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Opening Extract from...

Mexican Food Made Simple

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Makes 4

Preparation time: :
20 minutes

2 large, ripe tomatoes or
Fresh tomato salsa
(see page 14)
sea salt and black pepper
1 red chilli, finely chopped
a drizzle of olive oil
300g cooking chorizo
4 ciabatta buns
1 tablespoon lard or olive oil
(optional)
8 large tablespoons
refried beans (see page 63)
1 avocado, mashed with the
juice of ½ lime
½ red onion,
sliced very thinly
1–2 baby gem lettuces
4 very generous tablespoons
Chipotle mayonnaise
(see page 39) or ordinary
mayonnaise

Torta (the Mexican club sandwich)

Mention the word 'torta' to any *chilango* (someone who comes from Mexico City) and you will see a faraway look come over them as they are transported back to the torta stands that line the streets of the capital. This sandwich is not for the faint-hearted, but it is exceedingly good.

Slice the tomatoes and dress them in salt and pepper, the chilli and a drizzle of olive oil.

Slice the chorizo up into bite-size pieces that can easily be grilled, unless you are cooking them outside on the barbecue, in which case grill the sausages first and then slice them so you don't lose precious pieces in the fire. Heat a griddle or frying pan until smoking hot, add the chorizo and cook for a few minutes a side until it is looking good and crispy. Remove to a plate and cut the buns in half. Brush both sides of the buns with the chorizo fat and a little extra lard or oil if you think they need it. Toast on the grill pan on both sides.

Smear one half of the buns with refried beans and top with the avocado, red onion, tomato, chorizo and lettuce. Smear the other half in the mayonnaise and press down firmly. Eat at once, preferably doused with healthy amounts of the blow-your-head-off habanero salsa on page 30 or the Fiery roast tomato salsa on page 159.

Chicken torta

Use leftover chicken (the BBQ'd chicken leftovers from page 160 are especially good) in the torta instead of chorizo, or try steak, pork or fish.

Vegetarian torta

Layer the sandwich up with grilled courgettes, mushrooms (see the taco filling on page 102) or grilled corn, sliced from the cob.

