

Picnics, cookouts, campfires, ball games, lake time, golf, and all the things we look forward to in the middle of our long Minnesota winters!
Ahhhhh.... Summer in MN!

Dill Vegetable Dip

Prep: 5 min.

Servings: 1-1/2 Cups

1 C. sour cream
1/2 C. mayonnaise
1 T. finely chopped onion
2 tsp. dried parsley flakes
1 tsp. dill weed
1 tsp. seasoned salt
Assorted fresh vegetables

Combine the first 6 ingredients; mix well. Cover and refrigerate. Serve with vegetables.

Dill Pickle Pasta Salad

Prep Time: 15min.

Cook Time: 10 min.

Total Time: 25 min.

3 C. uncooked pasta any small shape
1 C. sliced dill pickles reserve the pickle juice
1/2 sm. yellow or white onion diced
1 C. diced cheddar or Colby-Jack cheese

Dressing:

1/2 C. real mayonnaise, full-fat
1/2 C. Greek yogurt or sour cream
2 T. pickle juice
1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. ground black pepper
2 T. fresh dill chopped, or 2 tsp. dried dill

Cook pasta until al dente in salted water according to the package instructions. Usually 10-12 min. Drain and rinse under cold water to stop the cooking process.

As the pasta is being cooked, make the dressing: In a bowl, combine mayo with yogurt, pickle juice, onions, salt, pepper, and fresh dill.

In a large bowl, combine the cooked pasta with sliced pickles, onion, and cheddar cheese. Dress the salad with the dressing.

Serve right away or cover and chill in the fridge for an hour then serve. (Better when chilled)

Loaded Baked Potato Salad

3 lbs. small red potatoes
8 strips bacon
1 C. sour cream
1/2 C. mayonnaise
1 C. sharp cheddar cheese, shredded
4 green onions, sliced
2 T. fresh chives, chopped
Salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 400°F. Wash potatoes and cut into 1-inch cubes, leaving skin on.

Toss potato cubes with a drizzle of oil and spread on a baking sheet in a single layer.

Season generously with salt and pepper.

Roast for 30-35 min., flipping once halfway through, until golden and crispy on edges.

While potatoes roast, cook bacon until crispy. Let cool and crumble into bite-sized pieces.

In a large bowl, mix sour cream and mayonnaise until smooth.

Let roasted potatoes cool for 10 min. – you want them warm but not hot.

Add warm potatoes to the sour cream mixture and toss gently. The warmth helps them absorb the dressing.

Add 3/4 of the bacon, 3/4 of the cheese, and most of the green onions. Reserve some for topping.

Fold everything together gently to avoid mashing the potatoes.

Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Transfer to serving bowl and top with reserved bacon, cheese, green onions, and fresh chives.

Serve warm or at room temperature. This is best eaten within a few hours of making.

Watermelon Feta Salad

1 lg. seedless watermelon (about 8 lbs.)

8 oz feta cheese, crumbled
1/2 red onion, very thinly sliced
1 C. fresh mint leaves
1/4 C. extra virgin olive oil
2 T. fresh lime juice
1T. honey
Flaky sea salt
Cracked black pepper

Cut watermelon in half, then into 1-inch thick slices. Remove rind and cut flesh into 1-inch cubes. You should have about 8 cups. Place watermelon cubes in a colander set over a bowl to drain for 15 min. This prevents a watery salad. Meanwhile, slice red onion as thinly as possible. Soak slices in cold water for 10 min. to mellow the bite, then drain and pat dry. In a small bowl, whisk together olive oil, lime juice, and honey. In a large serving bowl, gently combine drained watermelon cubes and onion slices. Drizzle with the dressing and toss very gently – watermelon is delicate! Add crumbled feta and half the mint leaves, torn into pieces. Fold gently to distribute. Taste and season with flaky sea salt and cracked black pepper. The salt really makes the watermelon pop! Garnish with remaining whole mint leaves. Serve immediately – this salad doesn't keep well as the watermelon continues to release juice.

Chicken with Peach-Avocado Salsa

Prep: 15 min.
Cook: 15 min.
Servings: 4

1 med. peach, peeled and chopped
1 med. ripe avocado, peeled and cubed
1/2 C. chopped sweet red pepper
3 T. finely chopped red onion
1 T. minced fresh basil
1 T. lime juice
1 tsp. hot pepper sauce
1/2 tsp. grated lime zest
3/4 tsp. salt, divided
1/2 tsp. pepper, divided
4 boneless skinless chicken breast halves (6 oz. each)

Salsa: in a small bowl, combine peach, avocado, red pepper, onion, basil, lime juice, hot pepper sauce, lime zest, 1/4 tsp. salt and 1/4 tsp. pepper.

Sprinkle chicken with remaining 1/2 tsp. salt and 1/4 tsp. pepper. On a lightly greased grill rack, grill chicken, covered, over medium heat 5 min. Turn; grill until a thermometer reads 165°F, 7-9 min. longer. Serve with salsa.

Grilled Pizza

Prep Time: 10 min.
Cook Time: 10 min.
Total Time: 20 min.

Pizza dough homemade or store bought
2 T. olive oil
Pizza sauce
Cheese
Toppings

Prepare your dough as directed in this recipe, or start out with a premade pizza dough.

Divide the dough into 4-6 dough balls. On an oiled surface, roll each with a rolling pin as thin as possible to make 10-12 inch circles. Then place a piece of parchment paper over the dough, letting it stick. Turn it over so that the parchment paper is underneath the dough, and brush the dough side with olive oil.

Preheat the grill to medium high heat, and have a hot and cold side on the grill. Clean and oil the grill grates.

Gently flip the pizza dough over the grill grates with the bottom side down, and peel off the parchment paper. Close the lid, and cook for 1-2 min. When the bottom of the pizza looks done, flip the pizza and cook for 1-2 more min.

Move the pizza dough over to the cool side of the grill and add your toppings (sauce, cheese, and any other desired toppings).

Lower the heat of the middle burner if needed. Close the grill and allow the cheese to melt.

Use grill tongs to remove the pizza from the grill and serve.

Notes: Roll it out thin. For grilled pizza, the thinner the pizza dough the better. If the dough is too thick, it might burn on the grill before it's completely cooked in the middle.

Pay attention. It really takes 2 min. or less per side to cook the dough, so don't walk away from the grill while you're cooking.

Be sure to preheat. Let the grill come all the way up to temperature before cooking the dough. Putting the dough on a cold grill will cause it to stick to the grates.

Go easy on the toppings. We're making a thin pizza, so don't overwhelm the crust with too much sauce or toppings. A thin layer of sauce and a handful of toppings is perfect.

Campfire Banana Boats

Servings: 6

6 ripe but firm bananas
1 C. chocolate chips
1 C. mini marshmallows
1/2 C. crushed graham crackers
Optional: peanut butter, caramel, nuts
Heavy duty aluminum foil

Keep bananas in their peels. Cut a deep slit lengthwise along the inside curve, being careful not to cut all the way through.
Gently open the slit to create a pocket.
Stuff pocket with chocolate chips and marshmallows, alternating for even distribution.
Add any optional ingredients.
Close banana peel back together as much as possible.
Wrap each banana tightly in heavy duty foil, sealing edges well.
Place on grill over medium heat or in coals of campfire.
Cook 5-10 min., turning once, until chocolate is melted and marshmallows are gooey.
Carefully unwrap (watch for steam!) and sprinkle with graham cracker crumbs.
Eat with a spoon right from the peel.

Piña Colada Lush

Prep: 20 min.

Cook: 3 hr.

Servings: 15

2 C. graham cracker crumbs
1/2 C. butter, melted
1/2 C. packed brown sugar
1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened
1 can (8 oz.) crushed pineapple, drained
1/2 C. confectioners' sugar
1 tsp. vanilla extract
2 C. whole milk
1 pkg. (3.4 oz.) instant coconut cream pudding mix
1 carton (8 oz.) frozen whipped topping, thawed, divided
1/2 C. sweetened shredded coconut, toasted
Maraschino cherries, optional

Combine the graham cracker crumbs, butter and brown sugar in a large bowl. Press onto the bottom and up sides of a greased 13x9-in. baking dish.

In a second bowl, beat together cream cheese, pineapple and confectioners' sugar. Stir in vanilla extract; spread into crust.

In same bowl, whisk together milk and pudding mix until thickened, about 2 min. Fold in 1 C. whipped topping; spread pudding mixture over the cream cheese mixture. Top with remaining whipped topping.

Sprinkle with toasted coconut. Refrigerate, covered, until set, about 3 hr. If desired, garnish with cherries.

Quote of the Week:

“That Declaration and that pledge were the beginning of the most significant political event in the history of the world, the American Revolution.”

~ Marco Rubio, Secretary of State