

Lemon Pepper Pecan Cheese Crackers

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
- 4 teaspoons finely grated lemon zest
- 1 tablespoon coarsely cracked black pepper
- 1 teaspoon Kosher salt
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, chilled, cut into small pieces
- 1/3 cup sour cream, chilled
- 1 large egg yolk
- 1/3 cup chopped U.S. pecans
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice

Directions:

1. In a food processor, combine the flour, cheese, lemon zest, black pepper, and teaspoon salt. Process until combined.
2. Add the butter and pulse until the dough resembles coarse crumbs. Add the sour cream, egg yolk and pecans and pulse again until just incorporated. Add lemon juice and pulse again. When the dough holds together, dump it onto a lightly floured surface and press it into a flat disk. Wrap in plastic wrap and chill for 2 hours or up to 2 days. (for class, freeze 20 - 30 minutes)
3. Position rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 375°F degrees.
4. On a lightly floured surface, roll out the disk to just under 1/8" thick and use a cookie cutter to stamp out 1 ½" or 2" rounds. Arrange the rounds on an ungreased baking sheet.
5. Bake until nicely browned around the edges and no longer doughy in the center, about 15 minutes (for class check at 5 minutes). Use a spatula to carefully transfer the crackers to a rack and let cool. Serve immediately or store in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

Yield: 5 dozen

*Pecan Crusted Chicken
Nuggets w/ Jalapeno
Dipping Sauce*

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ - 2 pounds boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1 ½ inch cubes
- salt and pepper, to taste
- 2 cups crushed tortilla chips
- 1/2 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 ½ teaspoons dried oregano
- 1/2 cup chopped U.S. pecans
- 1/4 cup milk

Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Line a baking sheet with foil; lightly grease with cooking spray and set aside.
2. Season chicken pieces with salt and pepper; set aside.
3. Place chips, chili powder and oregano in a food processor or blender; process until well ground. Add pecans and pulse a few times, or until finely ground. Transfer mixture to a plate.
4. Pour milk into a bowl. Dip chicken in milk and then roll in crumb mixture to coat. Place coated chicken nuggets on previously prepared baking sheet.
5. Bake for about 20 minutes (in class check at 5-7 minutes), or until chicken is cooked through, turning once halfway through cooking. Remove from oven and serve with Creamy Jalapeno Dipping Sauce.

Creamy Jalapeno Dipping Sauce

- 1 cup sour cream
- 1/2 cup Greek style plain yogurt
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 1/4 cup buttermilk
- 5 tablespoons dry ranch dressing mix
- 1/2 cup pickled jalapeno peppers
- 1/2 cup fresh cilantro leaves
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 1/2 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 1/2 teaspoons dried oregano
- 1/2 cup chopped U.S. pecans
- 1/4 cup milk

Wash and dry the cilantro. Chop into coarse pieces. Place all ingredients into a blender or a food processor. Pulse 7 or 8 times until well combined and smooth. Chill.

Flourless Chocolate Turtle Cookies

Ingredients:

- 3 cups powdered sugar
- 3/4 cup dutch process or special dark cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 3 large egg whites
- 1 large egg
- 2/3 cup dark or semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup caramel bits
- 1/2 cup chopped U.S. pecans, plus a few more for topping, if using

Preparation:

Parchment paper is a must in this recipe; do not substitute with a silicon mat.

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Whisk together the powdered sugar, cocoa, and salt. Add the egg whites and egg. Whisk again until smooth.
3. Stir in the chocolate chips, caramel bits, and pecans. This is a very stiff dough.
4. Drop by tablespoons onto a parchment lined baking sheet. Flatten with the back of a spoon for a thin cookie. Top each cookie with a few extra pecans, if desired.
5. Bake 12 minutes (in class check at 8 minutes), until the cookies are just set. They should be puffy and cracked across the top. Let cool for 5 minutes on the baking sheet before transferring to a wire cooling rack.
6. Let cool completely before storing in an airtight container.