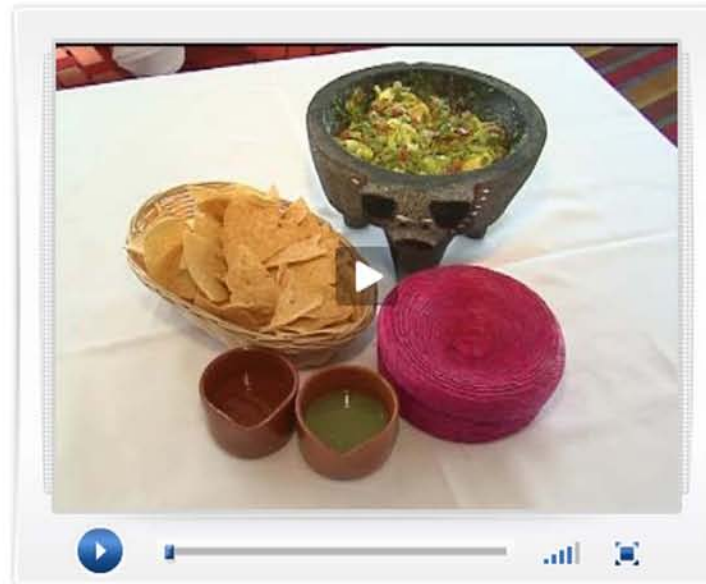


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## Zagat Restaurants: Homemade Cinco De Mayo Treats

By: Donna Karger



If you're looking to celebrate Cinco de Mayo without leaving your living room, the Zagat Restaurant Guide points us to Executive Chef Joe Quintana of Rosa Mexicano restaurant.

### Rosa Mexicano

61 Columbus Avenue  
New York, New York  
(212) 977-7700  
[www.rosamexicano.com](http://www.rosamexicano.com)

Surveyors say the "made-tableside guacamole" here is "justifiably famous" and now we'll show you how to make it at home.

Quintana starts with a chile paste he grinds in a traditional molcajete or lava rock imported from Mexico.

"We start our guacamole with white onions, some cilantro. We use jalapenos," said Quintana.

After adding table salt it's time for the avocados. The chef says your fruit is ripe if the skin flexes back after you indent it with your finger. Use a serrated knife to cut the skin open and make three by four cuts in each half.

Quintana adds diced plum tomatoes to his recipe for sweetness.

If you're looking to sweeten up your version at home, you can add grapes, pineapples or mangos to the concoction. For a more savory dip, add lump crab meat.

Want to keep your leftovers from oxidizing? Quintana says save the pit and put it back into the mixture overnight, make sure your container is tightly closed, and add lemon juice for acidity.

Besides the guacamole, patrons praise Mexicano's "signature pomegranate margaritas."

According to Zagat, Rosa Mexicano, which has three locations in Manhattan, is "always a fiesta."

Out of a possible 30, Rosa Mexicano gets a 21 for food, a 21 for décor and a 19 for service. The average price of a meal here is \$48.

If you're looking to head out for a Cinco de Mayo celebration, all Rosa Mexicano locations are holding Mexican Masquerade parties. The first 200 guests to show up after 5 p.m. in costume will receive a free shot of 1800 tequila.