

## Mexican Dining: Gluten-Free

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There are many ways to make your dining out experiences safe and enjoyable. Remember to always understand the menu, make special requests, and ask the wait staff questions.

When dining out in Mexican restaurants, what are some common menu items and how can you order them gluten-free?

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**Nachos:** Fried tortilla chips topped with cheese, refried beans, chili, lettuce, tomatoes, onions, salsa, olives, sour cream, and guacamole (see next item)

- ✓ Request 100% corn chips (preferably labeled gluten-free) from a dedicated gluten-free fryer or bring your own gluten-free chips. Avoid chili if thickened with flour; avoid refried beans if thickened with flour and ask for plain pinto or black beans. Avoid guacamole if it is thickened with flour.

**Guacamole:** Mashed avocado with chopped onions, tomato, garlic, spices and seasonings, served as a topping or a dip for tortilla chips

- ✓ Avoid spices and seasonings with wheat or wheat flour added to prevent caking. Ask for 100% corn chips (preferably labeled gluten-free) from a dedicated gluten-free fryer or bring your own gluten-free chips.

**Enchilada:** Soft corn tortilla filled with cooked beef, chicken, or cheese, topped with tomato sauce

- ✓ Ask for 100% corn tortilla (preferably labeled gluten-free) and plain (unmarinated) grilled or baked chicken breast slices. If tomato sauce is thickened with flour, substitute salsa. Avoid spices and seasonings with wheat or wheat flour added to prevent caking.

**Quesadilla:** Fried or toasted flour tortilla with melted cheese, topped with lettuce, tomatoes, sour cream, guacamole (see above), and salsa

- ✓ Ask for a 100% corn tortilla (preferably labeled gluten-free) to be toasted in tin foil.

**Taco:** Folded corn tortilla filled with spicy ground cooked chicken or beef, beans, cheese, lettuce, tomatoes.

- ✓ Ask for a 100% corn tortilla (preferably labeled gluten-free) to be toasted in tin foil. Ask for plain ground cooked chicken or beef. Make sure beans are not thickened with flour.

**Fajita:** Grilled chicken, lean beef, shrimp, or combination with grilled onions and peppers, served with lettuce, tomato, and salsa

- ✓ Ask for a very well cleaned fajita skillet or an alternative cooking method, such as broiling.
- ✓ Avoid spices and seasonings with wheat or wheat flour added to prevent caking.

**Chiles rellenos:** Green peppers stuffed with cheese, tomatoes, and chilies and fried or baked

- ✓ Request that it is baked in tin foil. Avoid spices and seasonings with wheat or wheat flour added to prevent caking.

**Huevos rancheros:** Fried tortillas topped with fried eggs, salsa, and cheese

- ✓ Request a 100% corn tortilla (preferably labeled gluten-free) to be heated in tin foil or fried in a dedicated gluten-free fryer. Request poached (in water only) or scrambled eggs or eggs fried in their own pan.

**Taco Salad:** Served on tortilla chips filled with lettuce, tomato, onions, cooked spicy chicken, beef or chili, topped with cheese, olives, sour cream, guacamole (see above) and salsa

- ✓ Request 100% corn tortilla chips (preferably labeled gluten-free) heated in tin foil or fried in a dedicated gluten-free fryer). Avoid chili if it contains wheat flour or other gluten containing ingredients. Avoid spices and seasonings with wheat or wheat flour added to prevent caking.

**Refried Beans and Mexican Rice:** Pureed or mashed pinto beans, fried in lard or vegetable oil with white rice, browned and cooked with sautéed onions, tomatoes, garlic, peppers, and seasonings

- ✓ Ensure beans are not thickened with flour. Ask for plain rice (not pilaf). Avoid spices and seasonings with wheat or wheat flour added to prevent caking.

### **Dishes/Ingredients to Avoid or Request a Gluten-Free Substitution:**

Request 100% corn chips and corn tortillas (preferably labeled gluten-free) fried in a dedicated gluten-free fryer, heated in tin foil, warmed in a clean pan, or bring your own. Ensure that 100% corn chips are not dusted with flour. Avoid taco salad shells (made from wheat tortillas), and burritos (choose a “burrito bowl” without the flour tortilla). Ensure sauces are not thickened with wheat flour; substitute lime juice, salsa, or guacamole.

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**Always identify your needs. Consider carrying a [gluten-free restaurant card](#) in different languages or a [gluten-free restaurant card in English](#).**

**Bring your own salad dressing or dessert with you to the restaurant.**

**If a utensil, preparation area, or cooking surface is used for foods that must be avoided, ask for it to be cleaned before cooking your meal. To be safe, ask staff to use disposable tin foil.**

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