Quick and Easy Holiday Recipes

QUICK AND EASY HOLIDAY RECIPES

LIVE WELL UTAH

Don’t let holiday party planning stress you out: try these quick and easy make-ahead recipes for your next holiday gathering, and enjoy this wonderful time of the year.

As the holidays become a fast approaching reality, the feeling of panic can quickly take over the sparkle…Will I be able to get everything done in time? Will it be just the way I want it? Can I make entertaining extra special without spending too much time or money on the details? Are there things we can do to entertain and prepare for the holidays without making ourselves crazy in the process?

I cater on the weekends and in my spare time, I have come across some simple ways to make the holidays extra special. What can I do to have homemade rolls, a lovely platter of savory bites that can be taken to the next party or maybe a simple dessert that will appeal to even the pickiest foodie? Just by having a few simple ingredients on hand you can make the holidays sparkle. Try out some of these tips and recipes to make your holidays merry and bright.

Chris’s Make Ahead Refrigerator Dinner Rolls

Homemade dinner rolls make any holiday meal extra special. With just a few inexpensive key ingredients, your house will smell like you have been baking all day and your guests will feel extra special when you are pulling these rolls out of your oven right before the event. Try these easy, foolproof dinner rolls for your next gathering.

Ingredients

- 2 cups warm water (105 to 115 degrees)

- 2 packages (1/4 ounce each) active dry yeast
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 4 tablespoons butter, melted, plus more for pan and brushing
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 6 cups all-purpose flour (spooned and leveled), plus more for shaping dough

Directions

1. Pour warm water into a large bowl or stand mixer bowl; sprinkle with yeast, and let stand until foamy, about 5 minutes.
2. Add sugar, butter, eggs, and salt; whisk to combine. Change out whisk attachment to a dough hook. Add flour; mix until incorporated and a sticky dough forms. Move dough to a buttered bowl. Brush top of dough with butter; cover bowl with plastic wrap, and set aside in a warm place until dough has doubled in size, about 1 hour.
3. Turn dough out onto a well-floured work surface. With floured hands, roll dough into a thick log. Cut into 18 equal pieces (halve log, cut each half in thirds, then cut each piece into thirds again).
4. Brush a 9-by-13-inch baking pan with butter. One at a time, flatten each piece of dough, then fold edges toward the center, pressing to secure, until a smooth ball forms. Place dough balls in prepared baking pan, smooth side up (you should have 3 rows of 6). Cover tightly with plastic wrap and refrigerate (at least 4 hours and up to 1 day.), OR you can cover loosely with plastic wrap and let rise in a warm place until doubled in bulk, 30 to 40 minutes.
5. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Remove plastic wrap; brush rolls with butter. Bake until golden and rolls sound hollow when tapped on bottom, 35 to 40 minutes (tent

with aluminum foil if browning too quickly). Pull rolls apart, and serve warm.

Green Onion Cheese Ball

For that special get together, sometimes it is fun to have an easy-to-make alternative to the traditional holiday sweet treat. Here is a simple recipe that, for next to nothing, can be whipped up in a matter of minutes and will look like you spent hours preparing it. Even if you do not like onion, you will be amazed at the flavor. This cheese ball is mild enough that you get just a hint of onion along with the other seasonings. This could be the next neighborhood favorite.

Ingredients

- 3 – 8 oz pkgs. cream cheese (room temperature)
- 1 pkg. dry onion soup mix (I prefer Lipton)
- 6 green onions finely diced (Whole onion – white and green parts)
- Chopped nuts

Directions

Mix first three ingredients thoroughly, shape into a ball, and roll in chopped nuts.

If desired, use this recipe to make two or three small cheese balls out of one batch for a great addition to a cheese and cracker platter for a smaller group. As another option, shape the cream cheese mixture into a teardrop so it looks like a festive Christmas pine cone when sliced or whole almonds are added in a layered pattern, starting at the point and working back. Then place sprigs of green onions, rosemary, or parsley at the round end.

Easy Sugar Cookies

These quick and easy recipes will give your holiday the sparkle and shine that shows you care, with a minimum of effort allowing you to enjoy the holidays with your friends and family.

Ingredients

- White cake mix (dry)
- ¼ cup butter or margarine (melted)
- 2 eggs

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Pour all ingredients into mixing bowl. Mix with a hand mixer until everything is incorporated and looks like moist crumbles. Press into the shape of a disk. Roll out and cut shapes with cookie cutter or scoop dough into balls. Place on cookie sheet, and bake for about 7-10 minutes until lightly golden brown. Place cookies on cooling rack, let cookies cool. Ice cookies according to preference.

This article was written by Chris Jensen, Piute County Extension Educator.