

# FOOD

## Purple Rice Flour Tortillas



BY PAUL A. NEUFELDT

*This is a simple, from scratch recipe for tortillas with a unique spin. Try these exquisite and exceedingly tasty purple tortillas to add a flare (and a load of nutrition) to any meal. Cook them up and top with salsa, cheese and/or your other favorite Mexican toppings. This is also a great food alternative for those avoiding wheat.*

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup brown rice flour
- 1/2 cup black rice flour
- 1/2 cup ground chia seeds
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- 2 cups boiling water
- walnut oil for frying

### Instructions:

**1. Making Brown and Black Rice Flour:** You can buy brown rice flour in the marketplace, though it is harder to find black rice flour. Or you can make either yourself at home using dry rice grains. Put 1/2 cup of uncooked brown rice or black rice in a coffee grinder or spice grinder and grind for two minutes. Repeat in 1/2 cup increments, letting the grinder cool between each set (*I use the freezer to cool my coffee grinder quickly for a couple minutes so it doesn't overheat between sessions*). Have a stock of the separate rice flours ready in advance for doing many fresh batches of tortillas quickly.

### Utensils:

- clean coffee or spice grinder
- wooden spoon
- skillet
- kitchen parchment paper
- tortilla press or rolling pin
- spatula

form each segment into a ball (*nine dough balls total*). Keep the balls covered to avoid drying out if you have to delay cooking or are doing a large batch.

**6.** Place a piece of parchment paper on the bottom of a tortilla press; place one of the balls in the center, cover with a second sheet of parchment, and press to form a thin, round tortilla. If you don't have a tortilla press, you can roll each tortilla out by hand with a dowel or rolling pin--don't worry about them being perfectly round.

**7.** Gently remove the top sheet of parchment. Dribble about a teaspoon of walnut oil on the skillet. Place the tortilla face-down into the skillet, then carefully peel off

the second sheet of parchment. Cook for about 3 minutes on each side (*turn down the heat if necessary to prevent burning; the tortillas will turn a deeper purple and black in spots on the outside as they are cooked through*).

**8.** Repeat step 6 above to make a stack of tortillas with the remaining dough.



**2.** Grind the half cup of chia seeds in a clean coffee or spice grinder for 30 seconds (so it powders to about the same consistency as the rice flour).

**3.** In a mixing bowl, whisk together the rice flour, ground chia seeds, and sea salt. Add the boiling water and mix with a wooden spoon.

**4.** When the dough is cool enough to handle, knead it a little in the bowl. Then let it rest for five minutes while the skillet heats up. Add more water, 1 tablespoon kneaded in at a time, if the dough feels too dry (*but not too much -- dough can fall apart if it's too runny*). The wet dough will be a lavender-purple color before cooking.

**5.** Preheat a cast-iron skillet (*a non-stick skillet is inferior to cast-iron for tortillas but will also work*) over medium heat.

**6.** While the skillet is heating, form all the dough into a big flat square and divide it into nine pieces with your spatula. Then

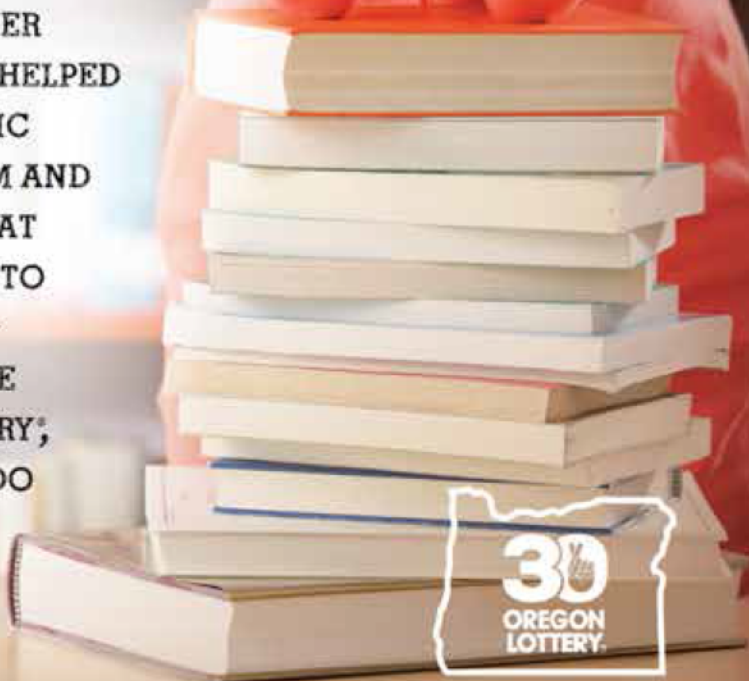
Transfer the cooked tortillas to a plate and flip another plate over the top to keep the tortillas warm and soft. Let them sit for about 20 minutes inside the plates; this way they will be nice and pliable for serving.

**NOTE:** *You can just use 1 1/2 cups brown rice flour if the black rice isn't easily located. To make chips, fry the tortillas for 5 minutes on each side instead of three; afterward, cut/break them up into 2 inch squares or triangles, and dip into salsa for a healthy, flavorful snack.*



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