**May 2022**

**Mexican Fiesta**

**Black Bean Salsa**

**Ingredients:**

* 2 cloves garlic minced
* 1 – 16oz can black beansm rinsed and drained.
* 1-7oz can shoepeg corn, drained.
* ½ cup Italian dressing
* 3 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
* ½ tsp tabasco sauce
* ¾ tsp chili powder
* 1 medium tomato, finely chopped
* ½ red onion, finely chopped
* ½ green pepper, finely chopped

**Directions:**

Combine first 7 ingredients, toss well and marinate 4-5 hours. Just before serving add last 3 ingredients. Serve with chips.

**Black Bean Salsa**

**Ingredients:**

* 1 can – 14.5oz black beans, rinsed and drained
* 1 cup frozen whole kernel corn, thawed
* 1 large tomato, chopped
* ¼ cup chopped green onions
* 2 Tbsp chopped fresh cilantro
* 2 Tbsp lemon juice
* 1 Tbsp vegetable oil
* 1 Tsp chili powder
* ¼ tsp salt
* 6 corn tortillas

**Directions:**

Combine beans, corn, tomato, green onions, cilantro, lemon juice, oil, chili powder and salt in medium bowl; mix well.

Preheat oven to 400. Cut each tortilla into 8 wedges, place on ungreased baking sheet. Bake 6-8 minutes or until edges begin to brown. Serve tortilla wedges warm or at room temperature with salsa. Garnish with lemon wedges and additional fresh cilantro, if desired.

**Dulce de Leche Bars**

**Ingredients:**

1 ½ cup of flour

½ cup of quick cooking or old fashioned oats

½ cup packed brown sugar

½ tsp salt

1 cup butter softened

1 can (13.4 oz) dulce de leche

1 cup toffee bits

**Directions:**

Heat oven to 350. In large bowl mix flour, oats, brown sugar and salt with fork. Cut in butter until mixture is crumbly. Press ¾ of mixture in greased 13x9 pan. Bake 10 minutes. Meanwhile in 1quart saucepan heat dulce de leche over low heat 2-4 minutes until softened. Spread dulce de leche over partially baked crust. Sprinkle evenly with toffee bits and remaining crumb mixture. Bake 20 -25 minutes until golden brown. Cool 15mins. Run knife around side pan to loosen bars. Cool Completely, about 30 mins. Cut into bars. (from Pillsbury “Holiday Baking”)

**Mexican Fiesta Pasta Salad**

**Ingredients:**

1 (16 ounce) package dried rotini pasta, cooked al dente

1 ½ cups medium chunky salsa

1 cup mayonnaise

½ cup sour cream

1 (16 ounce) can black beans, rinsed and drained

1 (11 ounce) can Mexican-style corn with red and green peppers, drained

½ cup chopped red bell pepper

2 green onions, sliced thin

1 (4.25 ounce) can sliced black olives, drained

½ teaspoon garlic powder

½ teaspoon ground cumin, or to taste

½ teaspoon dried cilantro, or to taste (I used fresh cilantro)

1 teaspoon salt

ground black pepper to taste

**Directions:**

Whisk the salsa, mayonnaise, sour cream, black beans, corn, red bell pepper, green onions, black olives, garlic powder, cumin, cilantro, salt, and pepper together in a large bowl; add the cooled pasta and stir to coat evenly. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate 2 hours to overnight before serving.

**Pig Out Salsa (chorizo, black bean and corn salsa)**

###  Ingredients

* 1 tsp olive oil
* 250 - 300 g / 8 - 10 oz chorizo , raw (not cured) (Note 1)
* 1 garlic clove , minced
* 1 cup corn kernels , canned drain or raw cooked
* 1 cup black beans (from can, drained)
* 250 g / 8 oz cherry tomatoes , quartered (Note 2)
* 1/2 red onion , finely chopped
* 1/4 cup finely chopped coriander/cilantro leaves

**Dressing:**

* 1 1/2 tbsp white wine vinegar
* 2 1/2 tbsp olive oil
* 2 tsp white sugar
* 1/4 tsp each salt and pepper

**Instructions**

* Chop chorizo into small pieces.
* Heat oil in a large skillet over high heat. Add garlic and chorizo and cook for 4 - 5 minutes until golden all over. Set aside to cool, but not col (oil will harden).
* Shake Dressing in a jar until well combined.
* Place beans, tomato, corn, onion and coriander in a bowl. Pour over Chorizo, including all the oil in the skillet, and the Dressing. Toss and serve!

**Notes**

1. Chorizo is sold raw, like sausages that need to be cooked, or cured like salami and can be eaten without cooking. This needs to be made with RAW chorizo so you can cook it until golden and use the pan juices as part of the dressing.

2. I like to make this with cherry tomatoes because I find they can be "diced" smaller than normal tomato, making it easier to scoop up with chips. But you can definitely use normal tomatoes!

## **Mexican Restaurant White Dip**

## **INGREDIENTS**

* 6 Cloves Garlic
* Juice of half a lemon
* 1 tsp Oregano, Dried
* 4 dashes Hot sauce
* 18 Pimento stuffed olives
* 1/2 tsp Cayenne pepper
* 1 tsp Garlic salt
* 1/2 tbsp Red pepper flakes
* 1/2 tsp Salt
* 1 tsp Cumin
* 1/2 cup Milk
* 1 cup Sour cream
* 30 oz Miracle whip jar
* 1 tbsp Olive juice from jar

**Directions:**

1. Easiest recipe ever!!
2. Just put all of these ingredients into your food processor and blend till smooth!
3. Here is the MOST IMPORTANT PART!
4. You HAVE to refrigerate this sauce for 12-24 hours.
5. You have to give it that time to meld together or it will not taste right so make sure to plan ahead!!
6. It makes a ton and is good on everything!

**South of the Border Pizza**

**Ingredients:**

* 1 prepared pizza shell or crust or tortillas for smaller pizzas
* 1 cup cooked low sodium kidney beans, rinsed and drained.
* 1 cup frozen whole kernel corn, thawed
* 1 tomato chopped
* ¼ cup finely chopped fresh cilantro
* 1 jalapeno pepper, finely chopped
* ¼ cup shredded reduced fat Monterey Jack cheese or any cheese

**Directions:**

Preheat over to 450. Place pizza shell in ungreased pizza pan or baking sheet

Arrange beans, corn, tomato, cilantro and jalapeno over pizza shell. Sprinkle evenly with cheese. Bake pizza 8-0 minutes or until cheese is melted and lightly browned. Garnish with green pepper, if desired.

**Peach Cookies (Nancy from Cooks-n-Books recipe. Feb. 2022):**

**5/26/22 – I made a variation of these cookies.  They were quick and easy to make.  I made the shells dropping them onto parchment lined cookies sheet using a medium scoop.  After they came out of the oven, I let them rest for 5 minutes before “digging the hole.”  When completely cooled I placed the cookie into a cupcake holder and filled the hole with the French Vanilla pudding (confession:  I thought that I bought the cooked pudding but I just realized that I bought the instant pudding…oops!).   I topped the pudding with a strawberry.  I refrigerated the cookies.  Enjoy!**

**Cream Filling**

2 small boxes French Vanilla or Vanilla cooked pudding

Make cooked pudding per package directions using ¼ cup less milk.  Cool.  Can be made ahead of time and refrigerated.

**Shells**

4 eggs, MUST be at room temperature

1 cup sugar

1 cup oil

3 t. baking powder

4 cups flour

Beat eggs, sugar and oil together.  Add baking powder and flour.  Let mixture set for a few minutes.  Roll into balls larger than a quarter. Place on baking sheet. Bake at 325 for 10 -12 minutes or until slightly golden.  While still warm and able to handle, dig out a hole using a teaspoon.  Let cool.  Cookies can be frozen at this point.

Place cream on 2 cookies, slightly overfilling.  Place 2 cookies together running finger over seam to seal.

Place ¼ cup Peach schnapps into a bowl along with ½ t. red food coloring (color should be red).   Place ¼ cup Peach Schnapps into another bowl with ½ t. yellow food coloring and 3 drops red food coloring (color should be orange).  Using food safe brush (not silicone) brush red onto half of the cookie and orange onto half of the cookie.  Roll cookie in sugar.  Place stem in top of cookie.  Refrigerate up to 1 day.  Makes 20 cookies (40 shells).

Nancy said that her sister-in-law also made Lemon cookies using lemon pudding and Limoncello.

**Carrie’s Taco Salad**

**Taco Salad**

Ingredients:

1 cup celery – diced

1 onion – diced

1 container of cherry tomatoes – chopped (or 1-2 tomatoes chopped)

2 cans of pinto beans – drained and rinsed

1 cup dry brown rice – cooked

1 batch of taco sauce (see recipe) or store bought jar

Taco meat - Ground tofu and mushroom “meat” (see recipe)

Drizzle of Good Seasons Italian dressing (or homemade – see recipe)

3-4 cups lettuce – chopped (I used mostly spinach, some butter lettuce)

Several handfuls of Doritos/ Aldi brand – crushed (crush in Ziploc bag)

Directions:

1. Combine all ingredients and enjoy!

Or

1. Combine all ingredients except lettuce and doritos – let meld in refrigerator overnight – add lettuce and doritos before servings to retain some crunch!

Notes:

* Can serve warm or chilled
* I like to make ahead the taco sauce, taco seasoning, and Italian dressing – usually I have these on hand for other recipes
* To save time, if you have a rice cooker, you can put that on while you prep other ingredients, or it can be cooked the day before
* Actually, most everything can be prepped ahead of time

**Taco “Meat” - Ground tofu and mushrooms**

Ingredients:

3 tablespoons neutral oil (canola, vegetable, etc)

1 block extra firm tofu – shredded/mashed with fork

1 pack mushrooms (any type) – diced small

5 tablespoons taco seasoning (store bought or homemade; see recipe)

Splash of liquid smoke – optional

Directions:

1. Heat oil in large pan over medium/ medium high heat
2. Add tofu, mix with oil, let sit til lightly browned on one side
3. Mix in 3 tablespoons taco seasoning and let sit a couple minutes
4. Add mushrooms, 2 more tablespoons taco seasoning, and optional splash of liquid smoke – cook down until desired consistency, stirring occasionally to prevent burning

Notes:

* The ground tofu/mushroom mix takes a good 20-25 minutes to cook
* Can double the batch – reheats well
* Great in tacos, burritos, and salad

**Taco Seasoning**

Ingredients:

¾ cup paprika

¾ cup chili powder

4 tablespoons garlic powder

2 tablespoons cumin powder

1 tablespoon salt

Directions:

1. Combine all ingredients!

Notes:

* Aldi brand spices are about ¾ cup – I just dump a whole container of paprika and chili powder in for this recipe to make it super easy

**Taco Sauce**

Ingredients:

16 ounces canned tomato sauce

2/3 cup water

2 tablespoons white vinegar

1 tablespoon ground cumin

1 tablespoon onion powder

1 tablespoon garlic powder

1 teaspoon chili powder

1 teaspoon paprika

1 teaspoon sugar

½ teaspoon cayenne pepper

Directions:

1. Stir over low heat for about 20 minutes

Notes:

* Exact measurements are not necessary for this to turn out delicious!

**Italian Dressing Mix**

Ingredients:

4 tablespoons sugar

2 tablespoons garlic powder

2 tablespoons onion powder

2 tablespoons dried oregano

1 tablespoon dried parsley

1 tablespoon dried basil

1 tablespoon dried celery seeds/powder

1 tablespoons salt

2 teaspoons pepper

Directions:

1. Combine all ingredients

For dressing:

1. Combine 2-3 tablespoons mix with ¼ cup apple cider vinegar, 2/3 cup oil of choice, and splash of water. Shake before use.