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Celebrate California Avocado Month with this fresh spin on a summer favorite

By

California Avocado Commission

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California summers are filled with warm nights, trips to the coast and an abundance of fresh, local produce, like delicious in-season California avocados. Grown in the Golden State from San Diego to Monterey, the versatile fruit adds dynamic flavor and texture to everyone's favorite summer dishes and is celebrated each June during California Avocado Month. With this in mind, the California Avocado Commission set out to discover Californian's favorite California avocado recipes. Partnering with Modern Luxury, CAC hosted a recipe contest, asking California-based fans to submit their must-eat avocado dishes.

Finalist recipes were tested with El Cajon's Mary Beth Porucznik bringing home the grand prize of \$1,000 plus a \$400 restaurant gift card and a California avocado prize pack. with her delicious California Avocado & Shrimp Pizza recipe. Porucznik's winning recipe was prepared by a Modern Luxury chef and professionally photographed to be featured on CaliforniaAvocado.com along with other finalist recipes.

"California Avocado Month is the perfect opportunity for home chefs to step up their recipes with delicious, fresh California avocados, which is why we hosted the California Avocado Recipe Contest," said Jan DeLyser, CAC's vice president of marketing. "It's been exciting to see the enthusiasm from our fans with the variety of dishes shared and we hope to inspire consumers to create their own dish at home."

Porucznik's California Avocado & Shrimp Pizza features fresh, mouth-watering ingredients that combine to create a masterpiece of flavors and textures, including grilled shrimp, pickled onions and jalapeños, ricotta cheese and of course, creamy California avocados.

Three runners-up also received prize packs: Deborah Kosareff from Whittier with a Pan Fried Street Corn & California Avocado recipe, Yoshiharu Sogi from Sonoma with a California Avocado Wellington dish and Nicole Ruiz Hudson from Oakland with Southwest Chicken & California Avocado Tartines. All recipes were evaluated based on several key elements, including overall taste, presentation and creativity.

Currently in the peak of their season, California avocados are a heart-healthy fruit that are naturally sodium-, cholesterol- and trans fat-free. One-third of a medium avocado (50 g) has 80 calories and contributes nearly 20 vitamins and minerals, making it a nutrient-dense choice.

California avocado enthusiasts can access seasonal recipes like these and more at CaliforniaAvocado.com and follow along at Facebook.com/CaliforniaAvocado, and on Twitter and Instagram at @ca_avocados.

California Avocado & Shrimp Pizza

Serves: 4

Prep Time: 4 hours 25 minutes (includes 4 hours refrigeration of pickled onions)

Cook Time: 15 minutes

Active Time: 1 hour 35 minutes

Avocado & Shrimp Pizza Ingredients:

- 1 clove garlic
- 1 to 2 chipotle peppers in adobo, reserve adobo
- 2 ½ limes
- ¾ cup olive oil, divided
- 1 tsp. sugar
- ½ tsp. sea salt
- ½ lb. medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 2 Tbsp. agave nectar
- 1 tsp. chipotle pepper adobo
- 2 ripe, Fresh California Avocados, seeded, peeled and thinly sliced just before using
- 2 Tbsp. chopped cilantro, plus additional for garnish
- 1 lb. prepared pizza crust or Pizza Dough (see make-ahead recipe below)
- 1 cup Ricotta Pizza Sauce (see make-ahead recipe below)
- ½ cup Quick Pickled Onions and Jalapeños (see make-ahead recipe below), drained

Avocado & Shrimp Pizza Instructions:

- Preheat oven and pizza stone at 425 degrees F for at least 1 hour.
- While oven is preheating, combine garlic, chipotle peppers, juice from 1 lime, ½ cup olive oil, sugar and salt in a food processor or blender and blend to combine.
- Once combined, place this marinade and the shrimp in a bag and marinate for about 30 minutes, or overnight.
- Remove shrimp from marinade and grill over medium heat for about 4 minutes, turning halfway until cooked through. Set aside.
- In a small bowl, whisk together remaining olive oil, agave nectar, juice from ½ lime, reserved chipotle pepper adobo and half of the cilantro until combined. Set aside.
- On a sheet of parchment paper, stretch pizza dough ball to the size of the pizza stone (approx. 16 inch). Pierce with a fork throughout.
- Bake on pizza stone for about 8 to 10 minutes until lightly browned. Remove crust from the oven and let cool for about 5 minutes. If you don't have a pizza stone, bake on a baking sheet for 15 minutes.
- Once cooled, top the crust with ricotta sauce, followed by sliced avocados (fanning them out), grilled shrimp, pickled onion and jalapeño slices and a sprinkle of cilantro to cover the pizza.
- Lightly drizzle with the reserved agave and chipotle oil mixture over the pizza, to taste.
- Cut remaining lime into wedges and serve with pizza slices.

Ricotta Pizza Sauce Ingredients:

- 1 cup ricotta cheese
- 1 jalapeño, minced (remove seeds for less heat if desired)
- 1 Tbsp. chopped cilantro

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- 1/8 tsp. sea salt, or to taste
 - 1/8 tsp. pepper, or to taste

- **Ricotta Pizza Sauce Instructions:**

- Whisk together all ingredients until combined and set aside.

- **Pizza Dough Ingredients:**

- 2 ¼ cups unbleached, high-gluten bread flour
- 3/4 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. instant yeast
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/2 Tbsp. sugar
- 3/4 cup plus 2 Tbsp. ice cold water
- 1/2 tsp. cornmeal, for dusting

- **Pizza Dough Instructions:**

- In the bowl of a stand mixer, mix together flour, salt and yeast until combined.
- Add the oil, sugar and water and mix until it forms a ball.
- On a clean surface, take out the dough and knead for about 5 minutes or until the dough is smooth.
- Shape the dough into a ball, flour lightly and place on a jelly roll pan or baking sheet that has been lined with lightly oiled parchment paper. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight, or up to three days.
- Remove the dough from the refrigerator two hours prior to use.

- **Quick Pickled Onions and Jalapeños Ingredients:**

- 1 jalapeño, thinly sliced
- 1/4 large red onion, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup rice wine vinegar
- 1/2 tsp. sugar
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/8 tsp. pepper, or to taste

- **Quick Pickled Onions and Jalapeños Instructions:**

- Layer jalapeños and onions in a 16 oz. container.
- In a saucepan, heat the rice wine vinegar, sugar, salt and pepper over medium heat until sugar dissolves, about 3 minutes, and pour over jalapeños and onions.
- Cover and refrigerate for four hours or overnight.
- **Large avocados are recommended for these recipes. A large avocado averages about 8 ounces. If using smaller or larger size avocados adjust the quantity accordingly.*

California Avocado & Shrimp Pizza by Mary Beth Porucznik for the California Avocado Commission Recipe Contest (Photo: Business Wire)

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