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Sweet pepper chipotle ranch salad

By

Pure Flavor & A Toasted Crumb

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Sweet and smokey salad made with grilled brisket.

There are so many flavors associated with summer, and that smoky, fresh-off-the-barbecue taste is one of the most popular. Whether you're grilling meat or veggies, that open flame flavor can't be replicated by any other means.

When Amber from [A Toasted Crumb](#) experimented with smoking her very first brisket, she did a lot of research about flavors and techniques. She wanted something to pair with it and thought immediately of how incredible Pure Flavor's® [Aurora Bites Mini Sweet Peppers](#) taste right off the grill. With grilled peppers in mind, she went to work on pairing flavors until she got the right combination. She wanted to balance the sweetness from the peppers with something spicy to complement the smokiness of the brisket. That's how her [Sweet Pepper Chipotle Ranch Salad](#) was born.



Grilling the Veggies

For this recipe, you want a nice char on the peppers. In order to achieve this, the grill needs to be hot. Preheat the grill for about 10 to 15 minutes. If the grate isn't hot enough, the mini sweet peppers will get softer than you want them to be before you get that charred effect.

While the grill is heating up, place the peppers, onion, garlic powder, olive oil, salt and pepper in a large bowl and give them a toss to coat them evenly. It is important that the veggies are thoroughly coated so they don't stick to the grill. If you're tempted to use a grill pan or foil on the grates – don't. The cooking effect you want to achieve for the smokiness of this salad comes from the veggies being in contact with high heat. Put all the vegetables directly on the grill for about 7 to 10 minutes, turning them over to evenly cook. Look for light charring and cracking or blistering on the skin of the peppers. The roasted, almost burnt, pieces really help bring out the flavor!



Homemade Dressing

The best thing about homemade dressing is that you can control the flavor. For Amber's chipotle ranch dressing, you have the option of making it as spicy or mild as you'd like. It's very easy to make, you just put mayonnaise, buttermilk, cumin, garlic powder, lime zest, cilantro and chipotle peppers into a blender and pulse it a few times until it's a nice, smooth texture. It is important that you taste the dressing after you blend it so that you know if you need to adjust the flavors. If you added too much chipotle, you could cool it down by adding a little more mayo and buttermilk. If it's not spicy enough, you can add more chipotle. Tasting and adjusting is the key to getting the perfect flavor.

Assembling the Salad

Amber likes to build her salads directly on a serving plate rather than tossing it together in a big bowl. It keeps everything crisp, and it always looks really pretty. You just start with a bed of lettuce, then add the grilled mini sweet peppers, jalapenos and onions, avocado slices, cotija cheese, fresh cilantro, and lime wedges. You can drizzle the homemade dressing over top, serve on the side or both!

If you don't have a smoker, or the time, patience or knowhow to cook a full brisket, don't worry! This salad pairs well with any grilled meat! You could even grill up some plant-based meat substitutes to pair with it. The key is to pair it with a protein you can grill up and infuse with that classic, summer smoked flavor that only a grill can produce.

To get the full recipe, [click here.](#)

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