

THE BEST-EVER BRAAI SIDES AND DESSERT

BRAAIED ONION AND SOUR CREAM DIP

Serves 6-8

Hands-on time: 15 minutes

Hands-off time: 35 minutes

INGREDIENTS

For the braaied onions:

- 3 medium onions
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp fresh thyme leaves, roughly chopped
- ½ tsp sea salt

For the dip:

- 1 cup sour cream
- ½ cup (115g) cream cheese, room temperature
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- ½ tsp ground black pepper
- ¼ tsp hot sauce
- 2 tbsp finely chopped fresh chives, divided

Serving suggestion:

Thick-cut potato chips or pita chips

METHOD

1. For the braaied onions:

- Prepare the braai for direct cooking over medium heat (180 - 230°C). Brush the cooking grates clean.
- Cut the onions in half lengthways, then slice into 5mm thick half-moons.
- In a large bowl, combine the onions, oil, thyme and salt and toss to coat the onions evenly.
- Arrange the onions in an even layer on a large perforated grill pan.
- Set the grill pan over direct medium heat and cook the onions, with the braai lid closed, for 25-35 minutes until the onions are golden brown. Stir every 5 minutes.
- Remove the grill pan from the braai and let the onions cool to room temperature. Discard any onion bits that have turned black. **Chef's Tip: discard the blackened onions to avoid any unwanted bitter flavours.*

7. For the dip:

In a food processor, combine all the dip ingredients except the chives. Process until smooth. Add the onions and pulse to a dip consistency with some onion pieces remaining. Add all but ½ teaspoon of the chives and pulse once.

- Transfer the dip to a bowl and sprinkle with the reserved chives. Serve with chips and ENJOY!

BRAAI-BAKED POTATOES WITH HERB BUTTER

Serves 4

Hands-on time: 30 minutes

Hands-off time: 1 hour 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS

For the herb butter:

- 115g unsalted butter, softened
- 1 tbsp fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves, finely chopped
- 2 tsp chives, finely chopped
- 2 tsp fresh tarragon leaves, finely chopped
- ¼ tsp each salt and pepper

For the potatoes:

- 3 slices streaky bacon
- 4 large (225g-350g each) potatoes
- 2 tbsp rendered bacon fat, melted unsalted butter or extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp pepper
- 1 cup sour cream
- 3 tbsp fresh chives, finely chopped

METHOD

1. For the herb butter:

In a small bowl, combine all the ingredients for the herb butter and mash together with a fork to mix well. Cover and refrigerate.

2. For the potatoes:

In a frying pan, fry the bacon over medium-high heat on the stove for 6-8 minutes until browned and crisp, turning occasionally. Transfer the slices to a paper towel-lined plate to drain. Reserve the fat.

3. Pour the bacon fat (about 2 tablespoons) into a small heatproof measuring jug or bowl and set aside to cool.
4. Prepare the braai for indirect cooking over medium heat (180 -200°C).
5. Wash and dry the potatoes thoroughly.
6. Pierce the potatoes in a few places with a fork
7. Brush the potatoes all over with the melted bacon fat and season the skins with the salt and pepper.
8. Brush the cooking grates clean. Roast the potatoes over indirect medium heat for 45 minutes - 1¼ hours or until tender, with the braai lid closed. Remove from the braai.
**Chef's Tip: Use a skewer or sharp knife to check doneness.*
9. While the potatoes are cooking, roughly chop the cooked bacon. Put the bacon, herb butter, sour cream and chives in separate small bowls and let stand at room temperature for about 1 hour. Place a small spoon in each bowl for serving.
10. Holding each hot potato with tongs, use a sharp knife to cut a deep incision lengthways into the potato and then a short incision across.
11. Squeeze each potato at both ends at the same time to open the centre. Transfer the potatoes to a platter. Serve immediately with the toppings and invite guests to dress their potatoes as desired and ENJOY!

BANANA SPLITS WITH SALTED CARAMEL SAUCE

Serves 4

Hands-on time: 15 minutes

Hands-off time: 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS

For the sauce:

¾ cup sugar

4½ tbsp double cream

3 tsp brandy

1 tsp vanilla essence

¼ tsp salt

For the bananas:

4 bananas, firm but ripe

30g unsalted butter, melted

1L chocolate or vanilla ice cream

1 cup whipped cream

¼ cup chopped pecans, toasted

4 maraschino cherries (optional)

METHOD

1. For the sauce:

In a saucepan, combine the sugar with ¼ cup water. Place over high heat on the stove, bring to a boil, swirling the pan gently, until the sugar dissolves. Brush down the sides with a wet pastry brush to prevent sugar crystals from forming.

2. Boil, without stirring, until the syrup turns a deep amber, occasionally swirling the pan and continuing to brush down the sides with the wet pastry brush for 7-9 minutes. Remove from the heat.

3. Stand back while carefully adding the cream, brandy, vanilla and salt. The mixture will bubble up vigorously. Stir with a heatproof rubber spatula until smooth, briefly placing the pan back over low heat if needed to dissolve any caramel bits. Set aside off the heat.

4. For the bananas:

Prepare the braai for direct cooking over medium heat (180-230°C). Cut each banana in half lengthwise, leaving the skin attached. Brush the cut sides with the melted butter. Brush the cooking grates clean. Braai the bananas, cut sides down, over direct medium heat, with the lid open for 2-3 minutes until warm and well grill-marked on the cut sides but not too soft.

5. Remove the bananas from the braai. Peel each half. You can either leave them in halves or cut each half in half again. Set aside.

6. Place 2 scoops of ice cream in each of the 4 serving bowls. Gently set the banana pieces on opposite sides of the ice cream. Drizzle each serving with the caramel sauce, top with whipped cream and garnish with the pecans and cherries, if using. Serve immediately and ENJOY!