Quesabirria Tacos

By [Tejal Rao](https://cooking.nytimes.com/ourcooks/tejal-rao/my-recipes?action=click&module=byline&region=recipe%20page)

* YIELD4 tacos
* Notes: The little puddle of fat floating on top of a pot of [birria](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1021858-birria-de-res) is pure gold, stained red from chiles, and rich with all the concentrated flavors of the original stew. In other words: Don’t waste it! Instead, spoon the fat off the top of the broth and reserve it for crisping tortillas to make quesabirria tacos, pan-fried until crisp, with cheese smushing out of the edges and browning in the pan. You can enjoy the tacos with salsas or hot sauce, but the birria meat and cooking oil are so flavorful that a little cilantro and onion are all you really need.

Sounds like this would make PERFECT small quesadillas (maybe they'd be easier to flip than tacos?), garnished with a dollop of sour cream and some sliced avocado. I can hardly wait!

INGREDIENTS

* ¼ cup seasoned birria fat plus 1 cup leftover birria meat (both from [Birria de Res](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1021858-birria-de-res))
* 4 corn tortillas
* 1 cup shredded low-moisture cheese, such as Monterey Jack
* ¼ white onion, chopped
* 1 handful fresh cilantro leaves, chopped
* 1 lime, quartered

PREPARATION

1. Use a spoon to skim the red-stained fat floating on the top of the birria pot — it’s deeply seasoned and the key to crisp, delicious tacos — and put it on a plate. Pull the meat and shred it with your hands, or a fork. (The meat should be very lightly dressed in broth, but not swimming in it.)
2. Heat a large nonstick or cast-iron skillet over medium. Working quickly, dip each tortilla into the birria fat on one side then flop it onto the hot pan, fat-side down. As it starts to sizzle, sprinkle 1/4 cup cheese to cover each tortilla, going all the way to the edges, then sprinkle about 1/4 cup meat over half of each tortilla.
3. As the tortillas brown and the cheese starts to melt, fold each tortilla in half to cover the meat, pressing down gently. It’s OK if some cheese spills out, in fact, it’s encouraged; this leads to lacy, crispy edges. Manage the heat and flip the tacos as needed to avoid burning, cooking until crisp on both sides.
4. Just before eating, lift up the taco edge and season each with a little onion, cilantro and lime juice, to taste.