

Authentic Mexican Street Corn Salad (Esquites): Creamy, Zesty & Spicy!

Mexican Street Corn Salad, or Esquites



TIME
5-7 min

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INGREDIENTS

4 cups fresh or frozen corn kernels (from about 4 ears of corn)
2 tbsp olive oil (if grilling fresh corn)
½ cup mayonnaise
... cup sour cream or Mexican crema
... cup crumbled Cotija cheese (plus extra for garnish)
2 tbsp fresh lime juice (from about 1-2 limes)
½ tsp chili powder (such as Ancho or a mild blend)
... tsp salt (or to taste)
1/8 tsp black pepper (or to taste)
Optional: 2 tbsp chopped fresh cilantro, for garnish
Optional: Pinch of cayenne pepper for extra heat

DIRECTIONS

- 1. Cook the Corn:** If using fresh corn, cut the kernels from the cobs. You can grill the corn first (or grill whole cobs, then cut off kernels) for a smoky flavor. To do this, toss fresh corn kernels with 1 tablespoon olive oil and grill/pan-sear over medium-high heat for 5-7 minutes until lightly charred. If using frozen or canned, simply thaw frozen corn or drain canned corn well.
- 2. Prepare the Dressing Base:** In a large mixing bowl, combine the ½ cup mayonnaise, ... cup sour cream or Mexican crema, ... cup crumbled Cotija cheese, 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice, ½ teaspoon chili powder, ... teaspoon salt, and 1/8 teaspoon black pepper. Whisk everything together until the dressing is smooth and well combined.
- 3. Combine & Toss:** Add the prepared 4 cups corn kernels to the bowl with the dressing. If adding optional diced red onion, add it now. Gently toss everything together until all the corn and any other vegetables are evenly coated with the creamy dressing.
- 4. Chill the Salad:** Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate the Mexican Street Corn Salad for at least 30 minutes, or preferably 1 hour, to allow the flavors to meld together and for the salad to chill thoroughly.
- 5. Garnish & Serve:** Give the salad a gentle stir before serving. Garnish with extra crumbled Cotija cheese and fresh chopped cilantro. Serve chilled as a refreshing and flavorful side dish. Enjoy your delicious Mexican Street Corn Salad!

SWAPS & NOTES

Corn: Fresh corn kernels (cut from the cob) are highly recommended for the best flavor and texture, especially if grilled or charred.

Frozen corn kernels (thawed) are a convenient substitute.

Canned corn can also be used, but drain and pat dry very well.

Mayonnaise & Sour Cream/Crema: This combination creates the creamy, tangy base.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Grilled Corn for Best Flavor: Grilling or charring the corn adds an authentic smoky depth.

Cotija Cheese: Don't skip this if you want authentic flavor!

Its salty, crumbly texture is unique.

Fresh Lime Juice: Crucial for the bright, zesty tang that balances the creaminess.

More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/authentic-mexican-street-corn-salad-esquites-creamy-zesty-spicy/>