



All About Ceviche

Who among us doesn't crave something cool and citrusy when the thermometer starts going crazy? Something that can be made in the AC and doesn't even require a stove or grill?

Ceviche is the perfect spring/summer dish. This is a dish you can eat by the pool...and still look good in your bathing suit the next day.

Ceviche is not a specific recipe, just a process: fresh raw fish "cooked" in citrus juice, mixed with vegetables and spices. Combine and let sit from 90 seconds to a few hours.

Weirded out by eating fish that you didn't put in a hot oven? Don't be. If the fish is fresh the dish is safe. (Shop at an award-winning fishmonger hint hint.)

We Texans tend to think of ceviche as a Mexican dish. But actually it was invented in Peru.

Ceviche recipes differ in ingredients and flavors throughout Latin America. Just like BBQ, each region has their signature styles:

Peru: Sweet potatoes and corn on the cob add some heft. A popular Peruvian/Japanese fusion dish features sashimi marinated ceviche style for mere minutes.

Ecuador: Shrimp and a soupier tomato base served with popcorn! Remember for shellfish, cook lightly 1-2 minutes before marinating.

Chile: Grapefruit, mint and cilantro. Of course Chilean sea bass is the preferred fish.

Mexico: The variety we are most familiar with here in Texas, with lime, cilantro, tomato and avocado, served in a tostada bowl.

Guatemala: "Black" ceviche Often features clams, Worcestershire sauce and hot peppers.

Caribbean/Florida: Conch replaces fish with pequin or scotch bonnet peppers.

Once you know the process, you are limited by your imagination: Add cucumber or avocado to cool it down. Mayo or sour cream to make it creamier. Use any white fish, or try tuna or salmon for a radically different flavor. Sub lobster or scallop for a modern twist. Serve over greens for a great salad. In martini glass for a standing cocktail party...in a big bowl with tortilla chips for a family-style casual dinner.

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