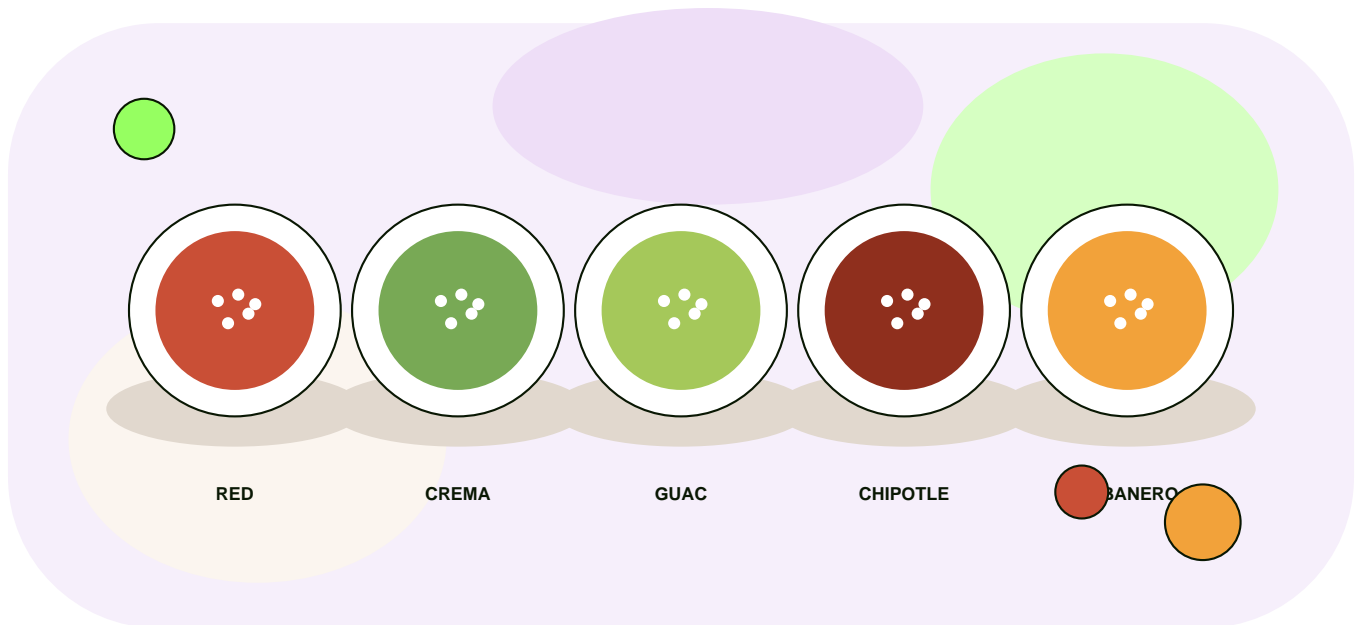


Dito's Table

The Salsa System

5 Mexican sauces, 1 small pantry, endless flavour bombs.



A practical flavour guide for tacos, bowls, beans, mushrooms, tofu, seafood, vegetables, eggs, and lazy-but-delicious home cooking.

Read the full sauce recipes and notes on Dito's Table.

Start Here: The Sauce Is the Flavour Engine

Do not cook more complicated food. Build better flavour around it.

Mexican food is not just tortillas and fillings. The soul often lives in the sauce: the charred tomato salsa, the cooling avocado crema, the smoky chipotle kick, the bright guacamole, or the tropical heat of habanero.

This system turns five core sauces into a simple way of building flavour. Once you understand the role of each sauce, you stop guessing and start composing plates like a taqueria.

1. Base Salsa Depth, savoury tomato, char, moisture.	2. Creamy Layer Richness, softness, heat control.	3. Hot Accent Smoke, fruit, fire, final lift.
--	---	---

The Dito's Table 3-Sauce Rule

For a great taco or bowl, choose: one base salsa + one creamy/rich sauce + one hot accent. That gives you contrast, not clutter.

- **Bean taco:** red salsa + avocado crema + chipotle hot sauce
- **Fish taco:** avocado crema + guacamole + pineapple habanero
- **Mushroom taco:** red salsa + guacamole + chipotle hot sauce
- **Al pastor-style tofu:** red salsa + avocado crema + pineapple habanero
- **Breakfast eggs:** red salsa + guacamole + a few drops of chipotle hot sauce

Rule of thumb: two sauces make a taco exciting. Three sauces make it memorable, as long as each sauce has a job.

The 5 Sauce Roles

Think like a taqueria: depth, richness, freshness, smoke, and fire.



Red Salsa

The Universal Base

What it does: Adds charred tomato depth, garlic, chilli warmth, and savoury moisture.

Best with: chips, tacos, quesadillas, eggs, beans, grilled vegetables

Power combo: beans + red salsa + chipotle



Avocado Crema

The Cooling Richness

What it does: Adds creamy softness, green herbs, acidity, and heat control.

Best with: fish tacos, rice bowls, beans, roasted sweet potato

Power combo: red salsa + avocado crema



Guacamole

The Fresh Upgrade

What it does: Adds good fat, chunky texture, brightness, and the fresh avocado moment.

Best with: nachos, tacos, wraps, grilled vegetables, topos

Power combo: fish + guacamole + habanero



Chipotle Hot Sauce

The Smoky Fire

What it does: Adds smoke, medium heat, vinegar, tomato depth, and chilli complexity.

Best with: eggs, beans, mushrooms, tofu, tacos, grain bowls

Power combo: mushrooms + chipotle + crema



Pineapple Habanero

The Tropical Flame

What it does: Adds fruit, acidity, sweetness, and serious heat at the end.

Best with: fish, shrimp, tofu, jackfruit, pork, slaws

Power combo: al pastor-style filling + habanero

How to read this page:

You do not need every sauce on every plate. Choose sauces by function. If food tastes flat, add red salsa. If food tastes sharp, add crema. If food lacks attitude, add chipotle or habanero.

The Small Mexican Sauce Pantry

Keep this stocked and sauce-making becomes easy, not heroic.

The goal is not to own every Mexican ingredient. The goal is to keep a compact basket of fresh produce, pantry spices, and fridge helpers that can produce bold sauce layers on demand.

Fresh Basket

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ripe plum tomatoes | <input type="checkbox"/> Coriander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White or red onion | <input type="checkbox"/> Limes or lemons |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Garlic | <input type="checkbox"/> Avocados |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fresh jalapenos or green chillies | <input type="checkbox"/> Pineapple |

Pantry Shelf

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chipotle powder or paste | <input type="checkbox"/> Oregano |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chilli powder | <input type="checkbox"/> Paprika |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Habanero powder | <input type="checkbox"/> Black pepper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White distilled vinegar | <input type="checkbox"/> Sea salt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cumin | <input type="checkbox"/> Sugar |

Fridge Helpers

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plant-based mayo | <input type="checkbox"/> Quick slaw |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooked beans | <input type="checkbox"/> Tortillas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Refried beans | <input type="checkbox"/> Totopos / tortilla chips |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pickled onions | <input type="checkbox"/> Fresh herbs |

The Buy-This-First Version

Tomatoes, onion, garlic, coriander, limes, avocados, jalapenos, chipotle powder, habanero powder, white vinegar, cumin, oregano, salt. With that, you can already make red salsa, avocado crema, guacamole, and simplified hot sauces.

Safety note: habanero powder and fresh hot chillies can irritate skin and eyes. Use gloves when needed, wash your hands well, and label very hot sauces clearly.

The Pairing Matrix

Choose sauces by the job they perform on the plate.

Food / Filling	Base Layer	Creamy / Fresh Layer	Hot Accent	Why It Works
Beans / refried beans	Red Salsa	Avocado Crema	Chipotle	Beans love smoke, acidity, and creaminess.
Crispy mushrooms	Red Salsa	Guacamole	Chipotle	Earthy mushrooms need char, fat, and smoky heat.
Tofu / vegan tinga	Red Salsa	Avocado Crema	Chipotle	The crema softens chilli and gives body.
Fish tacos	Avocado Crema	Guacamole	Pineapple Habanero	Fatty avocado and fruit heat lift the fish.
Shrimp / seafood	Red Salsa	Avocado Crema	Pineapple Habanero	Tomato depth plus tropical heat feels fresh.
Chicken tinga	Red Salsa	Avocado Crema	Chipotle	Classic tomato-smoke profile with cooling balance.
Al pastor-style pork or tofu	Red Salsa	Guacamole	Pineapple Habanero	Pineapple, chilli, and avocado make it pop.
Eggs / brunch tacos	Red Salsa	Guacamole	Chipotle	Savoury, fresh, smoky, and satisfying.
Roasted sweet potato	Red Salsa	Avocado Crema	Pineapple Habanero	Sweetness meets acidity, cream, and heat.
Burrito bowl	Red Salsa	Avocado Crema	Optional hot sauce	Use red for moisture and crema for the finish.

Quick diagnostic: flat food needs red salsa; dry food needs crema or guacamole; heavy food needs lime, coriander, or pineapple habanero; polite food needs chipotle.

Taco Night Blueprint

A repeatable build for tacos, bowls, and casual dinner with friends.

The formula:

Tortilla + Filling + Base Salsa + Creamy Layer + Hot Accent + Crunch / Freshness

Step	Question to Ask	Good Options
1. Tortilla	What carries the flavour?	Corn tortillas, flour tortillas, tostadas, totopos, rice bowl base.
2. Filling	Where is the protein or substance?	Beans, mushrooms, tofu, fish, shrimp, chicken, eggs, roasted vegetables.
3. Base salsa	What gives savoury depth?	Red salsa for charred tomato, garlic, chilli, and moisture.
4. Creamy layer	What gives richness and balance?	Avocado crema for smoothness or guacamole for chunky freshness.
5. Hot accent	What gives the final kick?	Chipotle for smoke. Pineapple habanero for fruit and high heat.
6. Freshness	What makes it feel alive?	Coriander, lime, onion, slaw, radish, cucumber, or pickled onions.

A finished taco should have weight, moisture, acidity, heat, and one little surprise. That surprise can be smoke, pineapple, green apple, char, or crunch.

Quick Sauce Pathways: Fresh and Creamy

Compact home-kitchen versions. Use the full article for detailed recipe cards.

Red Salsa - The Universal Base

Ingredients: 1.5 kg ripe plum tomatoes, 1 small onion, 4 garlic cloves, 3 jalapenos, coriander, 80 ml lemon juice, 1 tsp chipotle powder, 1 tsp chilli powder, sea salt, black pepper.

Method: Char tomatoes, onion, jalapenos, and garlic. Cool slightly. Blend with the remaining ingredients until smooth or slightly chunky. Rest before serving.

Use: Tacos, chips, quesadillas, eggs, beans, bowls, grilled vegetables.

Greenest Guacamole - The Fresh Upgrade

Ingredients: 3 ripe avocados, 1/2 white onion, tomato concasse, green chilli, coriander, 2 limes, salt, pepper, 1/4 tart green apple, optional chipotle paste.

Method: Mash avocado by hand. Add chopped ingredients, lime, coriander, seasoning, green apple, and optional chipotle paste. Do not overmix.

Use: Totopos, tacos, nachos, grilled vegetables, wraps, brunch plates.

Avocado Crema - The Cooling Richness

Ingredients: 1 avocado, 400 g plant-based mayo, 1/2 red onion, 2 garlic cloves, green chilli, coriander, 10 ml lemon juice, salt.

Method: Blend everything until smooth, creamy, and slightly runny. Adjust salt, citrus, and chilli.

Use: Fish tacos, mushroom tacos, bean bowls, roasted sweet potato, burritos.

Batch logic:

Make red salsa when you want a multi-day base. Make avocado crema when you need a smooth fridge sauce. Make guacamole when you are serving now and want freshness, texture, and drama.

Texture note:

Crema should be smooth. Guacamole should be chunky. Red salsa can be smooth or slightly coarse depending on the food you serve it with.

Quick Sauce Pathways: Smoke and Fire

These are the small-spoon, big-effect sauces.

Chipotle Hot Sauce - The Smoky Fire

Ingredients: 1.5 kg peeled diced tomatoes, 5 tbsp chipotle powder, 3 tbsp chilli powder, 1 cup sugar, 1 tbsp salt, 2 tbsp mixed spice with cumin, oregano, black pepper, 4 cups white vinegar.

Method: Simmer tomatoes with half the vinegar and chilli powders. Blend. Return to the pot with sugar, salt, and spices. Reduce. Add remaining vinegar and simmer to desired thickness.

Use: Beans, eggs, mushrooms, tofu, tacos, mayo-based condiments, marinades.

Pineapple Habanero - The Tropical Flame

Ingredients: 1 kg diced pineapple, 2 tbsp habanero powder, 1 tbsp chilli powder, 1 cup sugar, 1 tbsp salt, 2 tbsp mixed spice with cumin, oregano, paprika, 4 cups white vinegar.

Method: Simmer pineapple with half the vinegar and chilli powders. Blend. Return to the pot with sugar, salt, and spices. Reduce. Add remaining vinegar and simmer to desired thickness.

Use: Fish, shrimp, tofu, jackfruit, slaw, roasted vegetables, al pastor-style fillings.

How much to use?

Hot sauce should work like punctuation, not wallpaper. Start with a few drops or a small spoon, then build.

Chipotle vs Habanero

Choose chipotle when you want smoke, tomato depth, and darker savoury heat.

Choose pineapple habanero when you want fruit, acidity, brightness, and a louder chilli finish.

Storage logic

Cool sauces quickly before refrigerating.

Use clean spoons and clean bottles.

Label very hot sauces clearly.

For long storage or selling, follow local food safety rules and proper pH controls.

One Batch, Many Meals

Use sauces to make simple food feel deliberate.

Day	Quick Use	Sauce Move
Monday	Refried bean tacos	Red salsa + avocado crema + chipotle.
Tuesday	Mushroom tacos	Red salsa + guacamole + chipotle.
Wednesday	Rice and bean bowl	Red salsa for moisture, crema for finish.
Thursday	Fish or tofu tacos	Avocado crema + pineapple habanero.
Friday	Nachos or totopos night	Guacamole + red salsa + hot sauce on the side.
Saturday	Brunch eggs or tofu scramble	Red salsa + chipotle + fresh coriander.
Sunday	Roasted vegetables or sweet potato	Avocado crema + pineapple habanero + lime.

Read the full guide

For the complete sauce notes, recipe cards, and extra serving ideas, visit the Mexican Hot Sauces & Salsas guide on Dito's Table.

ditostable.com



Taco Craft. Salsa Magic. Proper Tortillas.

Created for Dito's Table - Mexi-terranean cooking, real tortillas, bold salsas, and practical restaurant know-how for home cooks.