

**THE
MICRO
WAY
LANI
BLOOMER**



Microwave party snacks

When you have a party coming up, using make-ahead recipes makes the evening fun for the hostess too. Your microwave is a help for hot appetizers, since many of these can be reheated at the last minute.

Here are three nonsweet snacks or appetizers that work well in the microwave. Kids and adults both

love the Pizza Dippers and the Nuts and Bolts. These recipes are easy enough for children or teenagers to make. The Pepperoni Stuffed mushrooms are a little fancier, but still easy to make—and delicious!

Pizza Dippers
1 cup buttermilk baking mix (like Bisquick)

1 cup grated parmesan cheese
1/2 pound sweet (or hot) Italian bulk sausage, uncooked.
2 10-ounce cans pizza sauce

1. Combine cheese and baking mix in a large bowl. Add sausage and stir until well combined. (Use a food processor for this if you have one!) The dough will hold together when mixed well enough.

2. Roll dough into 1-inch balls and place 20 at a time on a paper towel in a flat glass pie or cake pan. Cover with wax paper.

3. Cook on medium (50,5) for 4-4 1/2 minutes, rotating the pan a quarter turn once. Cover with foil and let stand 5 minutes before serving.

4. Heat pizza sauce in a microsafe serving bowl or use a 4-cup measure or 1-quart casserole. Heat on high for 3-5 minutes until hot and bubbling; stirring once or twice will help it heat more quickly. If you have a temperature probe, set the probe for 160° to 170° to heat sauce. Serve with toothpicks for dipping sausage balls into sauce. Makes 40.

Hint: To make ahead, prepare through step 3. Store cooked sausage balls tightly covered in the refrigerator or freezer. Just before serving, reheat on medium until warm.

Nuts and Bolts

2 cups Chex cereal
2 cups Cheerios
2 cups Corn Kix*
2 cups thin pretzel sticks
1/2 pound (about 1 cup) mixed nuts or peanuts
1/2 cup oil

1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
2 teaspoons seasoned salt
1/2 teaspoon garlic salt

1. Mix the cereal, pretzels and nuts in a large microsafe bowl.

2. Mix the remaining ingredients in a small bowl or measuring cup and dribble it over the cereal. Stir

3. Cook on high for 8-9 minutes, stirring twice, until the cereal is hot and toasted. Cool. Makes 8-9 cups.

4. Serve warm or cold. Keep leftovers in an airtight container.

* You can use six cups of any non-sweetened cereal to make this, but the flake-type cereal doesn't work well.

Pepperoni Stuffed Mushrooms

12 ounces fresh mushrooms
1 1/2 cups (about 6 ounces) shredded sharp cheddar cheese
1/3 cup finely chopped pepperoni, about one tenth (.1) pound
1/3 cup chopped ripe olives (12-14 olives)

1-2 tablespoons mayonnaise

1. Wash and stem mushrooms. Set caps aside for filling. Chop stems finely.

2. Combine chopped mushroom stems, cheese, pepperoni and olives in a bowl and mix well. Stir in just enough mayonnaise to make mixture hold together. Fill mushroom caps, but don't heap filling too high or it will run out when hot.

3. Put 12-14 caps on a plate and heat on medium (50,5) for 2-3 1/2 minutes, turning a quarter turn each minute if your oven heats unevenly. Heat until the cheese melts and is bubbly (The time will depend on the size of the mushroom caps). Let stand 5 minutes before serving, for the

filling to cool slightly (to avoid a burned mouth!). Serve warm. Reheat on medium if necessary. Makes 2-3 dozen.

Hint: If you have a food processor, chop the pepperoni first, then add the cheese, mushrooms, and olives in this order, mixing briefly after each addition. Do not puree or over-process, or you will have a grey-ish pink filling instead of an appetizing multicolored one!

Variations:

This pepperoni filling may be spread on crackers and heated, but use very crispy crackers, like Triscuits, because softer ones tend to get soggy. Fill and heat crackers just before serving. Place crackers on a papertowel on a plate, and heat on medium just until the cheese melts. If you heat them too long, the filling will bubble right off!

Use a 2-3 ounce can of mushroom stems and pieces, finely chopped (1/3 to 1/2 cup), in place of the fresh mushroom stems. This will reduce the cost of the filling if you are not stuffing mushroom caps with it.

The pepperoni filling may also be used as a hot dip for crackers, chips or vegetables. Add 1/4 cup mayonnaise instead of the 1-2 tablespoons mayonnaise listed above. Heat the dip in a serving bowl on medium (50,5) for 3-5 minutes until the cheese melts, stir two or three times. (The cheese on the outer edges will get stringy and rubbery if heated on high, or not stirred.)

Note: The times given above are for microwaves with 600-700 watts of power. For 500-600, add 10 seconds to each minute; for 400-500, add 20 seconds.

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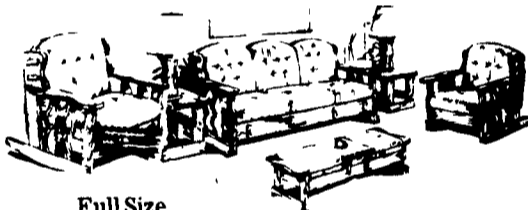


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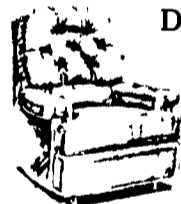
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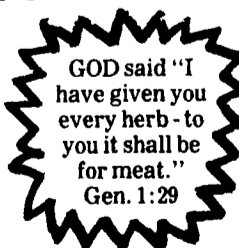
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