

CHEF CULTURES LLC

FRESH PICO DE GALLO

Prep Time: 15 minutes • Resting Time: 10–15 minutes • Yield: About 1½ cups (3–4 taco portions)

Description

This simple fresh pico de gallo highlights ripe tomatoes, citrus, herbs, and balanced seasoning while teaching students foundational knife skills, flavor balancing, and safe food preparation techniques. Bright, fresh, and versatile, this classic salsa fresca pairs perfectly with handmade heirloom corn tortillas and street tacos.

Students will work together as a team to chop and prepare all ingredients while practicing proper knife handling, teamwork, and kitchen safety.

Ingredients

- ¾ cup finely diced white onion (about ¼ small onion)
- ½ small jalapeño pepper, finely diced (remove seeds for milder flavor)
- 1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lime juice (about ½ lime)
- Zest of ¼ lime
- ¼ teaspoon sea salt, more to taste
- 4 ounces ripe tomatoes, de-seeded and diced (about 1 small tomato)
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro (small handful)

Directions

- 1. Prepare Flavor Base**
In a medium bowl, combine onion, jalapeño, lime juice, lime zest, and salt. Allow mixture to rest for 5 minutes while preparing remaining ingredients.
- 2. Practice Knife Skills**
As a team, carefully dice tomatoes and chop cilantro using proper claw-hand and knife safety techniques. Students should communicate and work mindfully around teammates.
- 3. Add Remaining Ingredients**
Add diced tomatoes and cilantro to bowl. Stir gently to combine evenly.
- 4. Taste and Adjust**
Taste salsa and adjust seasoning with additional salt or lime juice if desired.
- 5. Rest Before Serving**
Allow pico de gallo to marinate for 10–15 minutes before serving for improved flavor development.



6. **6. Serve**

Serve chilled or at cool room temperature using a slotted spoon if excess tomato juices develop.

Chef Ron's Notes

- Small uniform cuts improve texture, appearance, and flavor distribution.
- Serrano peppers may be substituted for additional heat.
- Always zest citrus before juicing for maximum flavor and reduced waste.
- Salt takes time to dissolve fully, so wait briefly before adjusting seasoning.
- Best served fresh but may be refrigerated up to 3 days.
- Students should always wear cut gloves during knife-skills practice and remain mindful of teammates and workspace safety.
- Seasonal tomatoes and herbs from local farms and markets dramatically improve freshness and flavor.

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