

# The DISH



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Well, here we are again . . . How can it be that we are only a few days away from the end of 2021? Wow, that went fast! But then again, I think I say that every year.

Have you made plans to ring in the new year? Whether we go out or stay home, one of my favorite things to serve/make/eat is appetizers. I think I could feature them in my column each week and never get tired of them. I've featured a few that I think sound amazing and will make whatever kind of celebration you have a hit.

I would like to take this time to thank all my readers from the bottom of my heart for taking the time to read my column and come along with me and my love of making delicious food. See you next year!

## Steak Bruschetta

ROAST:

1.5 lb. beef tenderloin roast  
Olive oil

Salt & pepper

BRUSCHETTA:

1 loaf baguette, sourdough, asiago loaf, or bread of choice, sliced

6 shallots, sliced not minced

½ cup butter and 4 Tbsp. for cooking shallots

THYME MAYO:

1 cup mayonnaise

¼ cup fig jam

1 tsp. kosher salt

1 tsp. pepper

1 tsp. fresh thyme

**Shallots:** Heat 3 Tbsp. butter (or use oil) on medium heat then add the shallots, stir until coated, add a pinch of salt (speeds up caramelizing process) and brown them until caramelized. Caramelizing onions brings out their amazing natural flavor. Make sure the pan doesn't get too hot or the butter will burn. Continue this process of cooking and deglazing until the onions have reached the color, flavor and texture you desire.

**Roast:** Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Rub roast with olive oil and season with salt and pepper on all sides.

Melt ½ cup butter on medium/high heat in a skillet. Add roast once the pan is hot (it should sizzle upon adding or the pan is not hot enough and you will get tougher meat from the steaming).

Flip the roast to brown each side, including the ends. You want a nice brown "crust" on each side. Use tongs for this. Add more butter as you go, if needed, as to not let the pan get dry. Bake at 400 degrees for 25 minutes. Take out of the oven and tent it with foil to keep warm. Let it rest on counter for 10 minutes. Slice thin.

**Mayo:** Mix all ingredients in a bowl until combined.

**Bread:** Saute 2 Tbsp. butter in skillet. Add bread slices, in one layer. Pan fry on both sides until a nice golden brown color. Spread thyme mayo on bread slice. Place slices of beef (1 or 2 depending on size of bread

slices) on top. Top with a spoonful of the caramelized shallots and a piece of fresh thyme (optional).

## Shrimp Cocktail Appetizer Bites

1 box phyllo cups, 15 per box

2 oz. cream cheese, softened to room temperature

1 Tbsp. mayonnaise

Pinch black pepper

1/8 tsp. Old Bay seafood seasoning

¼ tsp. fresh lemon zest

4-5 large precooked shrimp, peeled, tails off, deveined and chopped finely

2 Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley

HOMEMADE COCKTAIL SAUCE:

½ cup ketchup

1 Tbsp. horseradish, or according to your taste

¾ tsp. smoked paprika

In a medium bowl, stir together the cream cheese, mayonnaise, black pepper, Old Bay and lemon zest. Spoon the cream cheese mixture into a corner of a sandwich-size zip-top bag. Use scissors to snip off a small corner of the plastic bag. Pipe approximately ½ Tbsp. of the cream cheese mixture into each phyllo cup.

To make the cocktail sauce; Stir together all the cocktail sauce ingredients in a small bowl.

Top each cream cheese-stuffed phyllo cup with a dollop of cocktail sauce and some of the cooked and chopped shrimp. Sprinkle the chopped, fresh parsley over top and serve immediately, or refrigerate until ready to serve. Serve chilled and enjoy!

## Cream Cheese Sausage Balls

1 lb. hot sausage, uncooked

1 oz. pkg. Ranch dressing mix

1 lb. bacon, cooked and chopped

8 oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened

1½ cups Bisquick

1½ cups shredded cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Mix all ingredients until well combined with an electric stand mixer fitted with the dough hook attachment.

Roll dough into 1-inch balls and bake on a baking sheet. Bake 15 to 18 minutes.

## Taco Ranch Bites

1 lb. ground beef

1 oz. pkg. taco seasoning

10 oz. can diced tomatoes and green chiles, undrained

2 cups shredded cheddar cheese

8 oz. bottle Ranch dressing

5 (15-count) frozen phyllo tart shells

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

In a skillet, cook ground beef until no longer pink. Drain fat. Add taco seasoning and diced tomatoes and green chiles. Stir and cook for 5 minutes. Remove from heat.

Combine shredded cheddar cheese, Ranch dressing and taco meat. Spoon taco meat mixture into frozen phyllo tart shells. You can freeze for later at this point. Bake for 8-10 minutes, until cheese melts. (Add 2-3 minutes to the baking time if baking frozen tarts.)

## Pretzel Ring Beer Cheese Dip

1¾ cups shredded cheddar, divided

½ cup shredded mozzarella

8oz. block cream cheese, softened

1½ Tbsp. Dijon mustard

2 Tbsp. freshly chopped chives, plus more for garnish

2 tsp. garlic powder

¼ cup pale ale beer

Kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper

16.3 oz. can refrigerated biscuits

2 Tbsp. baking soda

1 large egg, mixed with 1 Tbsp. water, for brushing biscuits

Coarse salt

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, stir together 1½ cups cheddar, mozzarella, cream cheese, Dijon, chives, garlic powder and beer and season with salt and pepper.

Halve each biscuit and roll into a ball, then slice an X across the top.

In a small saucepan, bring 2 cups water and baking soda to a boil and whisk to dissolve. Immediately reduce heat to maintain a simmer. Add biscuits in batches and cook until puffy, 1 minute, then remove with a slotted spoon and transfer to a 10- or 12-inch ovenproof skillet, forming a ring along the inside edge.

Brush biscuits with egg wash and sprinkle with coarse salt. Transfer dip to center of skillet and sprinkle with remaining ¼ cup cheddar. Bake until biscuits are golden and dip is bubbly, 33 to 35 minutes. Garnish with chives before serving.