It is time to prepare your menu for the "Big Game!"
Whether it is an all-out party, or a stay-at-home event, we have some great options for everyone!

Cheesy Stuffed Taco Meatballs

Total: 35 min.
Active: 25 min.
Servings: 10

3/4 lb. ground beef
1 link fresh chorizo (3 to 4 oz.), casing removed
1 lg. egg
1/4 C. fine yellow cornmeal
2 T. tomato paste
1 T. chili powder
1 T. ground cumin
1/2 tsp. dried oregano
1/2 tsp. granulated onion
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 C. corn tortilla chips
2 oz. cheddar, cut into 30 cubes just under 1/2 inch thick
Shredded iceberg lettuce, guacamole, pico de gallo and sour cream, for serving

Preheat the oven to 425°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment.

Mix together the ground beef, chorizo, egg, cornmeal, tomato paste, chili powder, cumin, oregano, granulated onion, 1 tsp. salt and a few grinds of pepper with your hands in a large bowl. Scoop the mixture into tablespoon-sized portions. For each, press 1 cube of cheese into the center, press the meat around it to seal, and roll into a smooth ball.

Put the chips in a plastic bag, seal and crush with a rolling pin. Drop 3 or 4 meatballs at a time into the bag, and roll them around to lightly coat with the crushed chips. Arrange the coated meatballs on the prepared baking sheet, and bake until the outsides are browned and the cheese is melted inside, 10 to 12 min.

Serve the meatballs on a platter over a bed of shredded lettuce with guacamole, pico de gallo and sour cream on the side.

Bacon Cheeseburger Garbage Bread

Total: 1 hr. 55 min.
(includes cooling time)
Active: 50 min.
Servings: 8

2 lbs. ground beef chuck
12 oz. American cheese slices (about 30 slices)
All-purpose flour, for dusting
1-1/2 lbs. store-bought pizza dough, at room temperature
5 T. ketchup
2 T. yellow mustard
1 med. red onion, finely chopped
12 strips cooked bacon, broken in half
One 32-oz. jar dill pickle chips
Sesame seeds, for garnish
1/2 C. mayonnaise
1 tsp. dried onion flakes
1 tsp. sugar
Salt and ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 400°F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Heat a large skillet over medium heat. Add the beef and cook, stirring to break it up into small crumbles, until cooked through, 8-10 min. Meanwhile, roughly chop half of the cheese, leaving other half as slices. Set aside.

Using a slotted spoon, remove the beef from the skillet and transfer to a large bowl; discard the fat and liquid in the pan. Let the beef cool completely in the bowl, then stir in the chopped cheese.

On a lightly floured work surface, roll the dough into a 20-by-14-inch rectangle. Arrange the beef and cheese mixture evenly on one half of the dough, starting on the shorter end and leaving a 1-inch border on the sides. Drizzle 2 T. ketchup evenly over the beef mixture and the uncovered half of the dough; repeat with all the mustard, and then the red onion. Lay down the remaining cheese slices evenly over the half of the dough with no beef mixture, leaving a 1-inch border on the sides. Arrange the bacon pieces and 24 dill pickle chips just over the beef mixture.

Working from the short side with the beef mixture, tightly roll up the dough into a log, jelly-roll style. Pinch the open ends together to seal, then tuck them underneath the log. Transfer the log, seam side-down, to the prepared baking sheet, brush all over with water and sprinkle with sesame seeds. Bake, rotating the pan halfway through, until the bread is golden brown, about 40 min.

While the bread bakes, whisk together the mayonnaise, onion flakes, sugar, a pinch of salt and pepper and the remaining 3 T. ketchup, 2 T. finely chopped dill pickle chips and 1 tsp. pickle brine in a small bowl. Taste, and season the special sauce with additional salt if needed. Let the bread cool for 10 min. Slice into 8 pieces and serve warm with the special sauce.

Sweet Potater Tots

Total: 2 hr.
Prep: 40 min.
Cook: 1 hr. 20 min.
Yield: 36

1-1/2 lbs. med. sweet potatoes (about 3 potatoes), pricked with a fork
Cooking spray
4 C. finely crushed sweet potato chips
1/4 C. grated onion
2 T. unsalted butter, at room temperature
1 lg. egg
Salt and ground pepper
1/2 C. mayonnaise
2 T. Sriracha (Asian chile sauce)

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Bake the sweet potatoes directly on the oven rack until tender, about 50 min. Let cool completely.

Coat a baking sheet with cooking spray. Peel the sweet potatoes, transfer to a large bowl and mash. Stir in 1-1/2 C. crushed chips, the onion, butter and egg. Add 1/2 tsp. salt, and pepper to taste; stir until combined.

Spread the remaining 2-1/2 C. crushed chips in a shallow dish. Scoop about 1 T. of the sweet potato mixture into your hands and shape into a small 1-inch-long cylinder. Repeat to make about 36 cylinders. Roll in the crushed chips to coat on all sides and arrange on the prepared baking sheet; spray with cooking spray. Bake, rotating the pan halfway through, until crisp and golden, about 30 min. Season with salt.

Meanwhile, mix the mayonnaise and Sriracha in a small bowl. Serve on the side for dipping.

Loaded Baked Potato Dip

Prep:10 min.
Servings: 10

2 C. sour cream
2 C. shredded cheddar cheese
8 center-cut bacon strips, cooked and crumbled
1/3 C. minced fresh chives
2 tsp. Louisiana-style hot sauce
Hot cooked waffle-cut fries

In a small bowl, mix the first 5 ingredients until blended; refrigerate until serving. If desired, top with additional chives and bacon; serve with waffle fries.

Greek Salad Layered Dip

Total: 25 min.
Prep: 15 min.
Inactive: 10 min.
Yield: 4 cups

1 seedless cucumber
Salt
2 C. low-fat Greek yogurt
4 oz. feta cheese, crumbled
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/4 C. plus 2 T. chopped fresh mint
Ground black pepper
2 small vine ripe or plum tomatoes, diced
1 sm. red onion, diced
1/2 C. pitted black olives, such as kalamata or nicoise, coarsely chopped
Warm pita bread and/or root vegetable chips (such as Terra Chips), for serving

Grate the cucumber on the large holes of a box grater into a bowl. Toss with 1/4 tsp. salt and pour into a fine-mesh sieve set over a bowl. Let stand for 10 min. Using your hands and working with a bit of the cucumber at a time, squeeze the excess liquid out of the cucumber and place the cucumber in a large bowl. Add the yogurt, feta, garlic, 1/4 C. of the chopped mint, 1/4 tsp. salt and 1/4 tsp. pepper to the bowl with the cucumber. Stir to combine and add more salt and pepper to taste. Transfer to a shallow serving bowl.

Toss the tomatoes, red onion, olives and remaining 2 tablespoons mint together in a medium bowl. Sprinkle the mixture over the cucumber mixture. Serve the dip with warm pita or vegetable chips.

Giant Cookie Dough-Stuffed Pretzel

Total: 1 hr. 10 min.
Active: 20 min.
Servings: 6-8

Cookie Dough and Pretzel:
Nonstick cooking spray
1 C. packed light brown sugar
12 T. unsalted butter, at room temperature
1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
1/2 tsp. salt
1-1/2 C. all-purpose flour
1/4 C. milk
1-1/2 C. mini semisweet chocolate chips
Two (13.8-oz.) tubes refrigerated pizza dough
1 lg. egg, lightly beaten

Topping:
1-1/2 tsp. baking soda
Pearl sugar, for topping

Cookie dough and pretzel: Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spray a baking sheet with nonstick cooking spray.

Beat the brown sugar, butter, vanilla and salt in a large bowl with a mixer on low speed until combined. Increase the speed to medium high and beat until pale and fluffy, about 3 min.

Reduce the speed to low, add the flour and beat until combined, about 30 seconds. Add the milk, increase the speed to medium and beat until creamy, about 30 seconds. Stir in the chocolate chips; set aside.

Unroll the sheets of pizza dough and stack them. Use a rolling pin to roll the dough out to a 36-by-5-inch plank. Spread the cookie dough in an even line lengthwise down the center of the dough and brush one of the long sides with the egg. Fold the dough in half lengthwise. Pinch the edges together in the center to seal in the filling. Use your hands to roll and stretch the dough into a 5-foot rope. Form the rope into a giant pretzel shape and place on the prepared baking sheet. Bake until the dough is almost completely cooked through and golden brown all over, about 35 min.

Topping: Dissolve the baking soda in 1/4 C. hot water. Remove the pretzel from the oven and brush all over with the soda water, then brush with a thin coating of egg wash and sprinkle with the pearl sugar. Return to the oven and continue baking until dark golden brown and crisp, about 8 min. more. Let cool 5 min. before serving warm.

To Die for Brownies

Total: 3 hr. 50 min.
Prep: 15 min.
Inactive: 3 hr.
Cook: 35 min.
Servings: 6

1 stick butter, melted, plus more for greasing
All-purpose flour, for dusting
1/3 C. plus 1/2 C. evaporated milk
One (18.5-oz.) box German chocolate cake mix
1 C. finely chopped pecans
60 caramels, unwrapped
1/3 C. semisweet chocolate chips
1/4 C. powdered sugar, sifted

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease and flour a 9-by-9-inch baking pan.

Begin by pouring 1/3 C. evaporated milk into a bowl with the cake mix. Add the melted butter and the chopped pecans. Mix the ingredients together; it'll be pretty thick!

Divide the dough in half down the middle. Press half of it into the bottom of the prepared pan to make the first brownie layer. Bake until slightly set, 8 to 10 min. Then remove from the oven and set aside.

While the brownie layer is baking, in a double boiler combine the caramels and the remaining 1/2 C. evaporated milk. Stir occasionally until the caramels are totally melted and the mixture is smooth. Pour the caramel mixture over the first baked layer, spreading so it's evenly distributed. Sprinkle the chocolate chips all over the top.

Next, on a clean surface or a sheet of waxed paper, press the remaining dough into a square shape slightly smaller than the baking pan. Carefully set it on top of the chocolate chips. Bake for 20 to 25 min. Remove the pan from the oven and let the brownies cool to room temperature. Cover the pan and refrigerate the brownies for several hours to allow them to set.

When you're ready to serve them sprinkle generously with the powdered sugar and cut them into large rectangles before removing from the pan.

Quote of the Week:

"Okay, campers, rise and shine! And don't forget your booties 'cause it's cold out there today." It's Groundhog Day. Again.

~ From the movie "Groundhog Day" (1993)