

Chicken Tortilla Soup



This recipe calls for pre-cooked, shredded chicken breast. Leftover roasted chicken and store-bought rotisserie chicken are great options. If you don't have any pre-cooked chicken lying around, you can roast a couple boneless, skinless breasts drizzled in olive oil in a 375° oven for 25 – 30 minutes, then shred it with a fork.

Ingredients:

Soup:

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, finely minced
- 1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and finely diced
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 1 cup water
- 2 cups shredded cooked chicken breasts
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 (15-oz.) can diced tomatoes with green chilies, undrained*
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1 cup frozen corn, thawed
- 1 (15 oz.) can black beans, drained and rinsed
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Baked Tortilla Chips

- 3 (10") flour tortillas
- ¼ cup olive oil
- salt, to taste

Serve With:

- Shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- 1 fresh, ripe avocado, seed removed and diced

Fresh cilantro, stems removed and finely minced

*If you can't find the tomatoes with green chilies combination, use a small 4 oz. can of green chilies with a regular can of diced tomatoes.

Directions:

For Baked Tortilla Strips:

Preheat oven to 400°

Brush both sides of each tortilla with olive oil and sprinkle with salt. Stack tortillas into a pile and slice into thin strips.

Arrange tortilla slices in a single layer on cookie sheets and sprinkle with more salt, if desired.

Bake for 6 – 8 minutes, and then rotate baking sheets so the chips brown uniformly. Total cooking time will be about 15 – 18 minutes. When tortilla strips are golden brown, remove from oven and cool on wire racks.

For the Soup:

In a large, deep saucepan with a heavy bottom, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add onion and sauté until translucent, about 6 – 8 minutes. Add garlic and jalapeno peppers and cook another 1 - 2 minutes, stirring occasionally.

When garlic turns golden brown, add the remaining ingredients except the chicken and bring to a boil, then reduce heat to low. Simmer for 45 minutes to 1 hour to give flavors a chance to meld.

Right before soup is ready, cover chicken and warm in microwave for 30 – 45 seconds (or put back in hot oven for a couple minutes).

Taste soup and season with additional salt and pepper, if desired.

Divide chicken amongst the bowls and ladle steaming hot soup over it. Top with baked tortilla chips and serve with diced avocado, fresh cilantro and shredded cheese.