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ULTIMATE NACHOS

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Inspired by my mom Julie Boone, the family's "Nacho Queen," these nachos start with three essential ingredients: a dollop of homemade pinto bean dip, sliced jalapeños, and plenty of grated cheddar. The key to crispy nachos is to limit the number of ingredients that go into the oven with the chips.

This simple yet solid foundation is delicious on its own and provides a great canvas for your favorite fresh toppings.

YIELD: Makes 12 servings **ACTIVE TIME:** 45 minutes **TOTAL TIME:** 1 hour 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS

For the grilled chicken:

- 2 tablespoons olive oil, plus more for grilling
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 1/2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 1/2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken breasts, pounded to 1-inch thickness

For the pinto bean dip:

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/3 cup chopped red onion
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 3 tablespoons chopped red-bell pepper
- 3/4 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 15-ounce can low-sodium pinto beans, rinsed and drained
- 1/2 tablespoon red-wine vinegar
- 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
- 3/4 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

For the nachos:

- 1 13-ounce bag restaurant-style tortilla chips
- 1 to 2 jalapeños (depending on heat), halved lengthwise and thinly sliced
- 8 ounces sharp cheddar cheese, grated (about 2 cups)
- 8 ounces Monterey jack cheese, grated (about 2 cups)
- 1 medium tomato, chopped
- 1/2 small red onion, very thinly sliced
- Sour cream, for serving
- Cilantro leaves, for serving

Additional toppings (pick one or more):

- [Guacamole with Aleppo Pepper](#)
- [Tomatillo Salsa with Serranos](#) , or storebought tomatillo salsa
- [Spicy Tomato Salsa with Cilantro and Chiles](#) , or storebought tomato salsa

PREPARATION

Grill the chicken:

In a small bowl, whisk the oil, lime, garlic, chili powder, salt, and pepper together. Place the chicken in a resealable plastic bag and pour the marinade over. Toss to coat and marinate for 30 minutes.

Heat a lightly oiled grill or grill pan over medium-high heat. Grill the chicken turning once until cooked through, about 4 to 5 minutes per side. Allow to cool, then cut chicken in 1/2-inch cubes.

Make the bean dip:

In a large skillet over medium heat, heat the olive oil. Add the onion and cook until softened, 4 to 5 minutes. Add the garlic and bell pepper and cook, stirring, until softened, 4 to 5 minutes more. Stir in the chili powder and cook until fragrant, 1 minute more. Remove from heat.

To the bowl of a food processor, add the beans, vinegar, oregano, salt, pepper, and 1/4 cup water and pulse to combine. Add the onion mixture and pulse to combine. If necessary, add more water 1 tablespoon at a time and process until smooth. Taste and adjust seasoning.

Assemble the nachos:

Preheat oven to 400°. Add a small dollop of bean dip to the center of each chip (about 1/4 teaspoon per chip) and divide chips among 2 rimmed baking sheets. Sprinkle evenly with jalapeño slices and cheeses. Bake until cheese is bubbling and melted and the edges of chips are just starting to brown, 8 to 10 minutes. Top with tomato, onion, sour cream, grilled chicken, and cilantro. Serve immediately.