

School will be back in session soon, if not already. Here are some kid-friendly recipes for packing in lunches or an afternoon snack. Let us know if there is something you would like us to put in our column, or if you have a recipe to share, please submit to ads@thedrummer.com.

Watermelon Smoothie

*Yield: 2 servings
Prep Time: 5 mins
Total Time: 5 mins*

3 c. watermelon, diced
1 c. frozen strawberries
3 lg. ice cubes
1 (5.3-oz.) container vanilla Greek yogurt
1/2 banana
1/2 lime, juiced

Combine the watermelon, strawberries, ice cubes, yogurt, banana, and lime juice in a blender. Blend on low to break up the strawberries and ice, stopping to scrape the sides of the blender, as needed. Increase speed to high and blend until very smooth, about 20 seconds. Serve immediately.

Apple Salsa with Cinnamon Chips

*Prep/Total Time: 25 min.
Yield: 4 c. salsa*

Salsa:

2 med. tart apples, chopped
1 c. chopped strawberries
2 med. kiwifruit, peeled & chopped
1 sm. orange
2 T. brown sugar
2 T. apple jelly, melted

Chips:

8 flour tortillas (7" or 8")
1 T. water
1/4 c. sugar
2 tsp. ground cinnamon

In a bowl, combine apples, strawberries and kiwi. Grate orange peel to measure 1-1/2 teaspoons, squeeze juice from orange. Add peel and juice to apple mixture. Stir in brown sugar and jelly.

For chips, brush tortillas lightly with water. Combine sugar and cinnamon; sprinkle over tortillas. Cut each tortilla into eight wedges. Place in a single layer on ungreased baking sheets.

Bake at 400° for 6-8 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool. Serve with salsa.

Garlic-Ranch Party Mix

*Yield: 10 c.
Prep Time: 15 mins
Total Time: 1 hr 10 mins*

6 T. buttermilk powder
4 tsp. garlic powder
4 tsp. onion powder
1 T. dried chives
2 tsp. dried dill
1 tsp. kosher salt, plus more to taste
1 tsp. black pepper
5 c. cereal squares
1 c. thin pretzel sticks
1 c. salted roasted mixed nuts
1 stick salted butter, melted
1/3 c. popcorn kernels
1 T. vegetable oil

Preheat the oven to 250°. Whisk the buttermilk powder, garlic powder, onion powder, chives, dill, salt and pepper in a small bowl.

Dump the cereal, pretzel sticks and nuts into a large bowl. Add 6 tablespoons melted butter and toss. Sprinkle with all but 1 tablespoon of the seasoning mixture and toss again to coat. Spread on a baking sheet and bake, stirring every 15 minutes or so, until everything is toasty and crispy, about 50 minutes.

When the mixture comes out of the oven, make your popcorn: Put a few kernels of popcorn and the oil in a large pot over medium heat; cover. When the kernels pop, add the rest of the kernels, cover and cook, shaking the pot occasionally, until the popping stops, about 5 minutes. Dump the popcorn into a large bowl and toss with the remaining 2 tablespoons melted butter, reserved 1 tablespoon seasoning mixture, and salt to taste. Add the cereal mix and toss.

Fruit and Cheese Kabobs

Prep/Total Time: 20 min.

Yield: 12 kabobs

(1-1/2 c. dip)

1 c. vanilla yogurt
1/2 c. sour cream
2 T. honey
1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
2 c. fresh strawberries, halved
1-1/2 c. green grapes
8 oz. cubed cheddar or Monterey Jack cheese, or a combination of cheeses

For dip, mix first 4 ingredients. On 12 wooden skewers, alternately thread strawberries, grapes and cheese cubes. Serve immediately or refrigerate.

Cheesy Quesadillas

Prep/Total Time: 15 min.

Yield: 6 servings

4 flour tortillas (8"), warmed
1-1/2 c. shredded Mexican cheese blend
1/2 c. salsa

Place the tortillas on a greased baking sheet. Combine the cheese and salsa; spread over half of each tortilla. Fold over. Broil 4 in. from the heat for 3 minutes on each side or until golden brown. Cut into wedges.

Chicken & Bacon Roll-Ups

Prep Time: 20 min. + chilling

Yield: 4 doz.

1 can (9-3/4 oz.) chunk white chicken, drained
1 carton (8 oz.) spreadable garden vegetable cream cheese
1 c. salsa, divided
4 pieces ready-to-serve fully cooked bacon, crumbled
6 flour tortillas (8"), room temp.

Mix chicken, cream cheese, 1/2 cup salsa and bacon; spread over tortillas. Roll up tightly; wrap in plastic. Refrigerate at least 1 hour. Just before serving, unwrap and cut tortillas into 1-in. slices. Serve with remaining salsa.

Chili Dog Pizza

Prep/Total Time: 25 min.

Yield: 8 servings

1 tube (11 oz.) refrigerated thin pizza crust
1/2 c. yellow mustard
1 can (15 oz.) chili w/beans
6 hot dogs, sliced
2 c. shredded cheddar cheese
Chopped onion & sweet pickle relish, optional

Preheat oven to 425°. Unroll and press dough into bottom of a greased 15x10x1-in. baking pan. Bake until edges are lightly browned, 5-7 minutes.

Spread with mustard; top with chili, hot dogs and cheese. Bake until crust is golden and cheese is melted, 10-15 minutes. If desired, sprinkle with onion and relish.

Pizza Meat Loaf Cups

Prep/Total Time: 30 min.

Yield: 1 doz.

1 lg. egg, lightly beaten
1/2 c. pizza sauce
1/4 c. seasoned bread crumbs
1/2 tsp. Italian seasoning
1-1/2 lbs. ground beef
1-1/2 c. shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese
Opt.: Additional pizza sauce & basil leaves

Preheat oven to 375°. In a large bowl, mix first 4 ingredients. Add beef; mix lightly but thoroughly. Divide into 12 portions; press each onto the bottom and up sides of a greased muffin cup. Add cheese to centers.

Bake until meat is cooked through, 15-18 minutes. If desired, top with additional sauce and basil before serving.

Pizza Sandwiches

Prep/Total Time: 20 min.

Yield: 4 servings

8 slices Italian bread (3/4" thick)
8 slices part-skim mozzarella cheese
8 slices tomato
4 tsp. grated Parmesan cheese
1/4 tsp. garlic salt
24 slices pepperoni
1/4 c. butter, softened
Pizza sauce, warmed

On four slices of bread, layer one slice of mozzarella, two slices of tomato, 1 teaspoon Parmesan cheese, a dash of garlic salt and six slices pepperoni. Top with remaining mozzarella and bread. Spread outside of sandwiches with butter.

On a hot griddle, toast sandwiches until golden brown, 3-4 minutes on each side. Serve with pizza sauce.

No-Bake Chocolate Oatmeal Cookies

Yield: 3 dozen

Prep Time: 5 mins

Total Time: 40 mins

2 c. firmly packed light brown sugar
1 stick butter
1/2 c. whole milk
2 T. unsweetened cocoa powder
2-1/2 c. old-fashioned oats
1/2 c. sweetened flaked coconut, plus more for garnish
1/2 c. creamy peanut butter
1/2 c. chocolate-hazelnut spread (such as Nutella)
1 T. vanilla extract
1 tsp. salt

Line two rimmed baking sheets with parchment or wax paper, and set aside.

Bring the sugar, butter, milk, and cocoa powder to a rolling boil in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Let boil for 1 to 2 minutes, stirring often, until mixture measures 230° on an instant read thermometer. Remove from the heat.

Stir in the oats, coconut, peanut butter, chocolate-hazelnut spread, vanilla, and salt until everything is combined.

Working quickly before the mixture sets up, drop tablespoons of the mixture onto the prepared pans, flattening slightly, if you like. Immediately sprinkle with more coconut; press gently to help the coconut stick to the cookies. Let stand at room temperature until firm, about 30 minutes. Store in an airtight container in a cool, dry place for up to 1 week—if they last that long.

Strawberry-Banana Cereal Treats

Level: Easy

Total: 50 min

Active: 20 min

Yield: 24 servings

4 T. unsalted butter, plus more for greasing
1 (10 oz.) bag mini marshmallows
1 T. honey
1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
Kosher salt
6 c. toasted whole-grain oat cereal, such as Cheerios
1-1/2 c. freeze-dried strawberries, crushed
1-1/2 c. freeze-dried bananas, crushed

Line a 9-by-13-inch baking dish with enough foil so that there's a 2-inch overhang on all sides. Grease the foil with butter.

Melt the butter in a large pot over medium heat. Add the marshmallows and honey and cook, stirring occasionally, until the marshmallows melt completely, about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and stir in the vanilla and a pinch of salt. Add the cereal and 1 cup each of the crushed strawberries and bananas. Stir with a rubber spatula, making sure to scrape up the bottom, until the cereal is completely coated. Transfer to the prepared baking dish and pat down into an even layer. Scatter the remaining crushed fruit on top and press into the top (use the bottom of a measuring cup to help). Let sit at room temperature until firm, about 30 minutes.

Cut into 24 bars. Store at room temperature in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Quote of the Week:

“If we’re not meant to have midnight snacks, why is there a light in the fridge?”

- Unknown