

RICHARD BLAIS' ULTIMATE BIRTHDAY BASH NACHOS

*Carne Asada, Pinto Beans, Pico De Gallo, Ooey Gooey Cheese with Poblano Peppers,
Liquid Nitrogen Ice Cream, and Chocolate Dipped Strawberries*

Quick Carne Asada (serves 4)

What You Need

12-16 oz filet mignon steaks cut into 2-3 inch strips, then diced into small cubes
1 tbsp onion powder
1 tbsp garlic powder
1 tbsp mild chile powder
2-3 tbsp cilantro, chopped, plus more for garnish
1 tbsp clarified butter or cooking oil

What You Do

1. Mix all spices together. Season meat evenly.
2. Heat a grill or a skillet over high heat. Add butter or oil.
3. Sauté steaks on all sides until charred evenly, about 3 minutes total.

Pinto Beans (serves 4)

What You Need

1 ea 12-16 oz can pinto (or black) beans
1 tsp kosher salt
1 tsp fresh cracked black pepper
2 tbsp crumbled cotija cheese
1 bunch green onions, sliced thin
a few dashes of your favorite hot sauce

What You Do

1. Heat beans in a small saucepot. Season with salt, pepper, and hot sauce.
2. Top with cotija cheese and sliced green onions.

Pico De Gallo (serves 4)

What You Need

4 ea roma tomatoes
1 large jalapeño deseeded
½ of a small red onion (diced)
1 bunch cilantro, chopped or ¼ cup
1 lime, juiced
2 tsp salt
1 tsp black pepper

Guacamole (serves 4)

What You Need

4 large, soft Hass avocados
¼ white onion, chopped small
2 limes, juiced
1 bunch cilantro, chopped
2 tsp salt

What You Do

1. Core the tomatoes (remove all seeds and ribs). Clean the fresh jalapeños (remove excess seeds and ribs). Finely chop the cilantro.
2. Small dice all vegetables and combine all ingredients. Taste and adjust seasoning.

What You Do

Mash avocados in large mixing bowl with lime and salt. Fold in onion and cilantro, then serve.



Ooey Gooey Cheese with Poblano Peppers (serves 4, with some leftovers)

What You Need

2 large poblano peppers or 1 jar of mild Ro*Tel chili tomatoes
2 cups melting cheese, such as Velveeta
1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
½ cup shredded Monterey jack or pepper jack cheese
1 quart heavy cream

What You Do

1. Char poblano peppers on all sides until skin is dark and blistered. Immediately place in a small mixing bowl and cover with plastic wrap. Allow to steam for 2-3 minutes.
2. Remove peppers from bowl, peel off skins. Discard stem, skin, and seeds, and chop the peppers into small pieces. Set aside.
3. Alternatively, open and drain a small can of Ro*Tel tomatoes and chili or a similar prepared diced chili condiment.
4. Meanwhile, heat a heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium heat.
5. Add heavy cream and peppers, then stir. Bring to a low simmer. Fold in the melting cheese and stir until melted. Reserve the shredded cheeses to garnish the nachos.

Liquid Nitrogen Ice Cream (*makes 1 quart*)

What You Need

- 1 ½ cups heavy cream
- 1 ½ cups whole milk
- ¾ cup sugar
- 4 large egg yolks
- 2 tsp pure vanilla extract (or 1 whole vanilla bean, scraped)
- 4 liters of liquid nitrogen

For chocolate ice cream:

2 cups prepared chocolate sauce such as Hershey's, Nutella, or similar

What You Do

1. In a large saucepan, combine the cream, milk, vanilla, and ¼ cup of the sugar, and bring to a simmer over medium heat. In a heatproof mixing bowl, whisk the egg yolks with the remaining sugar until combined.
2. Gradually whisk the warm cream mixture into the egg mixture. When smooth and combined, pour the mixture back into the saucepan.
3. If making chocolate, fold in chocolate sauce.
4. Continue to cook, stirring constantly, until the custard is thick enough to coat the back of a spoon (175 °F on an instant-read thermometer). This should take about 10 minutes. Don't let the mixture come to a boil or it will curdle.
5. Strain the mixture through a fine mesh sieve into a bowl. Pour in liquid nitrogen and whisk until frozen. Be careful not to splash it!
6. When frozen (the ice cream will be soft), transfer to a container with a tight-fitting lid and freeze until firm, about 3 hours, or up to 1 week.

***Safety Warning:** Liquid nitrogen has a boiling point of -320 °F and can cause frostbite and serious cryogenic burns. Handle with care. Wear goggles and insulated gloves. This includes anyone else helping in the kitchen!

Optional garnishes

- chopped nuts
- whipped cream
- marshmallow cream
- chocolate sauce
- cherries
- sprinkles
- poprocks



Chocolate Dipped Strawberries (*serves 4-6*)

What You Need

- 1 liter liquid nitrogen
- 12 large, ripe strawberries
- 12 long skewers
- 4 cups melting chocolate
- 1 cup heavy cream

What You Do

1. Skewer strawberries. Bring a small saucepot filled halfway with water to a low boil. Place a mixing bowl on top to make a double boiler.
2. Add chocolate and cream to bowl and stir until melted.
3. Dip strawberries in chocolate, then in nitrogen. Immediately place on a cold plate in the refrigerator to set.

Cocktail Pairing

Classic Margarita

What You Need

- 1 lime wedge, plus 2 lime wheels for garnish
- 1 tbsp coarse salt, for glass rims
- 4 oz (120 ml) high-quality blanco tequila
- 2 oz (60 ml) Cointreau
- 1 ½ oz (45 ml) fresh juice from 2 limes

What You Do

1. Run lime wedge around the outer rims of two rocks glasses and dip rims in salt. Set aside.
2. In a cocktail shaker, combine tequila, Cointreau, and lime juice. Fill with ice and shake until thoroughly chilled, about 15 seconds (the bottom of a metal shaker should frost over).
3. Fill glasses with fresh ice and strain margarita into both glasses. Garnish with lime wheels and serve.

