

# Steak Tacos

SERVES 4 TO 6

TIME 1¼ HOURS

**Why This Works:** To develop an indoor steak taco recipe that yielded meat as tender, juicy, and rich-tasting as grilled, we chose flank steak, which is beefy and tender when sliced thin against the grain. Pan searing gave us the browned exterior and crispy, brittle edges characteristic of grilled meat. A paste of oil, cilantro, scallions, garlic, jalapeño, and cumin, which we applied to the meat and then scraped off just before cooking, gave our steak a flavor boost without sacrificing browning.

## HERB PASTE

- ½ cup packed fresh cilantro leaves
- 3 scallions, chopped coarse
- 1 jalapeño chile, stemmed, seeded, and chopped coarse
- 3 garlic cloves, chopped coarse
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon lime juice

## STEAK

- 1 (1½- to 1¾-pound) flank steak, cut lengthwise (with grain) into 4 equal pieces
- Salt
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil

## TACOS

- 12 (6-inch) corn tortillas, warmed
- Fresh cilantro leaves
- Finely chopped white onion
- Lime wedges

**Before You Begin:** We prefer this steak cooked slightly above medium-rare. For a spicier dish, reserve and add the ribs and seeds from the jalapeño to the herb paste as desired. In addition to the toppings suggested below, try serving the tacos with salsa, Sweet and Spicy Pickled Onions, or thinly sliced radishes or cucumber.

**1. FOR THE HERB PASTE:** Pulse cilantro, scallions, jalapeño, garlic, and cumin in food processor until finely chopped, 10 to 12 pulses, scraping down sides of bowl as necessary. Add oil and process until mixture is smooth and resembles pesto, about 15 seconds. Transfer 2 tablespoons herb paste to bowl and whisk in lime juice; set aside for serving.

**2. FOR THE STEAK:** Using fork, poke each piece of steak 10 to 12 times on each side. Place in large baking dish, rub all sides of steak with 1½ teaspoons salt, then coat with remaining herb paste. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.

**3.** Scrape herb paste off steak and sprinkle all sides of steak evenly with sugar and pepper. Heat oil in 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until just smoking. Place steak in skillet and cook until well browned, about 3 minutes. Flip steak and cook until second side is



well browned, 2 to 3 minutes. Using tongs, stand each piece on cut side and cook, turning as necessary, until all cut sides are well browned and meat registers 125 to 130 degrees, 2 to 7 minutes. Transfer steak to carving board and let rest for 5 minutes.

**4. FOR THE TACOS:** Using sharp chef's knife or carving knife, slice steak pieces against grain ⅛ inch thick. Transfer steak to bowl with herb paste–lime juice mixture and toss to coat. Season with salt. Spoon small amount of steak into center of each tortilla and serve immediately, passing cilantro, onion, and lime wedges separately.

**TO MAKE AHEAD:** Steak and reserved herb paste–lime juice mixture can be prepared through step 2 and refrigerated separately for up to 24 hours. To serve, let reserved herb paste–lime juice mixture come to room temperature and continue with step 3.