



Healthy Hacks for Your Cinco de Mayo Snacks

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Cinco de Mayo is a little over a week away, ole! Simply translated to the “fifth of May,” for most of us Cinco de Mayo doesn’t mean much more than a great excuse to have fun with friends while indulging in nachos, burritos and of course margaritas!

However, did you know that Cinco de Mayo isn’t really Mexico’s Independence Day ([read more about their true Independence Day and history](#))? It actually marks a major victory for the Mexican Army that occurred on May 5, 1862 when Mexican troops defeated the French at the Battle of Puebla. Who knew?!

Since then, the observance has spread to all corners of the US and is viewed much like St. Patrick’s Day- a time to celebrate heritage (or just an excuse to enjoy happy hour for lots of us). Traditional Cinco de Mayo celebrations combine music, dancing and of course, FOOD! Sounds fun, right?! It is!...but, if you’re trying to maintain a healthy lifestyle, loading up on calorie- and fat-laden nachos, chips, dips, and drinks can derail your good efforts.

You don’t have to forgo fun occasions like Cinco de Mayo though, you just have to get back to the basics! Maintaining a healthy lifestyle is all about consistency and moderation. Enjoy holidays and special occasions, but don’t go overboard and always do your best to make smart choices.

Here are some healthy hacks to help you enjoy your Cinco de Mayo festivities guilt-free:

1. **Give Your Chips a Makeover:** Make your own chips with just a couple ingredients (try [this recipe](#)) or take a walk on the wild side and make [sweet potato chips](#) (these make a GREAT base for [yummy nachos](#)). You can also swap tortilla chips for crispy [kale chips](#)!
2. **Say YES to Guac!:** Don’t be afraid of the fat in guacamole- it’s from [avocados](#) which are an excellent source of heart healthy, unsaturated fats as well as other nutrients. These good fats help keep you fuller longer and provide and balance out the carbs at your meal or snack. You do have to be mindful of portions though, so instead of eating a huge bowl, try ¼ cup instead. Or lighten it up by mixing in lots of diced tomatoes, onions, peppers and other veggies, like the asparagus guacamole recipe in this blog post.
3. **Top it Off:** Instead of high calorie toppings like queso and sour cream, opt for plain Greek yogurt or load up on salsa. Plain Greek yogurt has a tang similar to sour cream, but with an added punch of protein! Salsa is mostly veggies which means its low in calories, low in carbohydrates but high in vitamins and nutrients. Try making your own salsa, it’s super easy and the flavor combinations are endless! Give this [Pineapple Strawberry Salsa](#) a try.
4. **Try it Naked:** A good portion of the calories in burritos and tacos come from the shell, especially if you choose the fried ones, so try it naked! Instead, serve rice (ideally brown rice like in the recipe from this blog post), beans, protein and veggies in a bowl over a nice bed of lettuce or mixed greens.
5. **Lighten Up Your Cocktails:** A Cinco de Mayo fiesta isn’t quite complete without an ice cold margarita...BUT they are loaded with tons of sugar and hundreds of calories. Instead, try this [lightened up margarita](#) made with simple, natural ingredients or try [Micheladas](#) (light Mexican beer mixed with lots of fresh lime juice).

Now, grab some maracas, put on your best sombrero, and get ready to have fun this Cinco de Mayo! You'll have a fiesta to remember using these healthy hacks and your body will thank you for it later!

Try this memorable healthy Cinco de Mayo menu next week: roasted pork tenderloin (or any protein of your choice) seasoned with [homemade taco seasoning](#) served with a dollop of asparagus guacamole, cilantro lime brown rice and roasted kale chips. Yummy!!