

Taco Informative

The humble taco.

Dictionary.com defines the taco as “an often crisply fried tortilla filled, with seasoned chopped meat, lettuce, tomatoes, and cheese.” (cue slide)

The taco is a very complex and developed food. It’s elements have been evolving for hundreds of years into the food it is today thanks to taco entrepreneurs such as Glen Bell, the creator of Taco Bell.

The taco is also a very universal food, it is loved by everyone and has even saved lives. (cue slide) Police in Mexico City were able to save a suicidal man by promising to buy him tacos. The young man was found ready to jump off a bridge because he was lonely and depressed. The police talked to him, then they went to get get tacos. After they ate, the police took the man to a mental facility and saved his life.

We will begin with the origin and creation of the taco, then move into the history and elements that make up the taco. Up next we have the current taco and one of the many taco franchises, Taco Bell.

Although the taco isn’t something everybody enjoys, it is something that you can personalize and make your own. The taco comes in many varieties and can even have a Dorito shell.

Now lettuce taco-bout the taco.

Let’s begin with the **Origin Of The Taco**. (cue slide)

Dating back to the 18th century, the taco has jumped from the Mexican silver mines to an American staple. The Origin of the taco is really unknown, but the most probable and only theory I could find is from Jeffrey M. Pilcher, professor of history at the University of Minnesota, it states that the taco dates back to the 18th century Mexican Silver mines. In the mines the word “taco” referred to the little charges of dynamite the miners would use to excavate ore. When you think about it a taco is like a stick of dynamite because both the taco and the original taco have explosive qualities. Moving on... One of the first

mentions of the taco in America was in a newspaper written in 1905. This was a time when Mexican Immigrants started to come to America to work in mines, on railroads, and other jobs. Mexican food was seen as a lower class street food. It was mainly associated with the Chili Queens of San Antonio, (cue slide) who were street vendors that sold tacos during festivals to earn a little extra money. Thanks to the Chili Queens, the taco began to gain popularity and is now a loved staple of everyday American life.

Up next we have the **history of the taco**. (cue slide)

From the 18th century to the 21st century, the taco has been evolving from what seems like the beginning of time. In Mexico “taco” is a generic term, just like “sandwich” for Americans. A taco is just a tortilla surrounding the virtually endless possibility of fillings. Now let's go back to the “simpler” times of the 1940s to investigate the creation of the taco shell, this was the time that the Mexican restaurateurs began to use the taco shell to serve the taco “fresh” from their cart. Even though Glen Bell claimed to have created the taco shell in 1950 in his authorized biography, when you look back at the original taco shell patents, you can see that they were awarded to Mexican restaurateurs. The thing about the taco shell is that it is crucial to the taco. Without the shell what would be the blanket that wraps it all up and holds it together. The thing about the tortilla is that it has been around for thousands of years. Mexican Historians and maize scholars have found evidence of the first corn tortillas being made in 3000 BC by the early mesoamericans after the creation of corn.

Now we will taco-bout **the different types of tacos**. (cue slide)

There are many types of tacos because there is virtually no limit for what the taco can be filled and wrapped with. From the “average joe” taco to the spaghetti taco, they all have their own origins and creators. Each taco has its own unique flavor, fillings, and tortilla. (cue slide) The “average joe” taco is your average taco with a soft or hard corn or flour shell with a meat, cheese, and vegetable filling. (cue slide) The spaghetti taco is an iconic food of the popular Nickelodeon show, iCarly. The spaghetti taco is a hard

corn tortilla filled with angel hair pasta smothered in a tomato-meat pasta sauce.

(cue slide) There is also the fish taco. This contains a grilled corn tortilla filled with white fish, guacamole, an aioli, and lime juice. (cue slide) The taquito translates to “small taco”. It is a Mexican dish consisting of a small rolled up tortilla filled with beef, cheese, or chicken. It is then deep-fried and topped with sour cream or guacamole.

Taco Bell (cue slide)

This is a food chain that has been reinventing the taco and serving it up in its franchises since 1964. Glen Bell is the founder and creator of Taco Bell. He originally had a hot-dog stand called “Bell's Drive-In”. While looking for alternative menu items, Bell began selling 19-cent tacos from a side window in one of his stands. His tacos began selling so well that he and a partner opened three Taco Tias in the San Bernardino area. He wanted to grow his company, so Bell sold the restaurants and formed a new partnership that opened four El Tacos. Bell's true desire was to go solo. He sold his share of El Tacos to his partners and opened the first Taco Bell in 1962. He franchised in 1964, and since then Taco Bell has grown to the nation's leading Mexican-Style quick service restaurant chain. (cue slide) Bell resigned as Chairman of the Board in 1975 and three years later, he sold his interest to PepsiCo, Inc. He died on January 16, 2010. Taco Bell has also taken up “product endorsements”. (cue slide) They have introduced the new Dorito Locos Taco with a hard dorito chip shell. (cue slide) They also have a “Mystery” flavored airheads icee, a Mountain Dew icee, and a Starburst icee.

As we reflect on the taco,

We should thank all of our ancestors including but not limited to the Early Mesoamericans, the Chili Queens, and Glen Bell for helping us get the taco to the point that it is today. The taco has been developing for hundreds of years and each element works together to create the perfect food.

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