

Celebrate the last days of summer with this menu from Basic Food that's perfect for a cookout or potluck. These recipes are healthy and thrifty. They also have a short list of ingredients and are easy to make. Most of all they taste good!

Baked Tortilla Chips

Use this recipe to make your own whole wheat flour or corn flour tortilla chips.

Makes 6 servings.

Ingredients

- 3 flour tortillas (10-inch, whole wheat)
- cooking oil spray
- salt (dash, optional)

Directions

1. Preheat oven or toaster oven to 400°F.
2. Lightly grease a baking sheet with the cooking spray.
3. Cut tortillas into 8 sections (as if you were cutting a pizza) and place on baking sheet.
4. Spray tops of tortilla sections with cooking spray and lightly salt, if desired.
5. Bake for 10 minutes, until crisp and light brown, watching closely so the chips don't burn.



Beef and Bean Chile Verde

This recipe blends flavors and packs a nutritional punch as a source of iron, vitamin C, and fiber. Bell pepper, onion, and tomatoes bring color to the dish.

Makes 6 servings.

Ingredients

- 2/3 pound ground beef (90% lean)
- 1 bell pepper, large (chopped)

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- 1 **onion**, large (chopped)
- 6 **garlic** cloves (chopped)
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1 can diced **tomatoes**, low-sodium (14.5 ounces)
- 1 3/4 cups green salsa (or enchilada sauce, 1-16 ounce jar)
- 1 can pinto or kidney beans (rinsed and drained, 15 ounces)

Directions

1. Place meat, bell pepper, tomatoes, and onion in large sauce pan, . Heat on medium 8-10 minutes, stirring frequently until the meat is browned; drain fat.
2. Add garlic, chili powder and cumin, cook until fragrant (15 seconds).
3. Stir in salsa and bring to a boil.
4. Reduce heat and simmer; cover and cook 10-15 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. Add beans and cook until heated.

For nutrition information, please visit [Beef and Bean Chile Verde](#) at *What's Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl*.



Vegetarian Chili

This delicious chili packed full of veggies, beans, and spices is fast enough for a weeknight dinner. Top with cilantro for a boost of flavor.

Makes 4 servings.

Ingredients

- 2 **onions** (large, cut into 1/4 inch pieces)
- 1 **green bell pepper** (cut into 1/4 inch pieces)
- 3 **garlic** clove
- 2 jalapeno chilis (fresh, diced)
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon chili powder

- 1 tablespoon cumin (ground)
- 2 cans whole **tomatoes**, low sodium (28 ounces total - cut into 1/4 inch pieces or 8 medium fresh tomatoes)
- 2 **zucchini** (medium - cut into 1/4 inch pieces)
- 2 **summer squash** (medium - cut in to 1/4 inch pieces)
- 1 can kidney beans (16 ounce, rinsed)
- 1 cup cilantro (or coriander) (chopped, fresh)
- salt and pepper (to taste, optional)

Directions

1. In a large pot saute onions, bell pepper, garlic, and jalapeno in oil over medium high heat for about 5 minutes - stirring often.
2. Add chili powder, cumin, half of the chopped cilantro, salt and pepper, and continue cooking for another 3 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Add the tomatoes, zucchini, squash, and bring mixture to a simmer.
4. Simmer for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. Add beans, and continue to simmer for another 5 minutes.
6. Serve the mixture hot. Put remaining cilantro on top.

For nutrition information, please visit [Vegetarian Chili](#) at [What's Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl](#).



Grilled Vegetable Packets

Veggies are wrapped in foil and cooked on the grill for an easy side dish to your cookout. Don't have a grill? This recipe can also be made in the oven.

Makes 5 servings.

Ingredients

- 2 **zucchini**, small (sliced)
- 2 **yellow squash**, small (sliced)
- 4 red **potatoes**, small (scrubbed well and sliced)
- 1/2 **red onion**(sliced)
- 1/2 **bell peppers** (red or green, seeded and sliced)

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- 1/4 cup Italian salad dressing, light
- salt and pepper (optional, to taste)

Directions

1. Heat grill to medium heat or 350 degrees.
2. Wash vegetables and slice.
3. Toss in a large bowl. Add dressing and toss until all vegetables are coated.
4. Tear 2 large squares of aluminum foil and place half of the vegetable mixture on each piece. Place an equal piece of foil over the top of vegetable mixture and fold bottom piece with top sheet to form a packet.
5. Place on heated grill for 20-30 minutes or until the potatoes are tender. If you don't have a grill bake Veggie Packets in the oven at 400 degrees for 20-30 minutes.
6. Before you open the packets, poke holes in the foil with a fork. Be very careful opening the foil as the steam will be very hot and could burn you.
7. Empty vegetables onto serving plate or serve from foil packets.

Note: Try different vegetables- tomatoes, green beans, sweet potatoes, mushrooms, broccoli, carrots, corn or your favorites.

*For nutrition information, please visit [Grilled Vegetable Packets](#) at *What's Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl*.*



Grilled Fruit

Fruit kabobs cooked on the grill make a tasty and healthy dessert.

Makes 3 servings.

Ingredients

- 1 cup [pineapple](#) chunks
- 1 [peach](#) (cubed)
- 1 [banana](#) (sliced)

Directions

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1. Place fruit chunks on a skewer to make kabobs.
2. Grill or broil on low heat until the fruit is hot and slightly golden.

Note: If using wooden skewers, thoroughly soak skewers in water prior to using to prevent burning (approximately 30 minutes).

*For nutrition information, please visit [Grilled Fruit](#) at *What's Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl*.*



Fresh Fruit with Cinnamon Yogurt Dip

Vanilla yogurt with cinnamon makes a delicious dip for your favorite fruits. Use low-fat yogurt for an even healthier option.

Makes 4 servings.

Ingredients

- 1 apple
- 1 orange
- 1/4 cup orange juice
- 1 cup vanilla yogurt (low-fat)
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

Directions

1. Core and slice the apple.
2. Slice banana into thin circles.
3. Peel the orange and break it into sections.
4. Pour the orange juice into a small bowl.
5. Dip the fruit pieces into the orange juice to prevent browning.
6. Arrange on a plate.
7. Mix the yogurt and cinnamon in a small bowl.
8. Put the bowl of yogurt and cinnamon next to the fruit. Use it as a dip for the fruit.

Note: Try making this with other favorite fruits.

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For nutrition information, please visit [Fresh Fruit with Cinnamon Yogurt Dip](#) at [What's Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl](#).



Aunt Barbara's Chocolate Squash Cake

Incorporating squash into a chocolate cake adds flavor plus fiber, vitamin K, phosphorus, and folate.

Makes 12 servings.

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1 package cake mix, dark chocolate
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 3 eggs
- 1 1/4 cups water
- 1 cup [squash](#) (shredded or finely chopped)
- chopped walnuts (1/4 cup, optional)

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease and flour a 10" tube or bundt pan.
2. In a large bowl, combine cake mix and cinnamon.
3. Add eggs, water, and oil. Blend until combined, then beat with an electric mixer for 2 minutes on medium speed.
4. Fold in squash. Add nuts if you like.
5. Pour into prepared pan. Bake for 50 minutes to 1 hour, until cake springs back when lightly touched.