

National Ice Cream Day is July 16. In 1984, President Ronald Reagan declared the third Sunday in July as National Ice Cream Day and the month of July as National Ice Cream Month.

Did you know... Ice cream first originated in China. When immigrants arrived on Ellis Island they were greeted with ice cream. The classic vanilla ice cream is the most popular flavor around the world.

I don't need a special day to eat ice cream - but it never hurts to have one more reason!

Let us know if there is something you would like us to put in our column, or if you have a recipe to share, please submit to ads@thedrummer.com.

Mason Jar Ice Cream

Prep Time: 5 mins

Freeze Time: 4 hrs 5 mins

Total Time: 4 hrs 10 mins

Servings: 2

3/4 c. heavy whipping cream
1/4 c. sweetened condensed milk
1-1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
1/8 tsp. salt

Place a 1-pint wide-mouth Mason jar in the freezer until chilled, about 5 minutes.

Place cream, condensed milk, vanilla, and salt into the chilled jar. Beat with an electric hand mixer fitted with only one beater until thickened to the consistency of soft serve, 2 to 3 minutes, gradually increasing mixer speed from low to high. If desired, stir in any mix-ins with a long-handled spoon, making sure to leave at least 1/2 inch headspace. Seal the jar and freeze until hardened, about 4 hours.

Note: While it technically could be an optional step, pre-chilling the jar helps the base whip up faster and freeze faster - which means less ice formation for a creamier ice cream.

Almost It's-It Ice Cream Sandwiches

Prep: 40 min. + freezing Bake: 15 min./batch + cooling

Makes: 7 servings

1/2 c. butter, softened
3/4 c. packed brown sugar
1/4 c. sugar
1 lg egg, room temperature
1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
3/4 c. all-purpose flour
1/2 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
1/4 tsp. baking powder
1/4 tsp. salt
1-1/2 c. quick-cooking oats
1/4 c. chopped raisins, optional

For assembly:

3 c. vanilla ice cream
1 bottle (7-1/4 ounces) chocolate hard-shell ice cream topping
Optional: Sprinkles, chopped nuts and miniature semisweet chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350°. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugars until light and fluffy, 5-7 minutes. Beat in egg and vanilla. In another bowl, whisk flour, baking soda, cinnamon, baking powder and salt; gradually beat into creamed mixture. Stir in oats and, if desired, raisins.

Shape into fourteen 1-1/4-in. balls; place 2-1/2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake until golden brown, 11-13 minutes. Cool on pans 3 minutes. Remove to wire racks to cool completely.

To assemble ice cream sandwiches, place 1/3 c. ice cream on bottom of a cookie. Top with a second cookie, pressing gently to flatten ice cream; place on a baking sheet. Repeat with remaining cookies and ice cream. Freeze until firm.

Remove ice cream sandwiches from the freezer. Working over a small bowl, drizzle chocolate topping over half of each sandwich, allowing excess to drip off. If desired, roll the other edge in sprinkles, nuts or chocolate chips.

Place on a waxed paper-lined baking sheet; freeze until serving. Wrap individually in waxed paper for longer storage.

Tips: One of the joys of any homemade ice cream sandwich is that you can use any kind of ice cream you like! These oatmeal cookies would work really well with butter-pecan ice cream or coffee ice cream

For the best flavor and texture, store these ice cream sandwiches properly. Wrap individual sandwiches in plastic wrap and store them in a resealable plastic bag or airtight container. They'll be good for 3 months.

Magic Fruit-and-Veggie Cupcakes

Level: Easy

Total: 44 min

Prep: 20 min

Cook: 24 min

Yield: 24 mini cupcakes

Nonstick cooking spray

1/2 c. all-purpose flour
 1/2 c. whole-wheat flour
 1 T. soy flour
 2 T. wheat germ
 1/2 c. bran flakes cereal or old-fashioned oats (or a combination)
 1/4 c. ground flax seeds
 1 tsp. baking soda
 1 tsp. baking powder
 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
 Pinch of salt
 1 lg egg
 1/4 c. packed light brown sugar, plus more for topping
 2 T. extra-virgin olive oil
 1 tsp. vanilla extract
 2/3 c. plus 1 T. whole milk
 3/4 c. grated or finely chopped vegetables (carrots, zucchini and/or spinach)
 3/4 c. grated or finely chopped fresh or dried fruit (apples, pears, pineapple and/or raisins)

Preheat the oven to 350°. Line a 24-cup mini muffin pan with paper liners or mist with cooking spray.

Whisk the flours, wheat germ, bran flakes, flax seeds, baking soda, baking powder, cinnamon and salt in a large bowl; set aside. Beat the egg and brown sugar in a medium bowl with a wooden spoon until smooth. Add the olive oil, vanilla, milk, vegetables and fruit and mix well. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry mixture and stir just until blended.

Spoon the batter into the prepared pan, filling each cup about three-quarters of the way. Sprinkle the tops with brown sugar, if desired. Bake for 20 to 24 minutes. Remove from the pan and cool on a rack.

3-2-1 Ribs Method

Servings: 3

1 rack pork spareribs
 1 Dry Rub Recipe
 4 Hickory Chunks
 2 T. Apple Juice

Remove the membrane from the back of the ribs by inserting a butter knife between the membrane and the rib bone and gently working it open till you can grab it with your fingers and pull it off.

Season the ribs liberally with your favorite dry rub on both sides. The ribs can be placed in the refrigerator overnight to allow the rub to penetrate more deeply, but this isn't necessary.

Bring your smoker to 225° F and add 4 chunks of hickory on top of the charcoal (be sure to refer to the manufacturer's recommendations).

Keeping the temperature between 225-250° F, place the ribs in the smoker for three hours.

Remove the ribs from the smoker and wrap in foil along with apple juice. Place back in the smoker for two hours.

Finally, remove from smoker and unwrap. Place back into smoker for one hour and apply BBQ sauce, if desired.

Ribs are done when tender and crack slightly when picked up.

Note: Pork spareribs work best using the 3-2-1 method, if smoking baby back ribs use 2-2-1 (two hours unwrapped, two hours wrapped, one hour unwrapped).

Grilled Summer Salad

Prep Time: 20 min

Cook Time: 15 min

Total Time: 35min

Servings 6

For the salad

2 ears corn, shucked
 1-1/2 lg, sweet onion, such as Vidalia or Walla Walla, sliced to 1/4" rounds
 3 T. olive oil
 3 med zucchini
 6 Campari tomatoes - or other ripe tomatoes-on-the-vine, about 1-1/2 cups, sliced into wedges
 1-1/4 c. queso fresco or feta, crumbled
 2/3 c. loosely packed fresh cilantro, loosely packed

For the dressing

1-1/2 clove garlic, minced
 1-1/2 tsp. Dijon mustard
 3 tsp. lime zest
 1-1/2 T. lime juice from about half a lime
 3/4 tsp. kosher salt
 1/3 tsp. ground black pepper
 4-1/2 T. olive oil

For the dressing: In a small bowl combine all the ingredients and whisk until emulsified. Set aside.

For the salad: Preheat the grill to a medium high heat (about 450-500°).

Slice the onion into 1/4" rounds and place on a baking sheet. Shuck the corn and place it on the sheet. Brush the onions and corn with olive oil, just so it's lightly coated. Place the corn and onion slices on the grill and cook, turning every so often to avoid burning until the corn and onions are tender and have taken on a little char, (about 10 minutes). Transfer the vegetables to the sheet pan and set aside.

Use a vegetable peeler or a mandolin -- set on very thin slices to slice the zucchini into thin ribbons and transfer to a large bowl.

Cut the tomatoes into bite sized wedges and add to the zucchini. Separate the onions into rings and add them to the salad. Cut the corn off the cob and transfer to the salad. Crumble the queso fresco or feta and toss into the salad. Just before serving, toss the salad with the dressing and sprinkle with the fresh cilantro.

Pie Iron Pizza Pockets

Prep Time: 30 min

Cook Time: 15 min

Total Time: 45 min

Pizza Dough

2-3/4 c. all-purpose flour

1 packet rapid rise yeast

2 tsp. salt

1 c. warm water

2 T. olive oil

Fillings

1/2 c. pizza sauce

1 c. low-moisture shredded mozzarella cheese

1 green bell pepper, diced

4 oz. can sliced black olives, drained

16 slices pepperoni

Oil

Make the dough (can be done ahead of time!): In a mixing bowl, stir together the flour, yeast, and salt. Add the oil and water. Using a spoon or fork, mix the ingredients until a dough forms. Add additional flour if it seems too wet, then knead until a ball forms. Cover and let rise for 20 minutes.

Divide the dough into 8 pieces. Working with two pieces at a time, stretch and flatten the dough into roughly 4 1/2 x 4 1/2 inch squares.

Oil the pie iron and press one square of dough into the bottom plate. Load up your ingredients: 2 tablespoons of sauce followed by the 1/4 c. cheese, 1/4 of the bell pepper, 1 oz olives, and 4 pepperonis. Top with a second square of dough. Close & lock the pie iron.

Cook over the fire or on top of your campfire embers until the crust is golden brown, flipping as needed to ensure even heat. Exact timing will be variable depending on your campfire intensity, but generally, this will only take 2-3 minutes. Check often!

Remove from the heat, then carefully unlock the pie iron and turn the pizza pocket out.

Repeat with the remaining ingredients. Be mindful that the iron will be HOT when prepping subsequent pizza pockets. Wait until the iron has cooled or take extreme care when reloading the iron.

Notes: Pre-Trip Prep: The dough can be made at home ahead of time and stored in a container in your cooler. Remove from cooler 30 minutes before cooking to make it easier to roll out.

Shortcuts: Instead of making your own pizza dough, you can use premade, storebought dough.

Quote of the Week:

(In observance of National Ice Cream Day, July 16) I make ice cream disappear. What's your superpower?

~ Anonymous