

ini Tostadas with Chile-Butter Crab & Avocado-Tomatillo Crema

akes about 15 tostadas

is also delicious with fresh
ick-cut tortilla chips if you place
e crab and salsa in separate
wls. You will have about 2 cups
tover salsa, which is great on
os or other dishes. The leftover
ile butter can be frozen; save it
erve warm with cracked crab
other time.

le crab

1 dried ancho chile, seeds and
stems removed and split open

1 cup unsalted butter

2 garlic cloves, peeled and light-
ly crushed

1 shallot or $\frac{1}{4}$ onion, finely
chopped

1 sprig oregano

2 strips lemon peel

Kosher salt to taste

One 2-2½-pound crab, cooked,
cleaned and meat picked
(about 12 ounces fresh crab-
meat)

he tostadas

Vegetable oil

15 mini tortillas, about 4 inches
across (see Note)

he Avocado-Tomatillo Crema

1 pound tomatillos, washed,
peeled and halved

ripe avocado, cubed
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Mexican crema, creme
fraiche or sour cream
Juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ lime + more to taste
1 serrano pepper, ~~seeded and~~
chopped

Finely diced red radishes and
cucumber, to garnish

For the crab: Heat a dry skillet or
griddle over medium heat. Place
the chile on the pan and push
down lightly with a spoon or
spatula until softened. Repeat on
the other side, being careful that
the chile doesn't burn. Set aside.

Place the butter in a double
boiler with the garlic, shallot and
oregano, lemon peel and toasted
chile. When the butter melts, let it
infuse over low heat for 1 hour.

Strain the butter through a
fine-mesh strainer, pressing the
solids, then season with salt. It
should have a very mild chile
flavor. The butter can be made a
few days ahead.

When just about to serve,
place the butter and crabmeat in
a small saute pan. Bring to a
simmer over medium heat. Strain
again and season with salt.

For the tostadas: Pour oil into a
stock pot to a depth of 2 inches.
Heat over medium heat until it
reaches 350° on a deep-fry ther-
mometer. Spread paper towels
over a baking sheet.

Add 3 mini tortillas at a time

and fry until crisp and golden,
flipping once, about 2 minutes
per side. Remove with tongs and
drain on paper towels, then sea-
son with salt immediately. Repea-
with remaining tostadas.

For the crema: Place the tomatil-
los, avocado, crema, salt, lime
juice and serrano pepper in a
blender and blend until very
smooth. Adjust seasoning with
salt and lime juice. Salsa can be
made 1 day ahead.

To serve: Top each mini tostada
with a heaping tablespoon of the
warm crab, drizzle with some of
the butter and sprinkle with lime
juice. Top with 1 teaspoon of the
crema and garnish with the rad-
ishes and cucumbers.

Note: Guerrero brand mini tortillas
are available at Mexican markets;
Primavera's stone-ground mini
tortillas are available at Whole
Foods Markets.

Per tostada: 110 calories, 6 g
protein, 7 g carbohydrate, 7 g fat
(3 g saturated), 29 mg cholester-
ol, 144 mg sodium, 1 g fiber.

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