

A Taste of Mexico: Part 1

Written by Debbi Covington
Tuesday, 27 June 2017 13:08



Summer is a great time to entertain. The days are longer. The weather is warmer. Okay, who am I kidding? This is Beaufort. The weather is straight up hot. Anyway, the summer is still a good time to have friends over for cool cocktails and spicy Tex-Mex fare. This week's menu features easy, make-ahead recipes that are great for serving buffet-style. Thank you, **John Wollwerth**, for the beautiful food photography. Be sure to watch for the next edition of *Lowcountry Weekly* for recipes from A Taste of Mexico" Part II.

Raspberry Margarita

Salt your glass by rubbing a slice of fresh lime around the rim and then dipping the glass in coarse salt. For added flair, serve individual margaritas with a slice of lime on the side.

1 (12-ounce) package frozen raspberries, thawed

3 (6-ounce) cans frozen limeade concentrate, thawed

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12 ounces tequila

4 ounces triple sec

Puree raspberries and limeade in a blender until smooth. Pour through a fine sieve to remove raspberry seeds; return to blender. Add tequila and triple sec. Blend until smooth. Serve over crushed ice. Garnish with fresh lime. Serves 10 to 12.

Black Bean-Goat Cheese Dip

This chip and dip combo is so savory and satisfying, you'll never notice it's actually good for



you!

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1 tablespoon olive oil

1 cup chopped onion

2 cloves garlic, minced

1 1/2 teaspoons ground cumin

2 (15-ounce) cans black beans, drained and rinsed, divided

1 cup chicken broth

Salt

Freshly ground black pepper

2 large poblano peppers

1/2 cup sliced green onion

1/2 cup coarsely chopped fresh cilantro

1 (11-ounce) log fresh goat cheese, crumbled

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6 whole-grain tortillas (cut into wedges)

Olive oil, for brushing

Sea salt

In a large saucepan, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add onion and garlic and cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in cumin and 1 can of black beans and lightly mash using a potato masher. Stir in chicken broth and remaining can of beans. Simmer until very thick, about 5 to 7 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Let cool. Meanwhile, blacken poblano peppers on a sheet pan under a broiler, turning regularly, about 15 minutes. Place peppers in a paper bag; seal and let sit (and steam) until cool enough to handle. Peel peppers, removing as much of the charred skin as possible without rinsing. Seed and coarsely chop. Transfer to a small bowl and toss with green onions and cilantro. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In the bottom of a 1-quart baking dish, spread half of the bean mixture. Top with half of the crumbled goat cheese and half of the pepper mixture. Repeat layering once more, ending with pepper mixture. Bake for 30 minutes or until the top is bubbling. Meanwhile, arrange tortilla wedges on a large baking sheet in a single layer. Place in oven with dip and bake 12 to 15 minutes or until crisp. Brush with oil and sprinkle with sea salt. Serve dip hot with tortilla chips on the side. Serves 8.

Jalapeno-Lime Chicken Thighs

Tangy, mildly spicy and tender, this chicken is delicious with fresh salsa!

8 boneless, skinless chicken thighs

3 tablespoons jalapeno jelly

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1 tablespoon olive oil

1 tablespoon lime juice

1 clove garlic, minced

1 teaspoon chili powder

1/2 teaspoon black pepper

1/8 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon lime zest

Pickled jalapeno slices

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Line a 10x15-inch jelly-roll pan with foil; spray with nonstick cooking spray. Arrange chicken thighs in a single layer in prepared pan. Bake for 10 minutes; drain off juices. Combine jelly, olive oil, lime juice, garlic, chili powder, pepper and salt in a small bowl. Turn chicken; brush with half of jelly mixture. Bake 10 minutes. Turn chicken; brush with remaining jelly mixture. Bake chicken 10 to 15 minutes more or until juices run clear. Garnish with lime zest and pickled jalapeno slices. Serves 8.

Cilantro-Lime Rice

This rice with it's fragrant hint of lime and cilantro makes a fine side dish for Mexican food as

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well as other dishes. It's great in burritos, too!

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 cup basmati rice

1 1/2 cups chicken broth

2 to 3 cloves garlic, minced

2 tablespoons fresh lime juice

Zest from one lime

1/2 cup chopped cilantro

1 teaspoon salt

Heat the oil in a saucepan and heat on low. Add the garlic and rice to the oil and saute for 2 minutes on medium heat, stirring frequently. Add the chicken broth, salt, lime juice and bring to a boil. Cover and cook on low for 15 minutes or according to rice package directions. When the rice is done, add the lime zest and chopped cilantro and stir to mix in. Serve immediately. Serves 4.

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Grilled Fish Fillet with Beans and Vinaigrette

This dish is a classic Mexican meal. The fish is grilled and served with a side of beans and corn. The beans are cooked with onions and tomatoes, and the corn is cooked with butter and salt. The fish is topped with a lime wedge and jalapeños. The beans and corn are served with a side of shredded cabbage salad with red onions and tomatoes.



Debbi Covington, Author of A Taste of Mexico: Part 1