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FAVORITE

Recipes



OLD SCHOOL TACOS



8 tacos



20 minutes

This is my favorite taco filling recipe, developed by R&D chef and TV personality Chef Andrew Hunter, who makes this for his own family on busy days.



INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoons chili powder
1 tablespoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon ground cumin
2 teaspoons kosher salt
2 teaspoons hot smoked paprika
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 pound ground beef
8 crispy corn taco shells
Shredded iceberg lettuce
Grated Cheddar cheese
Sliced tomatoes
Salsa

DIRECTIONS

1. In a medium bowl, combine chili and garlic powders, cumin, salt, smoked paprika, and cayenne; stir to combine.
2. In a cast iron or nonstick skillet, brown the ground beef, breaking it apart into crumbles as it browns. When the meat is cooked, drain off any fat and stir in spice mixture until well combined.
3. Spoon an equal amount into each taco shell and serve on a platter with bowls of lettuce, cheese, tomatoes, and salsa. Let everyone make their own.

Recipe by Chef Andrew Hunter, slightly adapted.

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NOTES

It's easy to adjust the spiciness if the kids aren't used to spicy food. Season with half the spice mixture, taste, and add more, as needed. I use the whole amount.

THAI CURRY BEEF

 4 servings

 15 minutes

A tasty recipe from my Thai daughter-in-law, this dish is quick and easy, and requires just a few basic ingredients found in most kitchens.



INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 1/4 cups diced onion (about 1 medium onion)
- 1 pound ground beef or pork
- 1 tablespoon curry powder
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- Hot rice

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onion and sauté until soft; about 3 minutes. Remove onion from pan and set aside.
2. Add ground beef to skillet, stirring to break up chunks, and cook until no longer pink; about 3 to 4 minutes.
3. Return onion to skillet and add curry powder, sugar, and soy sauce. Stir until well combined and heated through. Serve hot over rice.

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NOTES

You can add fresh or thawed frozen peas when you return onion to the skillet, before adding seasonings. For a fancier variation, top each serving with a sunny-side up egg.

OVEN MEATBALLS



20 meatballs



30 minutes

Meatballs are an uncomplicated food kids love. Baking, instead of pan frying, makes them super-simple to cook. Serve with spaghetti or pack in bento lunches.



INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound ground beef, pork, or chicken
- 3/4 cup panko bread crumbs *
- 1/4 cup chopped onion
- 1 large egg
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh herbs (optional—see note below)
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- Jarred marinara sauce

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oven to 450°F. In a medium bowl combine beef, bread crumbs, onion, egg, herbs if using, and salt. Mix lightly; do not knead or overmix, or meatballs will become tough.
2. Form into twenty 1 1/2-inch balls, using 2 tablespoons of meat mixture for each ball. Arrange in a 9- X 13-inch sheet pan or baking dish, spacing them apart, and bake 12 to 15 minutes or until meatballs are browned and the internal temperature reaches 160°F. using an instant-read thermometer.
3. Simmer in marinara sauce and serve over pasta. Or serve “as is” for a child’s lunchbox, with a dip of ketchup, honey mustard, salsa, or sweet and sour sauce.

*If you don’t have panko, use 1/2 cup dried breadcrumbs.

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NOTES

Kids tend not to like herbs, but if yours are the exception, consider cilantro for an Asian flavor profile, basil or flat-leaf parsley for Italian, or mint for Mexican.

VEGGIE NACHOS



6 servings



30 minutes

This kid-tested-and-approved snack developed by Chef Janet Burgess, a children's cooking teacher for 24 years, will entice kids to eat their vegetables.



INGREDIENTS

- 1 (10 oz) package frozen corn
- 1 cup diced tomato
- ½ cup chopped broccoli florets
- ¼ cup diced green bell pepper
- 2 tablespoons sliced green onion
- 2 tablespoons chopped green chilies
- 2 tablespoons sliced black olives
- 2 tablespoons white vinegar
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ bag (from a 14-oz bag) baked corn tortilla chips
- 1/2 cup shredded Cheddar cheese

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oven to 350°F.
2. Cook corn following package directions and drain.
3. Mix corn, tomato, broccoli, bell pepper, onion, chilies, olives, vinegar, garlic powder and black pepper in a large mixing bowl.
4. Spread tortilla chips on an 18- X 13-inch baking sheet. Top with vegetable mixture. Sprinkle with cheese. Place in oven and bake for 8 to 10 minutes, or until cheese melts. Sprinkle with parsley and serve.

Recipe by Chef Janet Burgess, slightly adapted.

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NOTES

This healthy snack recipe is an excellent one for kids to make with adult supervision. They'll work on reading and math skills, learn to follow directions, and be rewarded with something yummy to eat afterwards.

LEMONY KALE SALAD



4-6 servings



15 minutes

This scrumptious salad by Linda Lau Anusasananan; veteran food writer, recipe editor, and cookbook author; is guaranteed to turn anyone into a kale lover.



INGREDIENTS

1 pound young lacinato kale
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 1/2 teaspoons grated lemon peel
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 teaspoon sugar
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt, or to taste
1 small apple, cored and cut in 1/2-inch cubes
1/3 cup dried cranberries or raisins
1/3 cup crumbled feta cheese
About 1/3 cup toasted slivered almonds or toasted pine nuts

DIRECTIONS

1. Wash the kale, drain well, and pat off excess water with paper towels. Tear the thick center ribs from leaves and discard. Stack a few leaves, roll lengthwise into a cigar shape and cut crosswise into 1/4-inch wide strips. Repeat to make about 16 cups total.
2. In a large bowl, stir together the oil, lemon peel, lemon juice, sugar, and salt to taste. Add the kale and with your hands, mix and massage the kale with the dressing until the leaves are completely glossy. You can cover and chill the salad up to 1 hour before continuing.
3. Next, add the apple, cranberries, cheese, and nuts and toss lightly together. You might want to add more nuts for extra crunch.

Recipe by Linda Lau Anusasananan.

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NOTES

Lacinato kale is also called dinosaur, Cavolo Nero, Tuscan, or black kale.

NO-BAKE CEREAL BARS



12 bars



5 minutes

This healthy recipe by dietitian Elizabeth Ward, MS, RD, is made with just 5 ingredients in 5 minutes. There are gluten-free, nut-free, and vegan options.



INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 cups crunchy peanut butter
- 1/3 cup maple syrup or honey
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 2 cups oats, uncooked
- 2 cups plain Cheerios, or store-brand equivalent

DIRECTIONS

1. Coat an 8- x 8-inch baking pan with cooking spray or line with parchment paper.
2. Combine peanut butter and syrup in a large mixing bowl and mix well. Add remaining ingredients and mix. Press the mixture evenly into the pan. Refrigerate at least one hour.
3. Cut into 12 squares. Wrap each square separately in plastic wrap for portion control. Keep refrigerated. Makes 12 bars.

Variations:

- For gluten-free bars, choose certified gluten-free oats. Cheerios are gluten-free.
- For nut-free bars, use sunflower seed butter, soy nut butter, or sesame seed butter.
- For vegan bars, use maple syrup instead of honey.

Adapted from a recipe by Registered Dietitian Elizabeth Ward.

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NOTES

Nutrition Information: Per serving: 302 calories; 17 grams fat (3 grams saturated fat); 0 cholesterol; 191 milligrams sodium; 31 grams carbohydrate; 5 grams fiber; 10 grams protein.

FRESH FRUIT PALETAS



4-5 servings



15 minutes

This fruity Mexican treat is the ultimate in icy-cold deliciousness. It's a good way preserve fruits when you find yourself with more than your family can eat.



INGREDIENTS

2 cups prepared fresh fruit (see notes below)

About $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar, depending on sweetness of fruit

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup liquid, such as heavy cream, coconut milk, or water

About 3 tablespoons lime or lemon juice, or to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. Put fruit and a little more than half the sugar into a blender or food processor, along with the liquid of your choice. Purée smooth or leave it a little chunky. Taste and add as much remaining sugar, as needed; pulse to blend. Stir in lemon or lime juice, a little at a time, and taste until the desired tartness is reached.
2. Fill popsicle molds or ice cube trays, leaving $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch of space at the top because the purée will expand as it freezes; freeze until firm, about 5 to 6 hours. Makes about 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups (20 fluid ounces) purée.

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NOTES

Prepare fruits like peaches or nectarines by peeling and pitting. Cut fruit into chunks.

Liquids with fat, such as heavy cream and coconut milk, will make creamier paletas.

EASY PB COOKIES



3 1/2 dozen



40 minutes

These old-fashioned cookies are a great first baking project for kids. They can shape the dough and press with a fork for the iconic peanut butter cookie design.



INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup peanut butter
- 1/4 cup vegetable shortening
- 1/4 cup (4 tablespoons) butter, at room temperature
- 1/2 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 egg, well beaten

DIRECTIONS

1. In a medium bowl, combine flour, baking soda, baking powder and salt and mix thoroughly with a wooden spoon.
2. In the bowl of an electric mixer, cream together peanut butter, shortening and butter; gradually add the sugars and beat thoroughly. Add the egg and blend.
3. Add the flour mixture to the creamed mixture and mix well. Chill dough for 1 to 2 hours to firm up.
4. Heat oven to 375°F. Form dough into balls 1 inch in diameter and place on ungreased cookie sheets about 3 inches apart. Flatten the balls with a fork dipped in flour, making a crisscross pattern.
5. Bake 8 to 10 minutes or until light golden brown. Cool on pan for 5 minutes, then using an egg turner, gently remove cookies from the sheet and cool completely on wire racks. Store airtight.

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NOTES

Allow 1 to 2 hours to chill dough and factor in baking time. And of course, allow more prep time if little hands pitch in.