

# Mini Tostadas with Chile-Butter Crab & Avocado-Tomatillo Crema

Makes about 15 tostadas

This is also delicious with fresh quick-cut tortilla chips if you place the crab and salsa in separate bowls. You will have about 2 cups leftover salsa, which is great on tacos or other dishes. The leftover chile butter can be frozen; save it to serve warm with cracked crab another time.

## For the crab

- 1 dried ancho chile, seeds and stems removed and split open
- 1 cup unsalted butter
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled and lightly crushed
- 1 shallot or ¼ 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 crabmeat)

## For the tostadas

Vegetable oil

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

## For the Avocado-Tomatillo Crema

- 1 pound tomatillos, washed, peeled and halved

2 ripe avocado, cubed  
¼ cup Mexican crema, creme fraiche or sour cream

Juice of ½ lime + more to taste

2 serrano pepper, seeded and chopped

Finely diced red radishes and cucumber, to garnish

*Very good, but mild*

**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 thermometer. 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 season with salt immediately. Repeat with remaining tostadas.

**For the crema:** Place the tomatillos, 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 radishes 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 cholesterol, 144 mg sodium, 1 g fiber.

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