

Spice up holiday parties with Mexican flavors

During the busy holiday season, convivial cocktail parties are a favored form of entertaining. Ideally suited to our love of snacks and informality, they offer the opportunity to host a large group without long hours in the kitchen.

To set the stage for merry making, a selection of libations and an appealing array of "finger foods" are all that is needed. Cocktail go-withs need not be extravagant or complicated, but to be memorable they should be imaginative, enticing and easy to eat.

One sure way to spice up party fare is to add south-of-the-border flavor. Everybody loves Mexican food, and appetizers boasting these festive flavors are sure to disappear quickly.

Chicken Flautas Appetizers are corn

tortilla "flutes" filled with a zesty mixture of chicken, cheese and onion, with pinto sauce streamlining the way to authentic Mexican flavor. Choose mild, medium or hot pinto sauce, as you prefer, for the filling and as a dip. Assemble these satisfying snacks an hour or two before the party if it's more convenient.

Store them uncovered in the refrigerator, ready to pop into the oven as the first guests arrive. Guacamole may be made up to an hour in advance. Press plastic wrap directly onto its surface to prevent discoloration, and refrigerate until serving time.

Served warm from the oven or microwave oven, Hot 'N Spicy Shrimp Dip is sure to please any holiday crowd. Teaming shrimp and two cheeses with

artichoke hearts and the garden-fresh flavor of pinto sauce, this extraordinary dip invites a wide range of dippers. Surround it with a colorful complement of interesting veggies and crispy chips or crackers.

For additional exciting recipes prepared with pinto sauce, send your name, address and zip code to:

Face Second Edition Recipes
P.O. Box 583
El Paso, TX 79977

Quantity requests from school, clubs and other organizations will be honored.

HOT 'N SPICY SHRIMP DIP
1 can (14 oz.) artichoke hearts (drained weight 8 oz.)

1 can (4 1/4 oz.) shrimp, rinsed and drained
1 package (3 oz.) cream cheese, softened
1/2 cup mayonnaise
1/2 cup pinto sauce
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
Short, finely julienned red pepper strips (optional)
Thinly sliced green onion tops (optional)

Drain artichoke hearts; dice. Add shrimp, cream cheese, mayonnaise, pinto sauce and Parmesan cheese; mix well. Spoon into 9-inch round pie plate or shallow baking dish. Bake at 350 degrees about 20 minutes or until heated through. Garnish with red pepper and green onion, if desired. Serve with chips and assorted vegetable dippers. Makes about 2 1/2 cups dip.

Microwave oven directions: Cook in microwave oven at HIGH about 3 minutes or until hot, stirring after each minute of cooking.

CHICKEN FLAUTAS APPETIZERS
2 cups (fleshy) shredded or chopped cooked chicken
1/2 cup pinto sauce
1/2 cup green onion slices
1/2 tsp. cumin
32 corn tortilla (8-inch diameter)
Vegetable oil
2 cups (8 oz.) shredded Cheddar or Monterey Jack cheese
Guacamole (recipe follows)

Combine chicken, pinto sauce, onion and cumin; mix well. Heat about 1/2 inch oil in small skillet until hot but not smoking. Quickly fry each tortilla

in oil to soften, about 5 seconds on each side. Drain on paper towels. Spoon 1 Tbsp. chicken mixture and 1 Tbsp. cheese down center of tortilla. Roll tightly; secure with wooden pick. Place seam side down on baking sheet. Bake in preheated oven at 400 degrees F. about 18 to 20 minutes or until crisp. Serve warm with Guacamole and additional pinto sauce. Makes 32 appetizers.

GUACAMOLE
1 large ripe avocado, peeled and mashed
2 Tbsp. pinto sauce
1 tsp. lemon juice
1/2 tsp. salt

Combine all ingredients; mix well. Makes about 1 cup.

Cool it

Wine-tea punch complements hot dip

Drop-in entertaining is easy on the nerves as well as the budget, especially during the sometimes-frenzied days leading up to Christmas and New Year's Day. Keep things simple with a peppy chili dip and a punch bowl or pitcher brimming with a cooling wine-tea punch.

The recipe for this Hot-Hot Chili Con Queso brings into play a combination of tomatoes, chilis, chopped onion and various other seasonings, blended with cream cheese and milk. Serve warm with crunchy crudités of carrot sticks, celery, cauliflower and green pepper, plus crisp tortilla chips.

The festive holiday punch will cool down the palates of your guests while they are enjoying the peppery dip. Instant Tea, which is the base for the punch, never overpowers the remaining ingredients — lemonade concentrate, apple juice and dry white wine.

HAPPY HOLIDAY PUNCH
(Makes 3 1/4 quarts or 28 4-oz. servings)
1 rounded Tbsp. instant tea
1/2 Tbsp. sugar
1/2 cups ice water
1 (6-oz.) can lemonade concentrate, undiluted
1/2 cups apple juice
1/2 cups dry white wine
Combine instant tea, sugar and ice water. Stir until sugar is dissolved. Add remaining ingredients. Chill. When ready to serve, pour over ice in punch bowl or pitcher.

HOT-HOT CHILI CON QUESO
(Makes about 2 cups)
2 medium tomatoes, peeled, seeded and chopped

1 (4-oz.) can chilis, drained and chopped
1 small onion, chopped
1/2 tsp. seasoned salt
1/2 tsp. garlic powder
dash white pepper
1 (8-oz.) package cream cheese, cubed and softened
1/2 cup cream or milk
2 Tbsp. drained, chopped pimientos
Raw vegetables
Tortilla chips

In medium saucepan, simmer tomatoes, chilis, onion, seasoned salt, garlic

powder and pepper 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Blend in cream cheese and then cream. Over very low heat, stir and heat through. Turn into chafing dish or heat-proof casserole and keep warm over candle warmer, and garnish with pimiento. Serve with warm carrot sticks, celery, cauliflower florets, green pepper squares and tortilla chips. Thin with a little cream if needed during serving period. Any leftover dip may be chilled and used as cracker spread. For a milder dip, use only one chili!

Cooking without a kitchen

If you are one of many who prepare meals in college dormitories, efficiency apartments or mobile homes, you are no doubt aware of the limitations of "kitchenless cooking."

But a small food preparation area doesn't have to hinder the culinary experience.

The versatile toaster oven, which allows a wide variety of recipe preparations, is a basic for solving the kitchenless dilemma. Below are suggested ways the toaster oven can do the job of several appliances.

• Bake: Remember that a toaster

oven is a real oven. There's no need to give up roast poultry or beef because these foods won't fit. Just think small!

Substitute Cornish hen or rolled turkey breast for turkey or chicken. Or instead of a large roast, prepare a small eye round.

• Broil: Most toaster ovens can broil fish, kabobs or flank steak, for example. The see-through window allows you to monitor the progress of the broiled food without opening the door to slow cooking time.

• Top-Brown: This technique is ideal for preparing "cheesy" delights

like cheddar-topped baked potatoes, English muffin pizzas with mozzarella and open-faced tuna sandwiches with melted American cheese. Top-browning can turn any cold snack into a hot meal in seconds.

• Toast: Toast is much more than a breakfast food. Next time you prepare a dish such as creamed chicken or seafood Newburgh, substitute pumpernickle, rye, whole wheat or white toast for rice.

The "all-in-one" appliance not only makes cooking "cheesy," it makes clean-up a breeze, too.

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DON'T DIE OF EMBARRASSMENT.

It starts quite innocently: you convince yourself the symptoms aren't serious. So if you sought medical help you'd just look foolish. And later it's too late.

Each year 350,000 Americans die from heart attacks before reaching the hospital. Often after a deadly, unnecessary delay. In fact, the average victim waits over three hours before consulting a doctor. Because he doesn't realize what his symptoms mean. And he doesn't want to seem silly.

Please, learn the warning signals of a heart attack. And, if you experience any of them, get help. Call a paramedic at once. Or, if you can get to an emergency room faster another way, do so. Without a second thought.

After all, saving face means nothing compared to saving your life.

WARNING SIGNALS OF A HEART ATTACK

1. An uncomfortable pressure, fullness, squeezing or pain in the center of your chest behind the breastbone.
2. The sensation may spread to your shoulders, neck or arms. If it lasts for two minutes or more, you could be having a heart attack.
3. Severe pain, dizziness, fainting, sweating, nausea or shortness of breath may also occur, but are not always present.

