

In Search of the World's Best Tacos

It could be argued that the taco is the perfect food. Tacos are equally inviting whether prepared using centuries-old recipes or modern gastronomic fusions. They are fun to eat—handheld and no nonsense. You can find them in home kitchens, street stalls, and world-class restaurants around the world. Tacos, it seems, have become as ubiquitous as pizza throughout the global culinary scene.

Though the true origin of the taco is unknown, taco experts theorize they came from the silver mines of Mexico. Taco is Spanish for “plug,” and it’s estimated that tacos as we know them got their name from the small explosives made of gunpowder wrapped in paper that miners inserted into holes carved in rock faces. As taco expert and professor of history at the University of Minnesota Jeffrey M. Pilcher explained to *Smithsonian* magazine, the first

references to the taco in any sort of archive came in the 19th century.

Today, you can find both authentic and unique takes on tacos all over the globe. From Korean taco creations at trendy food trucks in L.A. to authentic fresh fish tacos in Los Cabos, here are eight taquerias you can travel to with Inspirato Pass to experience some of the best tacos ever created.

Chicago

Boasting 22 restaurants with Michelin stars, Chicago consistently ranks as one of the best U.S. cities to visit for foodies. Though the Windy City might not typically jump to top of mind for excellent Mexican food, these trendy taco joints will have you thinking again. There are more than 1,200 trips to Chicago available on Inspirato Pass right now—you could make it in time for next Taco Tuesday.

► *Big Star*

With locations in Wicker Park and Wrigleyville, the Big Star menu is inspired by authentic Mexican street food and offers an extensive bourbon program. Self-described as “a bourbon and beer-focused, taco-slinging, late-night honky-tonk,” the atmosphere is almost as enticing as the food and drink. Classics like tacos al pastor—marinated and spit-roasted pork shoulder with grilled pineapple—grace the menu, but there’s also some interesting vegetarian creations like tofu- or potato-based tacos.

► *Antique Taco*

Awarded a spot on “The 30 Best Tacos in America” from Zagat, Antique Tacos has three locations serving up creations like the market mushroom taco and unique sweet treats like the abuelita popart and horchata milkshake. Owned by a husband-and-wife team, Antique Tacos is proud to source many ingredients locally and make tortillas fresh daily—plus you’ll love the antique décor sprinkled throughout.

Los Cabos

Search no further than Los Cabos for the perfect fish taco. You’ll find delicious varieties of baja fish and shrimp tacos at nearly every local restaurant, but these top contenders consistently rank as Inspirato members’ favorites. You can decide for yourself which tacos are the best—there are more than 4,000 trips to Los Cabos available right now through Inspirato Pass.



▲ *Taco Guss*

Located in the heart of downtown Cabo San Lucas, this hole-in-the-wall eatery is the perfect spot for an authentic dining experience while exploring the nearby marina. And if you happen to be hitting up the local nightlife scene, stop by Taco Guss after you dance up an appetite; it’s open 24 hours a day.

► *Tacos Gardenias*

Established more than 30 years ago, this modest but well-known taco joint serves up fresh ceviche, exotic cactus tacos, and classic regional specialties like shrimp and fish tacos. Just down the hill from the beach and open from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., Tacos Gardenias caters to both the beach crowd and those hitting the town.

Los Angeles

There is no doubt that L.A. has one of the most vibrant taco scenes in the world. From star street-style vendors to legendary taco trucks to Instagram-worthy hidden gems, it was hard to narrow down our top recommendations. With around 1,000 trips to Los Angeles County available through Inspirato Pass right now, you can start sampling tacos as soon as next week.

► *Kogi Taqueira*

Starting as a family-run food truck in 2008, Kogi took L.A. by storm with its Korean short rib taco. Kogi now has four food trucks, a catering business, and a brick-and-mortar taqueria on the Westside of L.A. The star of its menu will always be that Korean short rib taco, but other cult favorites include the kimchi quesadilla and calamari taco.



▲ *Guisados*

Named one of the best restaurants in the world by *Condé Nast Traveler*, Guisados focuses on just one thing: authentic, homemade tacos like the ones owner Armando De La Torres Sr.’s mom made for him growing up. Their specialty lies in stews and braises served on freshly handmade tortillas. There’s love and nostalgia in every bite.

San Miguel de Allende

Book one of nearly 75 available Inspirato Pass trips to San Miguel de Allende where you’ll find culture, historic architecture, and pure charm. This 500-year-old city, designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site, will make you feel like you’ve stepped back in time where you can find humble and authentic food at every turn. And, here’s a little pro tip: if you can make the nearly four-hour drive to Mexico City, you’ll find taco mecca.

► *Andy’s Taco Cart*

Sure, there are plenty of world-class chefs and five-star restaurants in San Miguel, but for a casual bite and a taste of something local, visit Andy’s Taco Cart. This quintessential Mexican street taco stand is open all night and is known for its tacos al pastor and gringas de bistec, which can be described as really big tacos made with flour tortillas instead of corn, steak, and lots of melty queso Oaxaca.

► *Don Felix Tacos*

The owner and namesake of this establishment, Don Felix, previously ran a very successful taco stand in San Miguel and locals and expats alike have followed him to his charming and kitschy brick-and-mortar location. This is authentic Mexican fare and family dining at its best. Those in search of a good taco must order the taco platter that offers seven different styles—from huitlacoche (a mushroom that grows on corn) to chistorra (a type of Spanish sausages).