

COOKING CORNER

In the mood for a zesty taste? Try pierogies or spicy popcorn

As a change from serving pasta, why not substitute pierogies? These Polish cousins to ravioli taste delicious with a quick Italian-style sauce and they have a surprise filling: whipped potatoes blended with cheese and seasonings.

Frozen Mrs. T's Pierogies are ready to cook and toss with your favorite jarred pasta sauce and a sprinkle of Parmesan. Pierogies Pesto gets its zesty flavor from prepared pesto sauce and a classic trio-asparagus, ham and pine nuts. For another speedy main dish in the Italian spirit, mix pierogies with a garlic-scented sauce based on sundried tomatoes from a jar.

Mrs. T's Pierogies come in several flavors, including Potato & Onion, Potato & Cheddar and Roasted Garlic. You'll find these ready-to-cook pasta pockets in the frozen foods section of your supermarket.

Pierogies Pesto

1 package (16.9 ounces) Mrs. T's Frozen Potato & Onion or Potato & Cheddar Pierogies
1 pound fresh asparagus, trimmed and cut in 1" pieces
1/2 cup prepared pesto sauce
4 ounces smoked ham, cut in 1/4-inch strips (about 1 c.)
2 tablespoons toasted pine nuts (pignolis)
Boil pierogies according to package directions, adding asparagus during last 2 minutes of cooking. Drain, reserving 1/4 cup of the cooking water. In the same saucepan combine pesto sauce, ham and reserved cooking water; heat until just hot; stir in pierogies. Garnish with pine nuts and fresh basil, if desired.
Yield: 4 portions (about 7 cups)

Italian-Style Pierogies

1 package (16.9 ounces) Mrs. T's Frozen Potato & Onion or Potato & Cheddar Pierogies
1 jar (6.5 ounces) sun-dried toma toes in olive oil
1 cup coarsely chopped onion
1 tsp. finely chopped garlic
Boil pierogies according to package directions; drain and keep warm in the saucepan.

Drain and reserve oil from tomatoes; if needed, add additional oil to make 1/4 cup; set aside. Chop tomatoes and set aside. In a large skillet, heat reserved oil until hot. Add onion and garlic; cook and stir until tender, about 5 minutes. Stir in tomatoes and drained pierogies; heat until hot, about 2 minutes.
Yield: 4 portions (about 5 cups)

For a free recipe leaflet, send a self-addressed, stamped business-size envelope to: Mrs. T's Pierogies, World of Delicious Ideas, P.O. Box 606, Shenandoah, PA 17976-0606.

Super Popcorn Snacking Ideas

When you're in the mood for a fast, easy and tasty snack, reach for popcorn, the versatile snack that delivers a powerful taste sensation with excellent nutrition. Go from plain to positively perfect with these quick and easy popcorn ideas:

- Spray warm, air-popped popcorn lightly with low-fast cooking spray, then just sprinkle with your favorite combination of herbs or spices such as garlic, curry, chili powder, lemon pepper, dry soup mix or shredded cheese.
- For creative croutons, sprinkle popped popcorn with dry, low-fat Italian dressing mix. These crunchy tidbits add interest and flavor to salads and soups and make a great snack all by themselves.
- Double up! Pop up a second batch of popcorn and store in a resealable bag. It's the perfect grab-and-go snack everyone will enjoy.
- Popcorn for lunch? Absolutely. Kids love popcorn as part of a balanced lunch. Try these fun and easy popcorn recipes and pop up your own super snack.

Rockin' Ranch Popcorn

1 oz. package of dry ranch dressing mix
8 cups of oil-popped popcorn
In a large bowl or paper bag,

place the popped popcorn and sprinkle with the dressing mix. Cover the bowl or fold over the bag and shake well to coat. Makes 8 cups.

Nutritional Information (based on 1-cup serving): Total Calories 46; Fat 2g; Carbohydrate 6.3g; Sugar 0.1g; Fiber 1.2g; Protein 1g; Sodium 24g; Cholesterol 0mg

Tex Mex Mix

8 cups popped popcorn (air-popped)
2 teaspoons ground chili powder
2 teaspoons paprika
2 teaspoons ground cumin
Butter-flavored cooking spray
In a small bowl, combine all seasoning together. Put popcorn in a large bowl and spray lightly with butter-flavored cooking spray. Add spices to popcorn and mix thoroughly until all kernels are coated. Makes 8 cups.

Nutritional Information (based on 1-cup serving): Total Calories 37; Fat 0.7g; Carbohydrate 7.2g; Sugar 0.4g; Fiber 1.6g; Protein 1.3g; Sodium 8mg; Cholesterol 0mg

English Toffee Popcorn Crunch
6 oz. English Toffee Candy
1/4 cup light corn syrup
8 cups popped popcorn
In a small, heavy saucepan, combine the toffee and corn syrup. Stir constantly over low heat until the toffee has melted and the mixture is smooth. Remove from heat and pour over popcorn. Using two wooden spoons, toss to coat well. Let cool. Makes 8 cups.

Nutritional Information (based on 1-cup serving): Total Calories 172; Fat 7.7g (4.7g saturated fat); Carbohydrate 26g; Sugar 12g; Fiber 1.3g; Protein 2g; Sodium 62g; Cholesterol 13mg.
Reference: USDA Nutrient Database for Standard Reference.
For more popcorn information, visit www.popcorn.org or call, toll free 1-877-POPALOT.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Monday-Friday

12-1 p.m., Brown Bagging the Arts, Cleveland County Arts Center, 111 S. Washington St., Shelby. Free one-hour art demonstrations and lectures. Take bag lunch. Drink and dessert furnished. For more information or to reserve a seat call 484-2787.

10 a.m.-12 p.m., 12:30-2:30 p.m. - Backcountry Farm and Catawba Village, Schiele Museum of Natural History, 1500 E. Garrison Blvd., Gastonia. Guided tours available Monday-Saturday at 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. and Sunday at 1:30 and 3 p.m. through August 11 (except July 4). For groups of 15 or more call 854-6676 to register.

Monday-Saturday

10 a.m. and 2 p.m. - Nature and History programs, Schiele Museum, 1500 E. Garrison Blvd., Gastonia. Also, Sunday 1:30 and 3:30 p.m. Meet live reptiles and amphibians in hands-on program for all ages. Monday is alligator day; Tuesday and Saturday snake days; Wednesday and Sunday turtle days; Thursday amphibian day; and Friday, lizard day.

Mondays

7 p.m. - Second Monday of each month, Kings Mountain Board of Education, Central School, 105 East Ridge St.

10 a.m. - Beginning line dance, every Monday, Shelby Senior Center.

10-11 a.m. - Sitting for Fitness, every Monday, Shelby Senior Center.

12 noon - Boiling Springs Rotary Club, Ritch Banquet Hall, Gardner-Webb University.

3 p.m. - Line Dance class, Upper Cleveland Senior Center. For ages 55 and older. Call Marilyn Stamp at 482-3488 for more information.

4:15-5:15 p.m. - Cardio tone class, every Monday, Shelby City Park.

5:30-6:30 p.m. - Overeaters Anonymous, every Monday, Central United Methodist Church, Kings Mountain.

5:30-6:30 p.m. - Early Evening Aerobics, every Monday, Shelby City Park.

7-8 p.m. - Evening Aerobics, every Monday, Shelby City Park.

7 p.m. - Parents Without Partners, every Monday, Shelby Presbyterian Church. For more information call Alan Smith at 481-2986.

7 p.m. - Hurting Families Support Group, every Monday, Christopher Road Baptist Church, Shelby. For information call 538-0410.

8 p.m. - AA Big Book Study, every Monday, Serenity Club, Highway 74 at Bethlehem Road, Kings Mountain.

Tuesdays

6 p.m. - Cleveland County Board of Commissioners, first and third Tuesdays, County Administration Building, Shelby.

7 p.m. - Kings Mountain City Council, last Tuesday of the month, City Hall, East Gold St.

Thursdays

10-11 a.m., every Thursday, Sitting For Fitness, Shelby Senior Center.

11 a.m. - every Thursday, Self Care Program, Bliss Center in Lawndale, Kings Mountain Senior Center, Boiling Springs United Methodist Church, and Charles Place, Shelby. Call Amanda Helms at 482-3488 for information.

12 noon - Kings Mountain Rotary Club, Ramada Ltd.

1 p.m. - Every Thursday, Aerobics, Shelby Senior Center.

6 p.m. - Kings Mountain Kiwanis Club, Central United Methodist Church.

7 p.m. - Broad River Genealogical Society, fourth Thursday, Senior Center in Shelby.

Thursday, August 3

5:30-7:30 p.m. - Reception for Art Camp exhibits, Cleveland County Arts Center, Shelby. Exhibit continues 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday through August 11. Call 484-2787 for information.

Saturday, August 5

10 a.m. - Beginner Bird Watching, Crowders Mountain State Park, Kings Mountain.

Learn about the basics of binoculars, field guides, and bird identification. Includes bird watching hike. Meet at the Amphitheater behind the Visitor Center. Take binoculars and field guides if you have them.

10-11:30 a.m. - Carolina Explorers - Pioneer Games and Toys. Play pioneer games and learn their origins; make a new toy to take home. Living History Farm, Kings Mountain State Park. \$2, ages 8-10. Call (803) 222-3209 for information.

2 p.m. - Wildlife Detectives, Crowders Mountain State Park. Hike for signs critters in the park leave behind. Discover what can be learned from an animal skull, track, and scat! Take walking boots, sketchbook, and other detective tools you might find necessary. Meet at the Visitor Center.

4-9 p.m. - Balloon Glow Festival, Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden, Belmont. Family activities, balloon walks, tours, antique automobiles, local band, picnics, etc. Half-price admission, \$4 for adults, \$2 for children 12-under. Free to members. Call 829-1256 for more information.

7 p.m. - Mid-Summer Singing, Heavenly Echo Gospel Music Park, US 74 by-pass exit 120, Mooresboro. Follow the signs. Park opens 4 p.m. Free admission, but love offering will be taken. For more information, call 434-5449.

Sunday, August 6

2 p.m. - A Lazy Stroll on the banks of the Broad, Broad River Greenway. Led by Clyde Buckner. Meet at the cabin.

2 p.m. - Map and Compass, Crowders Mountain State Park. Learn the basics. Meet at the classroom in the Visitor Center. Take compass if you have one.

2-4 p.m. - Hammered Dulcimer Concert by Susan Sherlock, Kings Mountain State Park Living History Farm. \$2. For more information, call (803) 222-3209.

Thursday, August 10

5:30-8:30 p.m. - Uptown Alive After 5, Washington St., Shelby, featuring "Atlanta Rhythm Section."



Shouldn't Growing

Old In A Small Town

Be Just As Healthy As

Growing Up In One?

Small towns are wonderful places to grow up and raise a family. But as you get older, the quality of health care becomes an important issue. For years Gaston Health Care has worked to bring you modern facilities, the latest treatments and a dedicated medical staff. As we broaden our reach to more communities, we've decided to adopt a new name, CaroMont Health. But we still have the same strong commitment to the health of your family. Wherever you are.



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