurl the tortilla across the griddle. If necessary, use the tip of a small offset spatula to pull the dough gently into shape. (If the tortilla is hopelessly wrinkled, simply let it cook.) After about 15

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seconds, check the tortilla for browning. If it is spotty golden brown, flip it, pressing to smooth the dough if necessary. The tortilla should have appealing brown spots and blisters. Cook until the second side is spotty brown, about 10 seconds; you may now flip the tortilla at will to cook and brown it further, though tortillas destined for quesadillas or other applications in which they'll see heat again should be kept supple and not allowed to become crisp.

6. Transfer the tortilla to a clean kitchen towel, folding the towel over the tortilla to keep it supple. Roll out and cook the remaining tortillas, stacking them directly on top of each other. If you will not be using the tortillas in the next hour or so, let cool to room temperature, transfer them to a gallon-sized zipper-lock bag, and refrigerate for up to 3 days. To reheat and serve the tortillas as accompaniment to grilled chicken or steak, warm them for a few seconds on each side on a medium-hot griddle.

Makes twelve 8- to 9-inch tortillas