

## **MICROWAVE MINUTES**

By JOYCE BATTCHER

Quick microwaved meat with tantalizing sauce is the answer to two questions — what to make for holiday party snacks, and what to make for dinner.

These three easy microwave meat recipes can be varied to make nine different hearty appetizers or main-dishes. Change the sauces to please your own tastes. Either sauce goes well with any of the meats — or substitute 1/4 cup of your favorite barbecue sauce in any of the recipes.

For main dishes, make larger meatballs, cut longer beef strips or thread more strips on wooden kabob skewers. Use chicken pieces instead of wings.

For the best flavor, marinate chicken and beef at least the minimum time or cook meatballs ahead and reheat. Before serving, bring to a boil any sauce that's been used for marinating. Recipes may be doubled, but the chicken and beef are best cooked in single batches.

These recipes are all from my newsletter, A Batch of Ideas, Volume 3, Number 6, December 1985-January 1986.

Jiffy Sweet-Sour Chicken Wings

½ cup red plum jam or jelly 3 tablespoons dark soy sauce 2 tablespoons packed brown sugar tablespoon lemon juice 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder 1 teaspoon paprika 7-8 small chicken wings (about 1

Make Sweet-Sour Sauce by stirring together all ingredients except chicken wings. Set aside.

Cut tips off wings and discard. Cut wings into 2 sections. (For best results, trim off excess fat and skin, especially from long edges of second wing joint.) Add wings to sauce, stirring to coat pieces evenly. Let stand at room temperature 15 minutes. If necessary to marinate longer, cover and refrigerate up to 24 hours.

Drain sauce into a microwavesafe small serving bowl. Microwave (High) 2 to 21/2 minutes, stirring once, until sauce boils; set aside. Place wings on microwave bacon/meat rack, arranging so thickest parts are to outside edges of rack; cover with waxed paper. Microwave (High) 4 minutes; turn pieces over, rearrange and baste with sauce. Re-cover; microwave (High) 2 to 3½ minutes more. To test doneness, cut near bone on largest piece — chicken is done if juices are clear and meat is no longer pink. Arrange on serving plate with dish of sauce in center. Makes about 8 appetizer servings.

For main dish: Use wings or 2½ to 3 pounds chicken pieces. Prepare as above. (With chicken pieces, microwave a total of 20 to 25 minutes.) Pour heated Sauce over chicken. Serve on hot cooked rice. Makes 3 to 5 servings.

Each serving: 422 calories, 32g protein, 10g fat, 46g carbohydrate, 481mg sodium, 90mg cholesterol.

Jiffy Hot And Spicy Beef 1/4 cup catsup

1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce 2 teaspoons chili powder 1 teaspoon onion salt or 1/2 teaspoon onion powder

Hot pepper sauce (optional) 1 pound beef sirloin or top round steak, 1/2 inch thick, cut in 1/4 by 3-3½ -inch strips

Round wooden picks

Make Hot and Spicy Sauce by combining all ingredients except beef in a medium bowl. Add beef strips, trimmed of any visible fat and connective tissue; stir until well coated. Let stand 15 minutes at room temperature; or cover and

refrigerate for up to 24 hours, stirring meat occasionally.

Drain sauce into a microwavesafe small serving bowl. Microwave (High) 2 to 21/2 minutes, stirring once, until sauce boils; set aside. Thread beef strips loosely on round wooden picks. Place strips on microwave bacon/meat rack and brush lightly with sauce. Cover with waxed paper. Microwave on Medium (50 percent power. 325-350 watts) 5 minutes; rearrange and turn strips over. Recover; continue microwaving on Medium 2 to 4 minutes, cooking to rare or medium doneness. Serve hot, with Sauce for dipping. Makes about 50 appetizers.

For main dish: Cut beef in longer strips if desired. Prepare as above, threading on wooden skewers, or spreading strips evenly on microwave bacon/meat rack. Cover with waxed paper and microwave as above, rearranging and turning over strips halfway through cooking. (With unskewered strips, microwaving time will be slightly longer.) Pour heated Sauce over beef. Serve on hot cooked rice, or potatoes. Makes about 4 servings.

Each serving: 234 calories, 27g protein, 9g fat, 7g carbohydrate, 509mg sodium, 81mg cholesterol.

Jiffy Barbecued Meatballs

1 pound lean ground beef 2½ -3 tablespoons dry onion soup mix (1/4 envelope)

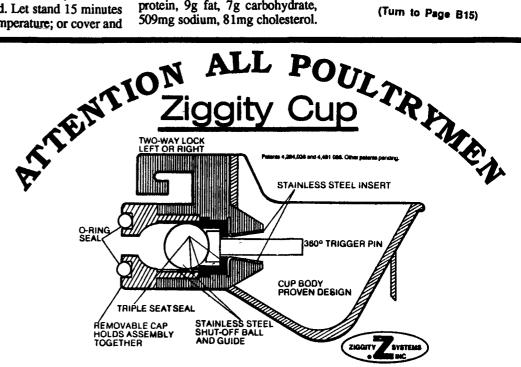
½-¾ cup barbecue sauce Combine beef and dry soup mix; mix gently. Scoop up meat in a teaspoon measure and gently form into 36 to 40 appetizer-size meatballs. Place in microwave-safe 8x8-inch dish; cover with waxed paper. Microwave (High) 3 minutes; turn meatballs over and rearrange so less-cooked ones are to outside edges of dish. Re-cover and continue microwaving (High) 1 to 2 minutes or until meatballs are no longer pink.

Drain, only if there's excess fat. Stir in barbecue sauce; cover with waxed paper and microwave (High) 1 to 2 minutes or until hot. For best flavor, make ahead, refrigerate and reheat. (To reheat: Cover dish with waxed paper; microwave (High) 4 to 6 minutes, stirring once, until hot.) Makes 36-40 appetizers.

For main dish: Use a tablespoon measure to make 20 to 22 main-dish size meatballs. Microwave as above. Serve on hot cooked rice, spaghetti, noodles or potatoes. Makes about 4 servings.

(Turn to Page B15)

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