

taste buds

chef Larry Janes



Nachos and margaritas: southwest's real flavors

Nachos and margaritas are edible anti-freeze for the body and the spirit.

Let's start with nachos. I'm not talking about those "so called" plates of stale cornchips and melted processed cheese food that Tiger Stadium and a few 24 hour convenience stores are trying to pass off.

Nachos are bite-sized portions of fire and flavor. At their simplest, nachos are corn tortillas covered with fresh melted cheese and a masochistically generous topping of jalapeno peppers. As they become more complex, nachos can become botanas and aperitifs and are piled into a varitable tower of peppers, meat, cheeses, sausages, tomatoes and more peppers.

Margaritas are the adult answer to lemonade. Tequila, which is cactus juice in its most potent form, is mixed with lime juice and an orange flavored liqueur and served in a salt-rimmed glass. True aficionados order them "straight up" but it is kosher to sip "on the rocks." Nothing can be more refreshing on a hot summer day than to lay your lips into a frozen margarita pulverized to an icy slush.

Having to do investigative work for this column, I even tried the premixed powdered and frozen cocktails available at most liquor stores. BLEAAAH! Laden with sugar and artificial flavors, a cheap bottle of tequila and a jug of Cointreau or Triple Sec (Orange flavored liquors that work wonders in cake batters) with a splash of fresh lime juice is the only way to go.

I have found out that for some odd reason, my nachos always taste better after a few margaritas get me rolling. Can't imagine why.

If you're looking for recipes that spell it all out for you in step-by-step fashion, forget it. If you can place some cheese and chili on a cracker and warm it in the oven, you can whip up a great batch of nachos and margaritas.

Margaritas are equally as flexible. The degree of potency, sweetness or tartness is solely up to the individual. True margarita swishers will declare that using imported tequila, fresh lime juice and Cointreau is the ONLY way to prepare a good margarita. Supposedly, using Triple Sec makes for a sweeter drink. Listen, after two drinks, few will be able to tell the difference.

Here's a few hints to help you prepare the best nachos and margaritas. If you fall with these little tidbits, there's a 24 hour convenience store somewhere in the city that can fill the void.

Prepackaged tortilla chips are OK, but you haven't lived till you've made your own. Buy a package of flour tortillas and cut them into triangles. Fry in an inch of hot oil for 1 minute and drain on paper towels.

For a lighter, crispier chip, try using egg roll wrappers. Proceed as mentioned above.

A taste-tested proven margarita starts with 1/4 oz. of tequila, add 1/4 oz. Cointreau and 1 oz. freshly squeezed lime juice.

Refried beans not only taste good on a tortilla but they also act as sort of a "cement" when making nachos. Just a teaspoon spread on a tortilla chip will work wonders.

Salsa is to nachos what ketchup is to french fries. Either buy a bottle or make your own. Put a spoonful on top of a nacho or use it as a dip.

NACHOS GRANDE

- 1 soft corn tortilla
- Oil
- Refried beans
- Pork sausage
- 1 bunch green onions, diced
- Monterey Jack cheese
- Colby cheese
- Guacamole
- Sour cream
- Jalapeno peppers

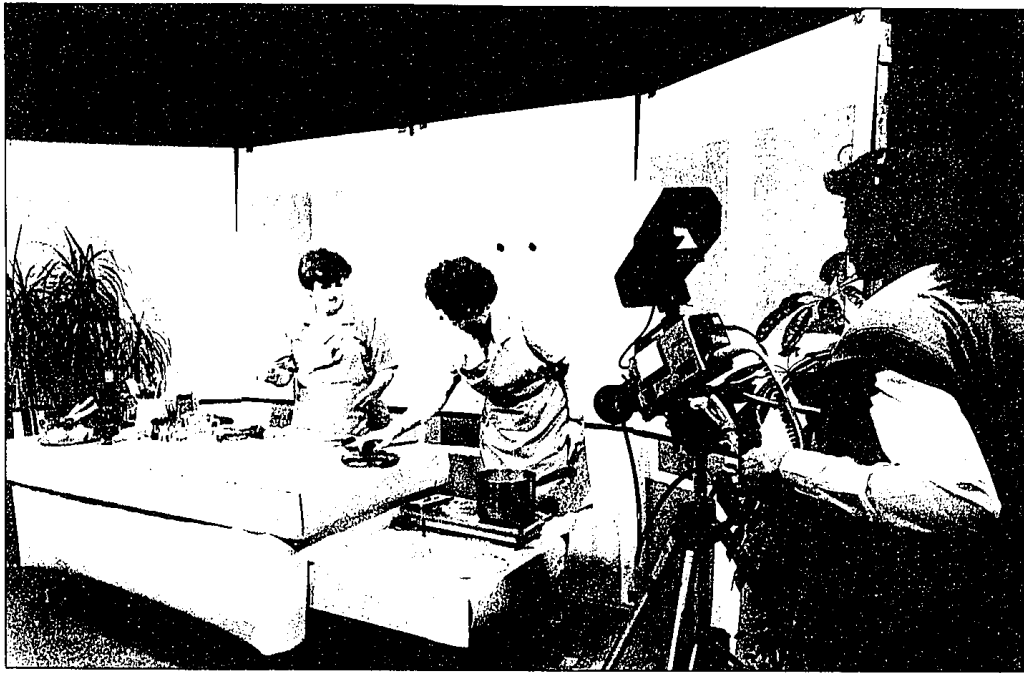
Deep fry corn tortilla in oil until golden brown. Drain and cover with a thin layer of refried beans. Sprinkle cooked pork sausage over the top and add green onions. Grate a little Jack and Colby cheese on top. Place in a preheated hot oven for 4 minutes or till cheese melts. Place on a serving platter with dollops of guacamole and sour cream and garnished with jalapeno peppers.

MARGARITA PIE

- Crust:
- 1/2 cup pretzel crumbs
- 1/4 cup butter
- 3 tbsp. sugar

- Filling:
- 1 envelope plain gelatin

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photos by RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Taping each episode of "Cooking With Class" is a major undertaking for host Judy Antishin, left, who must bring all of the food, utensils and appliances for preparing her recipes from home to the studio. Here guest Norma

Rudzinsky, Farmington Hills, helps Antishin make her grownup appearance recipe, while camera operator Duryea Callaway of West Bloomfield gets the perfect shot.

Local gourmet enjoys limelight

Cable cooking show helped hobby blossom into a career

By Rebecca Haynes
staff writer

Julia Child look out — here comes Judy Antishin. The Farmington resident hosts her own cable television show, "Cooking with Class," seen regularly on Metrovision's local channel.

"When I started out I wouldn't have believed it would grow to this," said Antishin, who has done the show for three years. "I can't go shopping in my jogging suit anymore because people recognize me. They'll look and see what's in my basket and ask me what I'm going to make."

"Cooking with Class" was the first local program produced by Metrovision, and Antishin said it took a few shows before everyone was comfortable with the format.

"I'll never forget the first time we taped," she laughed. "I was so busy watching the monitor I cut my finger and there I was, bleeding all over the set."

NOW SHE is so comfortable with the cameras and equipment, she has helped crew and direct other shows and even produces her own.

"You can make everyone else's job a lot easier if you know what's going on," she said.

Antishin left her teaching job in the mid '60s to raise her family. Cooking then became a way of life.

"I'm very happy being in the kitchen," she said. "When you have a large family you find yourself constantly cooking, but I really enjoyed it."

Her summer vacations began to revolve around cooking schools. Trips to different areas of the country as well as such exotic locations as Brazil and Acapulco have helped to teach her the latest techniques in food preparation and expand her knowledge of recipes.

"I really thought my husband was disgusted with it," she said, adding that recently he planned what

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— Judy Antishin

she thought was going to be a "normal" vacation. "As a surprise to me we went to a hotel/restaurant management program. I just couldn't believe it."

SEVERAL YEARS ago she began teaching her own classes in Farmington, Livonia, Dearborn and Farmington. However, because of time constraints with the television show and her catering business she has cut back on the number of these classes.

She also is contemplating opening her own restaurant.

"It's (cooking) a hobby that really has turned into a forte," she said. "The restaurant idea has been laying in the back of my mind, waiting to do something."

Preparing for her television taping takes about 12 hours.

"I have to think things through, decide what I'm going to prepare and what I'll need to prepare it," she said, adding she brings all of the equipment needed for cooking from her home to the studio. She also buys all the groceries needed to create the dishes.

"I'M GOING to the cable commission to see

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Judy Antishin has hosted Metrovision's "Cooking With Class" for the past three years. The Farmington Hills resident teaches numerous cooking classes and has turned a much-loved hobby into a successful career.

Judy offers recipes for cornish hens, chicken

Judy Antishin uses different recipes on each of her shows and at each of her classes. The following were featured on a recent "Cooking with Class" episode.

ROAST CORNISH HENS AND APPLE BROWN BETTY

- 2 (24 oz.) hens
- 2 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. pepper
- 1 tsp. ground ginger
- 2 onions
- 4 cups bread cubes

- 1/2 cup raisins
- 1 cup white wine or apple juice
- 1 cup milk
- 1/2 tsp. nutmeg

Preheat oven to 350°. Rub birds with salt, pepper and ginger. Mix onions, bread, raisins and apples. Stir in wine or juice. Blend all. Beat eggs, milk, nutmeg and add to bread. Stuff birds lightly. Add rest to separate casserole or surround birds. Roast 1 hour and 15 minutes or until Brown Betty isn't soggy. Makes 2-4 servings.

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Including a guest on each show is Antishin's way of initiating dialogue. Many guests, she said, will ask the same questions home viewers may be thinking about while watching the show. The guests are also a great help. Here Rudzinsky helps her host core apples needed for the recipes.