



First Edition

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## REVISION LOG

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<b>Rev. #</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Description</b>
00	2019-11-10(Sunday)	D. S. Wachter	Initial Creation
01	2020-08-08 (Saturday)	D. S. Wachter	- Updated organization - Adding recipes
02	2020-09-13 (Sunday)	D. S. Wachter	- Added section "Works in Progress" - Added "Surf and Turf Burger" to section "Works in Progress" - Added "Bleu Cheese Burger" to section "Works in Progress" - Added "McDowell's Fries" to section "Works in Progress" - Adding "OLD MAN's Pot Pie Wings" to section "Proteins" - Added "Thanksgiving Mac and Cheese" to section "Pantry Meals" - Added "The Accidental Sloppy Joe" to section "Sandwiches" - Added "Dave's Salad #000" to section "Veggies" - Added section "Fun with Dehydration" - Added "Dehydrated Mushrooms" to section "Fun with Dehydration" - Added "Dehydrated Onions" to section "Fun with Dehydration" - Added "SPAM Fried Rice" to section "Pantry Meals"
02	2020-09-18 (Friday)	D. S. Wachter	- Added "Egg Fried Rice" - Added "SPAMaloaf" - Added "Grilled Cheese Burger" - Added "Pulled Pork Bacon Balls" - Added "MD Poppers" - Added "Bacon Wrapped Pork Tenderloin" - Added "Sesame Tuna"
03	2020-09-19 (Saturday)	D. S. Wachter	- Added "Looney Tunes"
03	2020-09-27 (Sunday)	D. S. Wachter	- Created new section "Poppers" - Moved all popper recipes to section "Poppers" - Added "Steak and Cheese Poppers" - Added "OLD MAN's Potato Salad" - Move recipes in WIP section to applicable sections - Delete section WIP - Added section "YouTube Channels"
04	2020-10-30 (Friday)	D. S. Wachter	- Re-formatting / correcting some titles to match file folder names - Added "OG Poppers"

<b><u>Rev. #</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Author</u></b>	<b><u>Description</u></b>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Added "Dave's Salad #001"</li><li>- Added "Steak Fried Rice"</li><li>- Added "How to Cook White Rice"</li><li>- Added "The Grand Bacon Experiment Part I"</li><li>- Added "The Grand Bacon Experiment Part III"</li></ul>
05	2020-11-22 (Sunday)	D. S. Wachter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Added "How to Cook Baked Potatoes"</li><li>- Added "Vegan Bacon"</li><li>- Added "Sous Vide Scallops"</li><li>- Added "Black Bean Salsa"</li><li>- Added "Vegan Poppers"</li></ul>

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## INTRODUCTION

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As with any project, why? I have always cooked (if I don't cook, I don't eat, right?), but at one point, many (more than I care to remember) years ago, I started to go off the deep end. At first, I kept my notes on random bits of paper, but maybe 3 years ago, I started keeping them in those marbled composition books. I am now up to Vol XVIII and each time I want to make something that I made before, it takes me longer and longer to review my notes. The solution? Let's document the stuff that works, or at least, kinda works. "I ain't got time to bleed."

I am still not entirely sure how to organize this. I am sure, however, that I will change my mind many, MANY times. I can also say that anything that is named "OLD MAN's" is one of my favourites. It probably won't make sense to most people, but "no matter where you go, there you are." Let's get started.



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# PROTEINS

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## WINGS #000

I think this one may have been the tipping point, or at least very close to it. Maybe it was the pizza, which got me to the wings, but wings got me to fermentation which opened up so many more rabbit holes. This is the first wings recipe I made which I REALLY liked.

### INGREDIENTS

#### BRINE

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
2	12 oz. Bottles	Sierra Nevada Pale Ale
2	TBSP	Kosher Salt
4	TBSP	Brown Sugar
4	TBSP	White Sugar
5	oz.	Tabasco Original
1	TSP	Rosemary
1	TSP	Thyme
1	TSP	Garlic Power
Several	N.U.	Bay Leaves

#### SAUCE

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
8	TBSP	Land o' Lakes Salted Butter [i]
5	oz.	Tabasco Original
2	N.U.	Small limes
1	6 oz. can	Tomato Paste
2	Cloves	Garlic

#### PRE-COAT

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
3/4	Cup	Self-Rising Flour
3/4	Cup	Bread Flour

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POST-COAT

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<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
1 ½	Cup	Masa
1 ½	TSP	Black Pepper
1 ½	TSP	Cayenne Pepper
1 ½	TSP	Paprika

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EGG WASH

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<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
3	N.U.	Large Eggs
1/3	Cup	Butter Milk
5	oz.	Tabasco Original

Regular milk is OK if you don't have buttermilk.

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WINGS

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<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
12	N.U.	Wings
AR	-----	Peanut Oil

Perdue wings generally come 6 to a package and clock in around 1.67 lbs per package.

Peanut oil is enough to fill your deep fryer (or pot, or Dutch oven, or etc.) if it needs filling.

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SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Immersion blender
- Counter top deep fryer

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PREPARATION

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BRINE

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Not much to this part...

- 1) Mix all ingredients in a 1 quart Pyrex measuring cup with an immersion blender
- 2) Cover with plastic wrap and set aside until you need to brine the wings
- 3) If it will be a while, blend the brine again just before you add it to the wings

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WINGS – PART I

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- 1) Using a cleaver, separate the drummette, wingette, and tip.
  - a. Some people feel that the tip is not worth the effort; either discard or keep.
- 2) Put the wing sections into a Tupperware container and cover with your brine of choice
- 3) Let the wings brine overnight in your fridge

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SAUCE

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On the day that you are making the wings...

- 1) Chop / mince the garlic
- 2) Add butter to a small sauce pan and melt over low heat
- 3) Add the rest of the ingredients and whisk [ii]
- 4) Use a hand-held immersion mixer after the initial mixing to get the ingredients REALLY integrated
- 5) Continue to heat on low for a while (or when you're are ready to eat) whisking occasionally [iii]

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WINGS – PART II

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- 1) Heat deep frier oil to 356 deg. F
- 2) Mix the pre-coat ingredients in a gallon Ziploc freezer bag
- 3) Mix the post-coat ingredients in a second gallon Ziploc freezer bag
- 4) Mix the egg wash ingredients with an immersion blender
- 5) Pull 4-6 wing parts from the brine and put in the bag of pre-coat. Tap off extra liquid from the wings on the side of the container
- 6) Toss the wings in the pre-coat until evenly coated
- 7) Pull the wings from the pre-coat and tap off excess pre-coat. Set aside
- 8) Repeat pre-coat for the rest of the wings
- 9) Dip 4-6 wing parts at a time in the egg wash and mix around until thoroughly coated
- 10) Tap off the excess egg wash from the wings and put in the bag of post-coat
- 11) Toss the wings in the post-coat until evenly coated
- 12) Pull the wings from the post-coat and tap off excess pre-coat. Set aside
- 13) Repeat steps 9 - 12 for the rest of the wings
- 14) Fry wings 4-6 at a time at 356 deg. F for 4 min. 30 sec.
- 15) Drain in basket for 15 sec.
- 16) Set aside on paper towels
- 17) When ready to eat, mix / toss the wings and sauce. I find around 1 TBSP per wing generally works
- 18) Enjoy!

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## NOTES

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- i. I have never really given thought to unsalted vs salted butter until recently. Butter is butter right? Well, turns out that the amount of salt in salted butter may vary between brands (which is why I specified Land o' Lakes for this one). It is much easier to control the salt levels when you don't have to guess.
- ii. Make sure you use a Teflon whisk if you are using non-stick cookware.
- iii. If it becomes too separated, use the immersion mixer as needed.

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## PICTURES

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### BRINE

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WINGS - PART I

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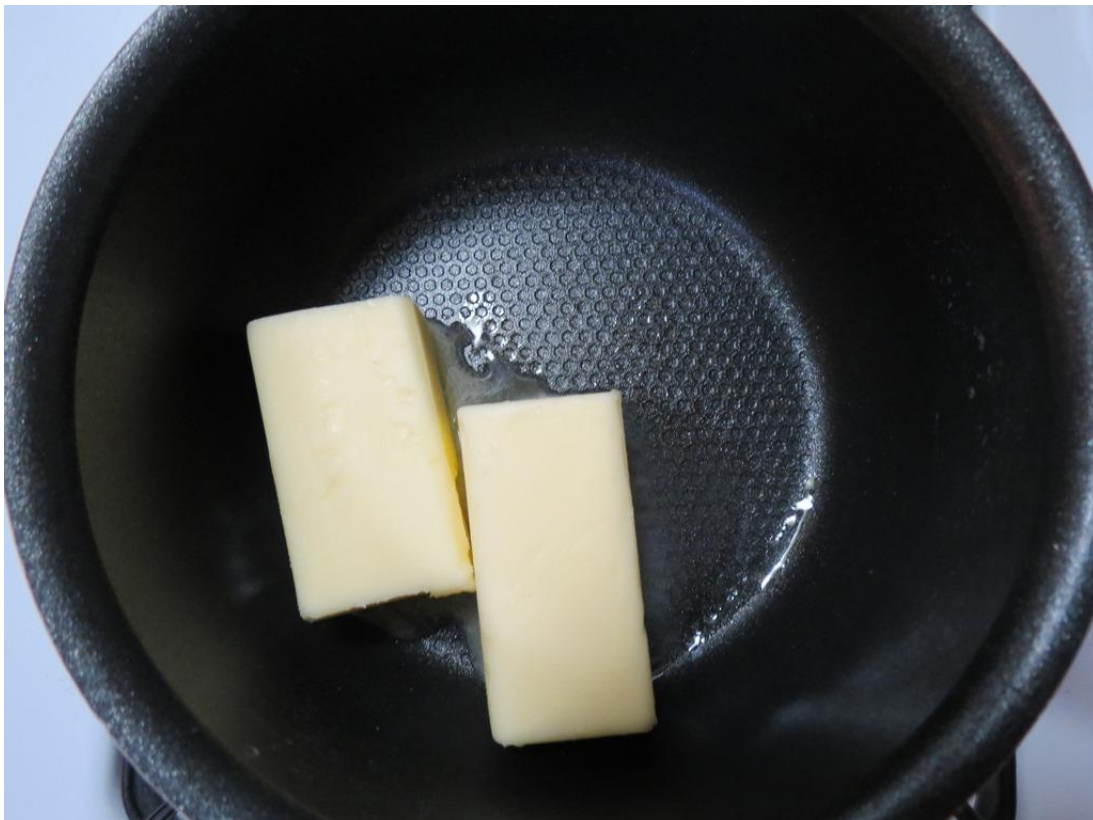




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SAUCE

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WINGS - PART II

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## OTHER WINGS

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This is another example of an offshoot from my fermentation experimentation. About 1 ¼ years ago, I had the idea to brine / sous vide wings in a round of pickled habaneros I had hanging around in the fridge. Hooray! Another win! Great taste and, believe it or not, not too, too much heat (although I may be lying about that since I added the ground dried habaneros).

### INGREDIENTS

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<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
1	1 qt. jar	Pickled Habaneros (See recipe “Lacto-Fermented Pickled Habaneros”)
4	TBSP	Land O’ Lakes Salted Butter
1	-----	Mediumish to Largish Lemon
1	Package	Uncut Chicken Wings
1/4	Cup	AP Flour
1	-----	Largish Egg
2	TBSP	Whole Milk
1	TBSP	Ground Smoked / Dried Habaneros
AR	-----	Corn Starch
AR	-----	Peanut oil

See standard disclaimer about salted vs unsalted butter in other recipes. I am too lazy right now to repeat it.

I generally get Purdue, or the like wings. They come 6 whole wings to a pack and usually weigh around 1.6 lbs. You can also get what I believe are called “Party Wings” which have already been separated into drumettes and flats, but for some reason, I like separating my own and including the wing tips.

As far as the ground smoked / dried Habaneros, I prepare those too. One of these days, I’ll get around to writing that up as well.

Don’t have or don’t like peanut oil??? Use any suitable oil for deep frying at around 374 deg. F.

### SECIAL TOOLS

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- Counter top deep fryer
- Sous Vide Machine [i]
- Food Saver (or similar vacuum sealer)
- Vacuum seal bags or bag rolls
- Immersion blender
- Regular ‘ol blender [ii]

## PREPARATION

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- 1) Heat the Sous Vide machine to 165 deg. F
- 2) Make (Qty. 2) 4 line vacuum seal bags (fold down the top edges of the bags by an inch or so to help avoid getting chicken stuff on the outside of the bag)
- 3) Separate the wings into drumettes, flats and tips with a cleaver [iii]
- 4) Put the parts from 3 wings into each 4 line vacuum seal bag
- 5) Pour the pickled habaneros and brine into the regular 'ol blender and blend on "liquify" for 1 minute [vi]
- 6) Measure and record the volume of the liquified pickled habaneros
- 7) Pour one half of the liquified pickled habaneros into each 4 line vacuum seal bag
- 8) OK... this next part might get a bit tricky... The goal is to vacuum seal the wings and brine with as little leftover air as possible WITHOUT sucking liquid into the vacuum sealer
  - a. Position the vacuum sealer near the edge of a counter
  - b. Squeeze out as much air as possible from a bag of wings and pickled peppers
  - c. Position the bag o' wings in the vacuum sealer so that it hangs over the edge of the counter [iv]
  - d. Pull a vacuum as long as possible until liquid just about reaches the vacuum sealer and trigger the seal function
  - e. After one minute, re-trigger the seal function
  - f. After one minute, pull the bag and wipe out any liquid between the top of the bag and the seal line
  - g. Reposition the bag to place a second seal just above the first one and trigger the seal function
  - h. After one minute, re-trigger the seal function
  - i. Place the bag o' wings in the fridge
  - j. Repeat Steps 7a through 7h for the second bag
- 9) Once the Sous Vide machine has reach temperature, add both the bags o' wings
- 10) Add additional water as required to cover the bags o' wings [v]
- 11) When the Sous Vide machine temperature, set a timer for
  - a. 3 hours for non-frozen wings
  - b. 3 ½ hours for frozen wings
- 12) When timer goes off, pull the Sous Vide wings and drain through fine mesh strainer on top of a quart measuring cup
- 13) Scrape extra gunk off the wings into the juice and set wings aside
- 14) Set a sauce pan on medium-low, add the 4 TBSP of butter and let melt
- 15) Add the wing juice to the sauce pan
- 16) Juice the lemon and add juice to the sauce pan
- 17) Fill the deep fryer with oil and heat to 374 deg. F
- 18) Heat the sauce until it reduces to your desired level of thickness. If it starts bubbling too vigorously, reduce the heat.
- 19) Want the sauce a bit thicker? Stir in some corn starch a little bit at a time, let's say 1 TSP, until it gets to where you want
- 20) Whisk the egg in a bowl with the 1 TBSP of ground smoked / dried habaneros and 2 TBSP whole milk until well incorporated
- 21) Put the flour in a gallon ZipLoc bag

- 22) Toss wings in the flour in the zip loc bag 3 or so at a time at set on a cookie sheet []
- 23) Dredge the wings in the egg wash and set back on the cookie sheet
- 24) Deep fry wings in small batches (DON'T CROWD!) for 1 minute 30 seconds
- 25) Let drain in the basket for 15 seconds
- 26) Put wings on a ½ sheet cooling rack in a ½ sheet pan. Keep covered with a second half sheet pan
- 27) Repeat steps 23 - 25 for the rest of the wings
- 28) Toss wings in a bowl with 1 TBSP of sauce per wing part
- 29) Pour left over sauce in a small bowl for additional dipping goodness
- 30) Plate
- 31) ENJOY!!!

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### NOTES

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- i. I think this may be the first appearance of the Sous Vide machine. How have I neglected it for so long!
- ii. Why is a regular blender in the "Special Tools" list? I dunno; I just get the feeling that maybe not too many people have blenders. At least I didn't specify a Vitamix.
- iii. Yeah, I know. Most people don't like to waste time on the tips, but for some reason, I feel guilty if I don't include them.
- iv. Make sure you clamp down and lock the vacuum sealer before you let go of the bag!!!
- v. Don't go over the max fill line!
- vi. DO NOT over fill the blender, or else you will get Habanero juice EVERYWHERE! Blend in batches as required.
- vii. Running out of flour? Add more!

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### PICTURES

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## OLD MAN’S POT PIE WINGS

This is one of the great things that followed from Devil’s Trinity. Now, I love wings, but for the most part they are of the hot variety; hot to the point where most sane humans will shy away. These wings, however, are not hot at all. There may be a little tang from the Devil’s Trinity, but only on a nice underlying, subtle note. Despite not being hot, these are VERY tasty and the sauce / gravy is FANTASTIC!

### INGREDIENTS

<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
1	1 qt. jar	Devil’s Trinity (See recipe “Devil’s Trinity”)
1	Package	Uncut Chicken Wings
½	Cup	Self-Rising Flour
1	-----	Largish Egg
2	TBSP	Butter Milk
AR	-----	Corn Starch
AR	-----	Peanut oil

I generally get Purdue, or the like, wings. They come 6 whole wings to a pack and usually weigh around 1.6 lbs. You can also get what I believe are called “Party Wings” which have already been separated into drumettes and flats, but for some reason, I like separating my own and including the wing tips

No buttermilk? Whole milk will work

No self-rising flour? AP flour will work

Don’t have or don’t like peanut oil??? Use any suitable oil for deep frying at around 374 deg. F.

### SPECIAL TOOLS

- Counter top deep fryer
- Sous vide machine
- Food Saver (or similar vacuum sealer)
- Vacuum seal bags or bag rolls
- Wood tamper

## PREPARATION

---

- 1) Hat the Sous Vide machine to 165 deg. F
- 2) Make (Qty. 2) 4 line vacuum seal bags (fold down the top edges of the bags by an inch or so to help avoid getting chicken stuff on the outside of the bag)
- 3) Separate the wings into drumettes, flats and tips with a cleaver [iii]
- 4) Put the parts from 3 wings into each 4 line vacuum seal bag
- 5) Empty the jar of Devil's Trinity into a glass bowl and mix with a wood spoon
- 6) Split the Devil's Trinity evenly between the two vacuum seal bags
- 7) OK... this next part might get a bit tricky... The goal is to vacuum seal the wings and brine with as little leftover air as possible WITHOUT sucking liquid into the vacuum sealer
  - a. Position the vacuum sealer near the edge of a counter
  - b. Squeeze out as much air as possible from a bag of wings and Devil's Trinity
  - c. Position the bag o' wings in the vacuum sealer so that it hangs over the edge of the counter [iv]
  - d. Pull a vacuum as long as possible until liquid just about reaches the vacuum sealer and trigger the seal function
  - e. After one minute, re-trigger the seal function
  - f. After one minute, pull the bag and wipe out any liquid between the top of the bag and the seal line
  - g. Reposition the bag to place a second seal just above the first one and trigger the seal function
  - h. After one minute, re-trigger the seal function
  - i. Place the bag o' wings in the fridge
  - j. Repeat Steps 7a through 7h for the second bag
- 8) Once the Sous Vide machine has reach temperature, add both the bags o' wings
- 9) Add additional water as required to cover the bags o' wings [v]
- 10) When the Sous Vide machine temperature recovers, set a timer for []
  - a. 3 hours for non-frozen wings
  - b. 3 ½ hours for frozen wings
- 11) When timer goes off, pull the Sous Vide wings and drain through fine mesh strainer on top of a quart measuring cup
- 12) Scrape extra gunk off the wings into the juice and set wings aside
- 13) Moderately press down on veggies to get out extra juice
- 14) Remove veggies and put in fridge for future use
- 15) Heat juice on low for 6 minutes. If it starts bubbling too vigorously, reduce the heat.
- 16) Stir in 3 TSP of corn starch 1 TSP at a time
- 17) Heat juice for another 15 minutes
- 18) Want it a bit thicker? Stir in more corn starch a little it at a time until it gets to where you want
- 19) Fill the deep fryer with oil and heat to 374 deg. F
- 20) Whisk eggs and milk in a small glass bowl
- 21) Put the flour in a gallon ZipLoc bag
- 22) Toss wings in the flour in the zip loc bag 3 or so at a time at set on a cookie sheet
- 23) Dredge the wings in the egg wash and set back on the cookie sheet
- 24) Deep fry wings in small batches (DON'T CROWD!) for 1 minute 30 seconds



- 25) Let drain in the basket for 15 seconds
- 26) Put wings on a ½ sheet cooling rack in a ½ sheet pan. Keep covered with a second half sheet pan
- 27) Repeat steps 24 - 26 for the rest of the wings
- 28) Add the wings to the gravy, gently stir, and continue to heat for about 10 minutes
- 29) Plate
- 30) ENJOY!!!

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### NOTES

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- i. Yeah, I know. Most people don't like to waste time on the tips, but for some reason, I feel guilty if I don't include them.
- ii. Make sure you clamp down and lock the vacuum sealer before you let go of the bag!!!
- iii. Don't go over the max fill line!
- iv. You have a bit of leeway here. Can't get to it right away when the timer goes off? No problem. Sous vide is pretty forgiving as far as running a bit long goes, just don't let it sit forever

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### PICTURES

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## THREE INGREDIENT CHICKEN

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Another foray into quick and easy... well, easy anyways. Not the healthiest chicken in the world, but TASTY!

20200525 (Monday): A word about cook temperatures and times...

The original cook temperature was 350 deg. F until the internal temperature reached 155 deg. F. The meat was very nice, moist, tender and tasty. The skin? OK, but not great. I am now trying to juggle cook temps and times to get both the fantastic meat and skin. Previous attempt

- 350 deg. F until the internal temperature reaches 155 deg. F
- 350 deg. F until the internal temperature reaches 150 deg. F. Crank oven to 500 deg. F and cook until internal temperature reaches 165 deg. F

20200705 (Sunday): I am getting there...

The skin is still not crispy all over, but this reflects the best I have been able to get it. I did not do the bit with the SearzAll last time around, but I think it will only help the skin texture

20200726 (Sunday): Closest yet!

Last time I made this, I forgot to put the chicken on a lightly greased cookie sheet before sticking in the oven. I just went right from the fridge to the oven on the ¼ sheet cooling rack. You know what? Best crispy chicken skin yet! I am updating the recipe to reflect this

### INGREDIENTS

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<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
4	-----	Chicken Thighs
AR	-----	Old Bay
AR	-----	Land O ' Lakes Salted Butter

I generally get the smaller pack of chicken thighs which come 4 thighs to the pack, so it all works out!

Insert standard disclaimer about salted butter here

### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- SearzAll [iii]

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## PREPARATION

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### DAY BEFORE

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- 1) Slice 4 thin patties of butter
- 2) Separate, but do not remove, the skin from the meat to form a “pocket”[i]
- 3) Generously sprinkle Old Bay under the skin and over all sides of the chicken thighs
- 4) Insert a thin patty of butter into each pocket
- 5) Place chicken thighs on a quarter sheet cooling rack in a quarter sheet pan
- 6) Place pan in fridge over night

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### DAY OF

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- 1) Pre-heat oven to 500 deg. F
- 2) Pull the chicken from the fridge and insert a temperature probe into the thickest part of the largest thigh
- 3) Place the chicken in the oven keeping it on the same ¼ sheet cooling rack in the ¼ sheet pan that was used in the fridge
- 4) Set timer for 10 minutes
- 5) When 10 minute timer expires, reduce oven to 225 deg. F
- 6) Cook until internal temperature reaches 165 deg. F
- 7) Pull from oven. If the chicken skin is not as crisp as you would like, blast it with the SearzAll until it gets there
- 8) Allow chicken to rest under a heat dome for 10 minutes [ii]
- 9) ENJOY!!!

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### NOTES

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- i. You may be able to do this with your fingers, but a sharp knife sure does help!
- ii. Internal temperature should rise by 5 – 10 degrees F due to carry-over cooking. Use your temperature probe to be sure!
- iii. Maybe not 100% necessary, but it sure is fun to use!

PICTURES







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## THE GREATEST STEAK

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This is another one I have been working on for a while. I think I am pretty much there, but I think I need to work on my searing technique a bit.

Update 2020-04-12 (Sunday):

I sent this recipe to my Dad and he recommended searing the steak first. He also recommended oiling the steak and not the pan. That got me to thinking... I don't think I have ever run the forward vs reverse searing experiment, so this time I tried it forward and it turned out pretty freakin' good. I did, however, oil the pan just a tad in addition to oiling the steak.

The other two things I did were

- 1) Used ghee (I made some earlier in the day). Each time I have used ghee, the steak was fantastic, so I am changing the note from "If you don't have ghee, substitute the neutral oil with high smoke point" to "You really, REALLY need to use ghee."
- 2) Cranked the heat on the cast iron pan from high to VERY high, i.e. MAX, i.e. just below the "LITE" setting (my stove is gas, by the way)

By the way, I have not updated the pictures yet.

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### INGREDIENTS

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<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
1	Steak	~1 ½ - 2 Inch Thick Prime Grade Ribeye
AR	-----	Kosher Salt
AR	-----	Fresh Ground Black Pepper
AR	-----	Worcestershire Sauce
AR	-----	Neutral Oil with High Smoke Point (e.g. Grapeseed Oil)
12	g	Ghee

Yes, Prime grade is worth it. It will cost more than choice, but the extra marbling... so good. I LOVE dry aged, but I am not sure if it would be lost in the smoke or not

If you don't have ghee, well, you really, REALLY need to use ghee. It is VERY easy to make.

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### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Traeger Pellet Grill with Mesquite Pellets[i]
- Sous Vide Machine [ii]
- Food Saver (or similar vacuum sealer) [ii]
- Vacuum seal bags or bag rolls [ii]

## PREPARATION

---

- 1) Weigh steak [iv]
- 2) Measure [iv]
- 3) Pat steak dry with paper towels
- 4) Apply the dry brine to the steak in the following order, rubbing in with your wet hand at each step
  - a. Worcestershire Sauce
  - b. Kosher salt
  - c. Fresh ground black pepper
- 5) Place the steak on a ¼ sheet cooling rack in a ¼ sheet pan and put in fridge
- 6) Let the steak sit for at least 2 hours. 3 hours or more is preferable
- 7) Pull Traeger on deck
- 8) Fill the hopper with mesquite pellets
- 9) Set to “Smoke” with the lid open
- 10) When you start to see smoke, close the lid and set temperature to “High”
- 11) Let heat for 20 minutes
- 12) Scrape grate
- 13) Shut lid and set to “Shutdown cycle”
- 14) When ready to smoke the steak, open the Traeger lid and set to smoke
- 15) Heat cast iron pan to VERY high for at least 5 or so minutes
- 16) If the ghee is solid, melt it in the microwave
- 17) When start to see smoke from the Traeger, oil the grate with grapeseed oil and closed lid
- 18) Add 4g ghee to the cast iron pan and swirl so that it coats the entire pan
- 19) Brush the remaining ghee on the steak over the entire surface
- 20) Sear the steak for 30 seconds on each side
- 21) Sear the edges for about 10 – 15 seconds using tongs to hold the steak
- 22) Remove heat from the cast iron pan
- 23) Put the steak on the Traeger and insert a temperature probe into the center of the thickest part
- 24) Close the Traeger lid and smoke for 45 minutes
- 25) Right after you close the Traeger lid, start heating the Sous Vide to 130 deg. F.
- 26) Make a 4 line vacuum seal bag
- 27) At the end of 45 minutes, bump up the Traeger temperature to 225 deg. F and cook until the steak’s internal temperature reaches 125 deg. F. This should take somewhere around 35 or so minutes depending on a bunch of factors
- 28) Remove the steak from the Traeger, immediately vacuum seal it, and put it in the Sous Vide machine
- 29) Finish up the rest of dinner
- 30) When the rest of dinner is about ready, heat a cast iron pan on VERY high for at least 5 or so minutes
- 31) Sear the steak a few seconds on each side and the edges as well. The goal is to cook off surface moisture just enough to give a crustier crust
- 32) Remove heat from the cast iron pan
- 33) Put steak under heat dome
- 34) Gather the rest of dinner, plate, and ENJOY!



## NOTES

---

- i. If you don't have a Traeger or the like, you can use the oven. You will, however, miss out on that great smoke flavor.
- ii. The Sous Vide machine is not used to cook the steak; it is used to keep it at the perfect temperature while you work on other parts of dinner. If you get your timing down perfectly, you can go without it and, by extension, the vacuum sealer and vacuum seal bags.
- iii. The last picture really does not do the sear justice, but I do need to work on my technique a bit.
- iv. For information purposes only.

PICTURES [III]









## STEAK OUT

---

I already have one pretty darn good steak recipe, so why another? I foolishly thought I was done, but then at some point, I came across an episode of Alton Brown's "Good Eats". He did a kind of quasi dry age method in the fridge; no special equipment needed. I saw a handful of other videos that did the same thing and the more I thought about it, the more I became intrigued. I was under no illusion that this would yield a "true" dry-aged steak, but I said let's give it a whirl. That was about three months ago. No special equipment (unless you don't have a grill press) is required, but it does take about a week of time and a little bit of attention once a day. But the results are... well TASTY!

## INGREDIENTS

---

<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
1	Steak	Prime Grade Ribeye, about 1 ½ - 2 Inches Thick
AR	-----	Morton's Kosher Salt
AR	-----	Lea and Perrins Worcestershire Sauce
AR	-----	Fresh Ground Black Pepper
AR	-----	Accent
26	g	Ghee
1	46 oz. can	Pineapple Juice

Prime grade? Preferably, but choice will work too! Make sure you get a thick cut if available

Lea and Perrins? I think there are other brands that make Worcestershire Sauce, but I don't think I have ever had them. Stick with the original!

Accent has one ingredient. Can you guess what it is?

This is one instance where you ABSOLUTELY need ghee. Not only does it have a high smoke point, but when brushed on the cold steak, it solidifies so you see where you need to apply more and it does not drain off the steak

You won't use all of the pineapple juice for one steak, so make sure you also have something to store it in after opening the can

## SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Heavy Grill Press [i]
- Vacuum Sealer and Bag [ii]
- Digital meat oven thermometer [xii, xiii]

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## PREPARATION

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### DAY 1

---

- 1) Buy a steak
- 2) As soon as you can after you get the steak home, pull it out of its package and pat dry with a paper towel
- 3) Weigh the steak and record the result [ii]
- 4) Wrap the steak in a single layer of paper towel
- 5) Put the steak on a  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet cooling rack in a  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet pan
- 6) Place steak in fridge

---

### DAY 2

---

- 1) Pull the steak out of the fridge and note which side of the steak is up
- 2) Unwrap the steak and discard the paper towel [v]
- 3) Weigh the steak and record the result [ii]
- 4) Wrap the steak in a single layer of paper towel such that the side of the steak that was previously up is now down [iv]
- 5) Put the steak on a  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet cooling rack in a  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet pan (remember to place the side of the steak that was previously facing up, face down)
- 6) Place steak back in fridge

---

### DAY 3

---

- 1) Pull the steak out of the fridge and note which side of the steak is up
- 2) Unwrap the steak and discard the paper towel [v]
- 3) Weigh the steak and record the result [ii]
- 4) Wrap the steak in a single layer of paper towel such that the side of the steak that was previously up is now down [iv]
- 5) Put the steak on a  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet cooling rack in a  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet pan (remember to place the side of the steak that was previously facing up, face down)
- 6) Place steak back in fridge

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### DAY 4

---

- 1) Pull the steak out of the fridge and note which side of the steak is up
- 2) Unwrap the steak and discard the paper towel [v]
- 3) Weigh the steak and record the result [ii]
- 4) Wrap the steak in a single layer of paper towel such that the side of the steak that was previously up is now down [iv]
- 5) Put the steak on a  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet cooling rack in a  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet pan (remember to place the side of the steak that was previously facing up, face down)
- 6) Place steak back in fridge

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DAY 5

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- 1) Pull the steak out of the fridge and note which side of the steak is up
- 2) Unwrap the steak and discard the paper towel [v]
- 3) Weigh the steak and record the result [ii]
- 4) Wrap the steak in a single layer of paper towel such that the side of the steak that was previously up is now down [iv]
- 5) Put the steak on a  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet cooling rack in a  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet pan (remember to place the side of the steak that was previously facing up, face down)
- 6) Place steak back in fridge

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DAY 6

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- 1) Pull the steak out of the fridge and note which side of the steak is up
- 2) Unwrap the steak and discard the paper towel [v]
- 3) Weigh the steak and record the result [ii]
- 4) Wrap the steak in a single layer of paper towel such that the side of the steak that was previously up is now down [iv]
- 5) Put the steak on a  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet cooling rack in a  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet pan (remember to place the side of the steak that was previously facing up, face down)
- 6) Place steak back in fridge

---

DAY 7

---

- 1) Pull the steak out of the fridge and note which side of the steak is up
- 2) Unwrap the steak and discard the paper towel [v]
- 3) Weigh the steak and record the result [ii]
- 4) Wrap the steak in a single layer of paper towel such that the side of the steak that was previously up is now down [iv]
- 5) Put the steak on a  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet cooling rack in a  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet pan (remember to place the side of the steak that was previously facing up, face down)
- 6) Place steak back in fridge

---

DAY 8

---

Finally, the day of eating is here! But be warned! You still have several hours to go, so plan your time accordingly!

- 1) Place the heavy grill press in the fridge
- 2) Pull the steak out of the fridge
- 3) Unwrap the steak and discard the paper towel
- 4) Weigh the steak and record the result [ii]
- 5) If you have a vacuum sealer and bags
  - a. Make a 4 line vacuum seal bag. Make two sets of seals, each double sealed
  - b. Put the steak in the bag



- c. Pour 1 half can of pineapple juice into the bag [!!! SHAKE THE PINEAPPLE JUICE CAN BEFORE OPENNING !!!] [vi]
- d. Pull a vacuum until the juice almost reaches the vacuum sealer [vii]
- e. Seal the bag then create a double seal
- f. Pull the bag and wipe out any juice along the top of the bag
- g. Create a second seal right above the first then create a double seal
- 6) If you don't have a vacuum sealer
  - a. Pull out a Tupperware container that is the closest fit to the steak as possible
  - b. Cut 4 or so bamboo skewers so that they fit in the bottom of the Tupperware container
  - c. Put the steak on top of the skewers
  - d. Add pineapple juice until the steak is covered when weighted down
  - e. Weigh down the steak so that it stays submerged [viii]
- 7) Place the steak in the fridge for 1 hour, flipping the steak every 15 minutes [ix]
- 8) Pull the steak and rinse thoroughly under cool water
- 9) Thoroughly pat dry the steak with paper towels
- 10) Weigh the steak and record the result [ii]
- 11) Put the steak back on the cooling rack / sheet pan and generously coat on all sides with Worcestershire Sauce
- 12) Generously coat the steak on all sides with Kosher salt
- 13) Place the steak back in the fridge for 1 hour
- 14) Pull the steak from the fridge noting which side is up
- 15) Apply a second generous coating of Worcestershire Sauce on all sides of the steak
- 16) Place the steak on the cooling rack so that the side that was up is now down
- 17) Place the steak back in the fridge for 1 hour
- 18) Pull the steak from the fridge noting which side is up
- 19) Apply a third generous coating of Worcestershire Sauce on all sides of the steak
- 20) Place the steak on the cooling rack so that the side that was up is now down
- 21) Place the steak back in the fridge for 1 hour
- 22) Pull the steak from the fridge noting which side is up
- 23) Apply a fourth and final generous coating of Worcestershire Sauce on all sides of the steak
- 24) Place the steak on the cooling rack so that the side that was up is now down
- 25) Place the steak back in the fridge for 1 hour
- 26) At the end of 1 hour, heat oven to 225 deg. F
- 27) Weigh out 13 g of ghee in a Pyrex measuring cup
- 28) Heat the ghee in the microwave, 5 – 10 seconds at a time, until the ghee is melted
- 29) Pull the steak from the fridge and pat dry.
- 30) Brush the ghee on all sides of the steak until all the ghee is used. Wait a few seconds after each application to allow the ghee to solidify so you can tell which areas need to be targeted
- 31) Put the steak back in the fridge for 15 min
- 32) Weigh out a second round of 13 g of ghee in a Pyrex measuring cup
- 33) Heat the ghee in the microwave, 5 – 10 seconds at a time, until the ghee is melted
- 34) Pull the steak from the fridge and brush the ghee on all sides of the steak until all the ghee is used. Wait a few seconds after each application to allow the ghee to solidify so you can tell which areas need to be targeted

- 35) Put the steak back in the fridge for 15 min
- 36) Heat cast iron pan on VERY HI for at least 5 minutes
- 37) Place the steak in the pan and the heavy grill press on top of the steak
- 38) Sear for 15 seconds
- 39) Flip the steak and place the heavy grill press on top of the steak
- 40) Sear the steak for 15 seconds
- 41) Using a long [x] pair of metal tongs, sear the edges for 15 seconds per edge
- 42) Put the steak back on the cooling rack / sheet pan
- 43) Sprinkle Accent on all sides of the steak
- 44) Sprinkle fresh ground pepper on all sides of the steak [xi]
- 45) Insert the temperature probe into the thickest part of the steak
- 46) Place steak in oven and cook until it reaches an internal temperature of 122 deg. F.
- 47) When the steak reaches temperature, pull the steak from the oven and put under a heat dome for 5 minutes [xiv]
- 48) Plate with your sides
- 49) ENJOY!!!

#### NOTES

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- i. OK... you don't absolutely need a grill press. I regularly forget it, but I think it does help get a little more crust when searing.
- ii. You don't necessarily need a vacuum sealer either, but I think it works a little bit better and uses less pineapple juice
- iii. Not 100% necessary, but it is interesting to track the weight to see how it changes
- iv. Yes, I am pretty sure this makes a difference, especially depending on how you wrap it. For one or two of my attempts, I did not flip the steak daily and it wound up "dry aging" unevenly
- v. After day 1, you may not need to discard the paper towel. If it is not soaked in meat juice, you can probably keep using it
- vi. I kept forgetting to do this
- vii. Be careful with this. You don't want to get any juice in your vacuum sealer
- viii. I used one of my glass fermentation weights
- ix. 1 hour is the limit. The enzymes in the pineapple juice do a REALLY good job of breaking down meat
- x. The longer the better; the pan is quite hot at this point and there can be some ghee spatter
- xi. Apply less than you think you will like if your pepper is relatively fresh; it can be quite potent
- xii. I don't think I consider this special equipment any more, but I listed it here just to make sure we use one.
- xiii. One of the ones with either a remote probe or a probe on a wire that can be snaked out the over door
- xiv. The internal temperature should rise by about 5 - 10 deg. F while resting

PICTURES

DAY 1 – STEAK WEIGHT = 661 G





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DAY 2 - STEAK WEIGHT = 635 G

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DAY 3 - STEAK WEIGHT = 613 G

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DAY 4 - STEAK WEIGHT = 598 G

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DAY 5 - STEAK WEIGHT = 585 G

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DAY 6 - STEAK WEIGHT = 572 G

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DAY 7 - STEAK WEIGHT = 560 G

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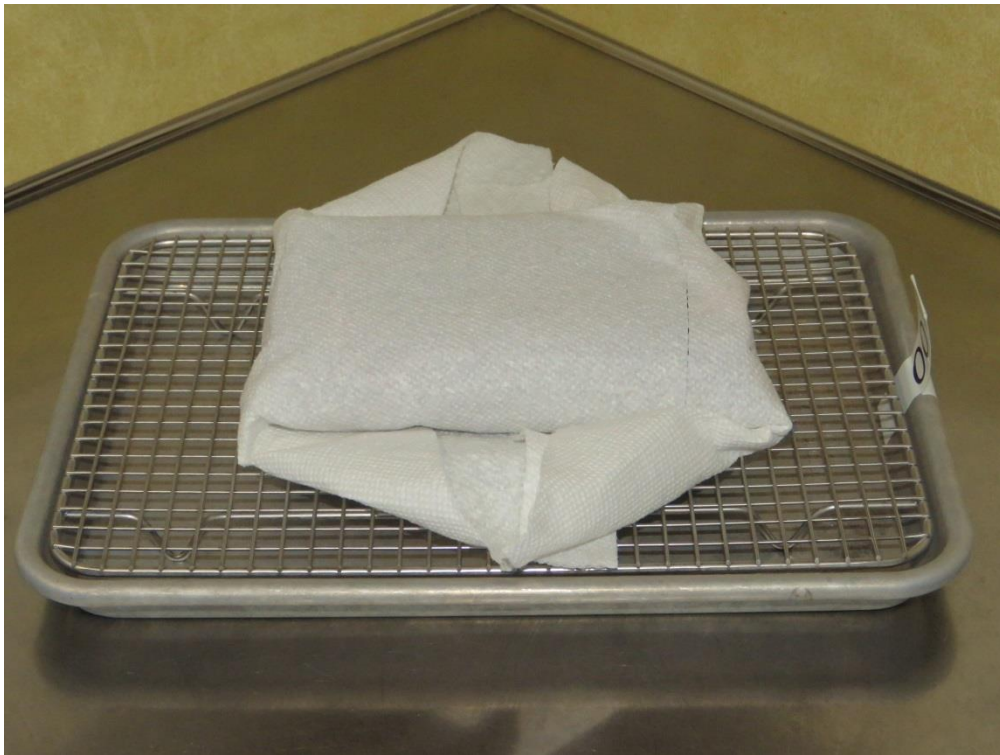


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DAY 8 – STEAK WEIGHT = 550 G

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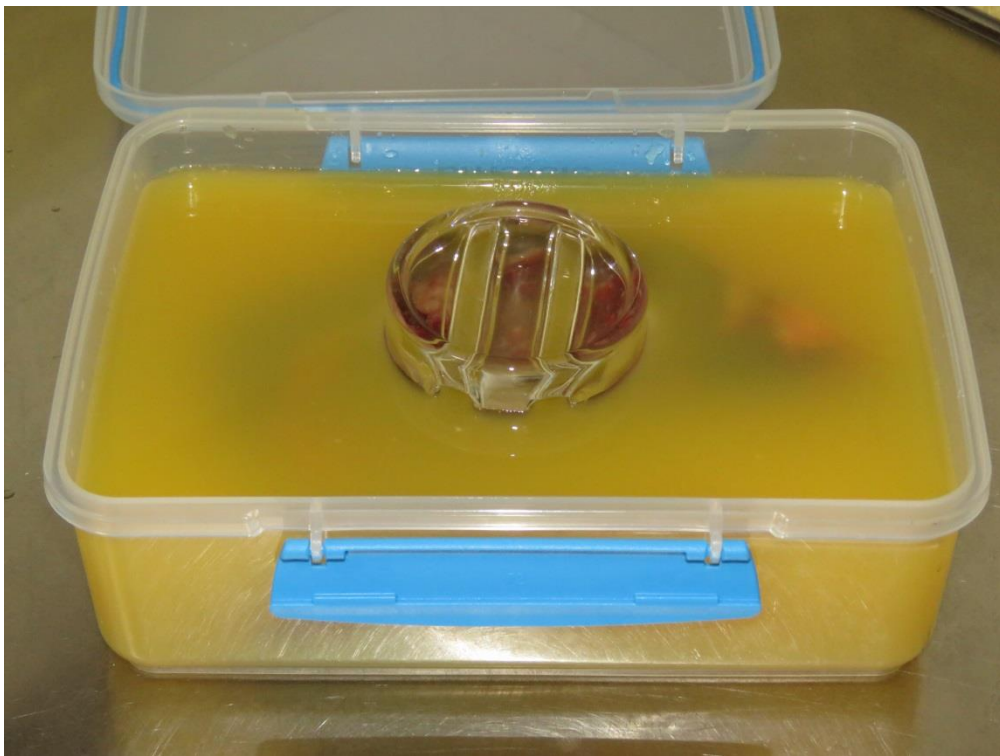
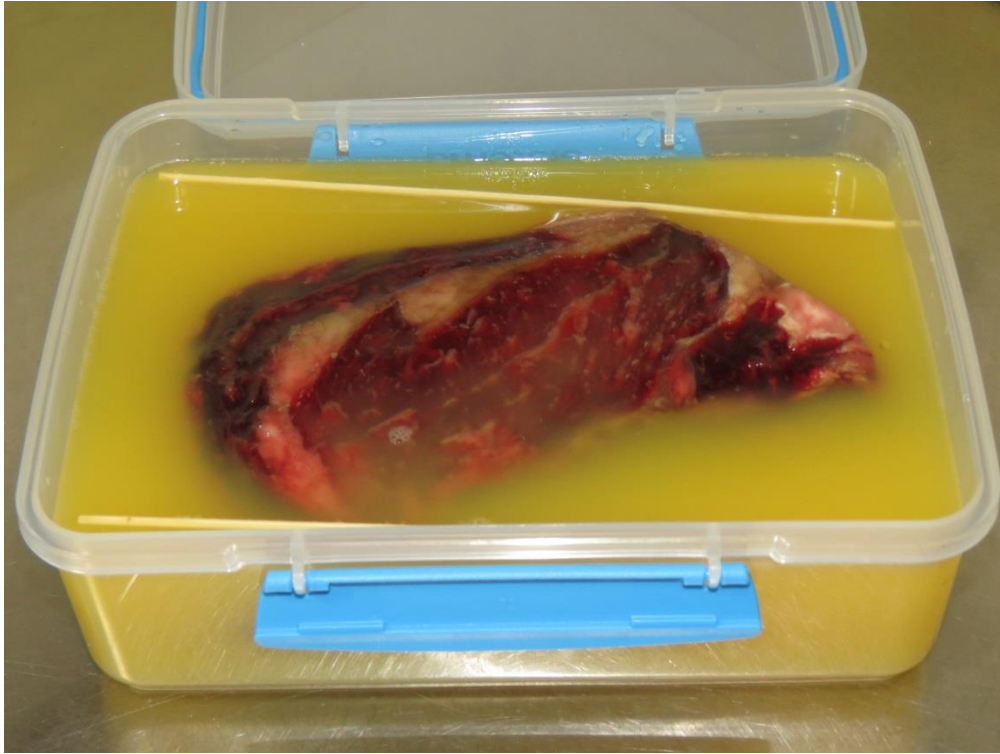


















Well, once again I started too late and by the time I was ready to eat, I was too hungry and I forgot to take pictures of the final product. Maybe next time!

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## SOUS VIDE FISH FILETS

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For some reason, I did not eat a lot of fish for a good while. I am not sure why as I like most fish. I guess part of it boils down to I was never really comfortable with the fish counters in most grocery stores and there were no real fish markets nearby. Anyways, about ¾ of a year ago, I convinced myself to get some fish from a local supermarket with a pretty good fish counter. I think it was trout. You know what? It was pretty freaking good! My early cook attempts were baking and I think may have tried pan frying once or twice, but I never really found a way I was totally happy with... Until I tried Sous Vide. I mean WOW! Easy, forgiving cook times, and perfect texture. I eventually discovered that I did not like doing a sear either; it really did not add anything and just wound up overcooking the fish. I now regularly get fish every week and it usually winds up giving me two meals (depending on how hungry I am that night!)

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### INGREDIENTS

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<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Items</b>
AR	-----	Fish
AR	-----	EVO
AR	-----	Seasoning of choice

As you can see, the ingredient list is pretty open ended. As far as the fish goes, go by what looks good and what you are in the mood for. I never really expected to like tilapia for some reason, but now it is in my regular rotation. For seasoning, I'll typically do salt and pepper, but sometimes OLD BAY or McCormick's Black Garlic Powder. But, as always, do what you like!

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### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Vacuum Sealer [i]
- Vacuum Seal Bags [ii]
- Sous Vide Machine[iii]

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### PREPARATION

---

- 1) Check Sous Vide machine water.
  - a. Add / replace water as required
- 2) Heat the Sous Vide machine to 135 deg. F
- 3) Make 1 vac seal bag for each filet
  - a. Create two seals, each one double sealed
- 4) Unwrap the fish and pat each filet dry with paper towels
- 5) Apply a thin coat of EVO all over each filet
- 6) Apply seasoning of choice to the non-skin side [iv]
- 7) Place one filet in each bag and vac seal

- 8) Stick vac sealed filets in the fridge until the Sous Vide machine reaches temperature
- 9) Sous Vide for [v]
  - a. 45 minutes for non-frozen fillets
  - b. 60 minutes for frozen fillets
- 10) Be careful when removing the fish from the bag, it can be fall apart tender
- 11) Plate with your sides of choice
- 12) ENJOY!!!

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#### NOTES

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- i. I use the Food Saver, but I do have a vac chamber sealer that I need to break out one of these days
- ii. Food Saver requires the special bags, but the vac chamber does not
- iii. I have the Sous Vide Supreme, but there are a lot of options out there
- iv. The filets are usually thin enough that seasoning both sides would be too much
- v. Sous Vide is generally pretty forgiving if you go long on cook times, but fish for some reason is not quite as forgiving. I've gone long before and the fish was still TASTY!

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#### PICTURES

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No pictures yet!

## SOUS VIDE FISH STEAKS

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I just finished writing up Sous Vide Fish Filets, but what about steaks? Well, I have not had a lot of luck until recently. Part is probably due to my insistence on trying to sear the fish after Sous Vide, but most likely it is due to me overcooking the fish. Now here is where it gets tricky. The temperatures and cook times may be considered unsafe by some, so PLEASE do your own research to determine what is best for you and the people you are serving. DO NOT TRY THIS AT HOME!!!

### INGREDIENTS

---

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Items</u>
AR	-----	Fish Steaks
AR	-----	EVO
1	TSP per Steak	Lemon Juice
AR	-----	Seasoning of choice

As you can see, the ingredient list is pretty open ended. As far as the fish goes, go by what looks good and what you are in the mood for. For seasoning, I'll typically do salt and pepper, but sometimes OLD BAY or McCormick's Black Garlic Powder. But, as always, do what you like!

### SPECIAL TOOLS

---

- Vacuum Sealer [i]
- Vacuum Seal Bags [ii]
- Sous Vide Machine[iii]

### PREPARATION

---

- 1) Check Sous Vide machine water.
  - a. Add / replace water as required
- 2) Heat the Sous Vide machine to 116 deg. F [v]
- 3) Make 1 vac seal bag for each steak
  - a. Create two seals, each one double sealed
- 4) Unwrap the fish and pat each steak dry with paper towels
- 5) Apply a thin coat of EVO all over each steak
- 6) Apply seasoning of choice to both sides
- 7) Place one steak in each bag along with 1 TSP of lemon juice and vac seal
- 8) Stick vac sealed steaks in the fridge until the Sous Vide machine reaches temperature
- 9) Sous Vide for [v]



- a. 45 minutes for non-frozen steaks
  - b. 60 minutes for frozen steaks
- 10) Be careful when removing the fish from the bag, it can be fall apart tender  
11) Plate with your sides of choice  
12) ENJOY!!!

---

### NOTES

---

- i. I use the Food Saver, but I do have a vac chamber sealer that I need to break out one of these days
- ii. Food Saver requires the special bags, but the vac chamber does not
- iii. I have the Sous Vide Supreme, but there are a lot of options out there
- iv. Sous Vide is generally pretty forgiving if you go long on cook times, but fish for some reason is not quite as forgiving. I've gone long before and the fish was still TASTY!
- v. OK... 116 deg. F was based on some research and was the last good temperature that I liked. Everything above that was overcooked in my opinion. Some people may consider this unsafe, so PLEASE do your own research to determine what is best for you and the people you are serving. DO NOT TRY THIS AT HOME!!!  
P.S. I am probably going to try 110 deg. F next time

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### PICTURES

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No pictures yet!

## BACON WRAPPED PORK TENDERLOIN

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This one was born out of me trying to resurrect my Slow Cooker Pork Loin recipe from the days of yore. You know, back before I started keeping notes in the marble composition notebooks. Anyways, I went to the store and could not find the pork loin, but they did have a whole pork tenderloin. Well, to make a long story short, I did not have the slow cooker recipe by the time I needed to use it and played this one by ear. WOW! Freakin’ fantastic. Not only was this great by itself and as leftovers, but it gave rise to one of my favorite off the cuff recipes, The Accidental Sloppy Joe!

One other note, I am working on dialing in the cook temperature to get good crispiness on the bacon. What I have here is my best thoughts at this time

### INGREDIENTS

---

<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
1	-----	Whole Pork Tenderloin (~ 3 ¼ lbs)
1	16 oz. Pack	Regular Cut Bacon
AR	-----	Kosher Salt
AR	-----	Fresh Ground Black Pepper
AR	-----	Garlic Powder
AR	-----	Yellow Mustard

The whole pork tenderloin actually consists of two tenderloins, at least the one I get at Martin’s. I’m no butcher, but I guess that is what they mean by “whole pork” (two tenderloins per pig). And you know what? Less than \$10. That is pretty good for something that can feed a family or one person for most of a week

I like Kunzler bacon, with the Hormel Black Label being a close second

For the mustard, I like French’s Yellow Mustard. That may anger the food cops, but you what? I don’t care. I like it.

### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Large melting dome [ii]

### PREPARATION

---

- 1) Heat oven to 350 deg. F
- 2) Set timer for 30 minutes
- 3) Remove the pork tenderloin from the packaging and pat dry
- 4) Rub the mustard over the pork tenderloins. This is being used mainly as a binder, so not too heavy; just enough to get complete coverage

- 5) Apply Kosher Salt all over the pork tenderloins. Pat in as needed
- 6) Apply Fresh Ground Black Pepper. Pat in as needed
- 7) Apply the Garlic Power. Pat in as needed
- 8) Place the pork tenderloins on ½ sheet cooling rack in ½ sheet, uncovered, in fridge
- 9) Make bacon weave (see pictures)
- 10) Place one of the tenderloins on the end of the bacon weave with the unweaved ends, the roundest side down
- 11) Place the second tenderloin on top of the first, flattest side down with the wider end on top of the narrower end of the first tenderloin
- 12) Slowly roll the tenderloin and weave towards you, keeping it tight
- 13) Tuck in the sides of the weave at the ends
- 14) Insert a temperature probe as close to the center of the thickest part of the wrapped tenderloins
- 15) Place the wrapped tenderloin in the oven on the cooling rack in the sheet pan in the oven
- 16) Cook until the internal temperature reaches 135 deg. F [i]
- 17) Pull the wrapped tenderloin from the oven and cover with a melting dome [ii]
- 18) Let the wrapped tenderloin rest for about 10 minutes. The internal temperature should rise by about 10 deg. F due to carry-over cooking
- 19) Slice and plate
- 20) ENJOY!!!

#### NOTES

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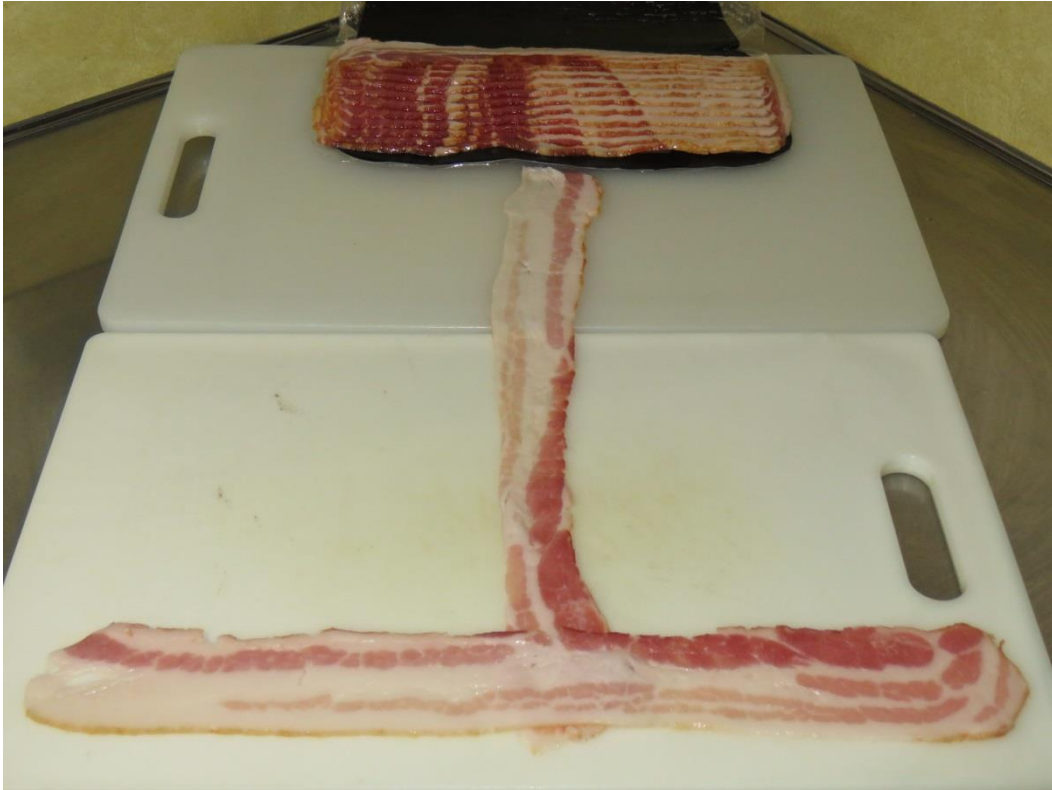
- i. Cook time should be somewhere around an hour, but will vary depending on the vagaries of your oven
- ii. I am not sure if I should consider this special equipment or not, but just in case. If you don't have one, covering with aluminum foil should work just as well

PICTURES

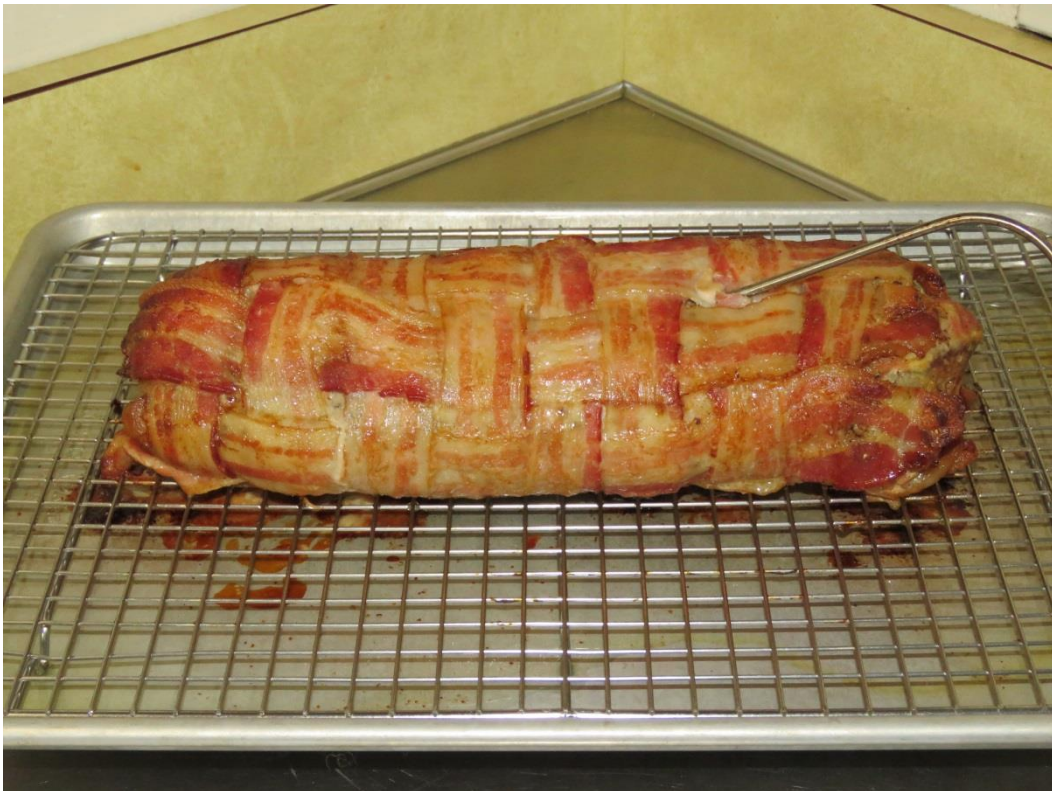
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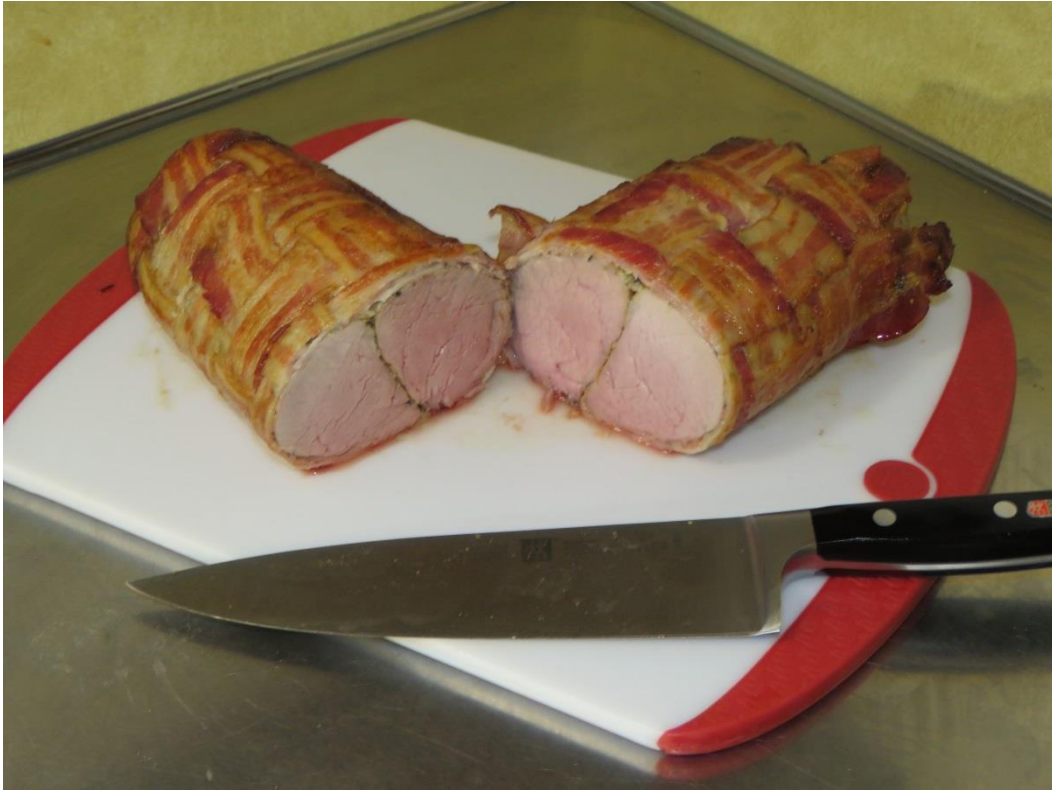












## LOONEY TUNES (WIP)

This has got to be one of the craziest things I have ever made. This one came to fruition back in July of 2018 (funny, a lot of these seem to be coming from 2018) and was one of those random bursts of insight that you get only once in a blue moon. Word of warning... this took around 12 ½ hours from start to finish with some spaces here and there to get other stuff done. This is yet another example of why I should NEVER run a restaurant.

I have not made this since then, but here are some things I had listed as thoughts for the next time:

- Bump up the cook temperature for crispier bacon
- Use cheddar instead of feta. Less moisture and the yellow will provide another colour element
- When roll the roll, place the larger pieces of meat towards the end so the inner fillings do not show through the cracks between the meat sections
- Lightly salt and pepper each layer of meat
- Maybe try precooking the bacon before wrapping
- Use a Searzall
- Someone also suggested a cast iron pan, but I don't have one big enough to fit this monstrosity

Anyways, I am going to write this one up as I made it, but keep those bulleted points above in mind if you decide to give this a try.

## INGREDIENTS

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
1	Pack	Pre-Washed Baby Arugula
2	-----	D'artagnan Duck Breast
1	-----	D'artagnan Young Rabbit
1	Container	Feta Cheese Cheese Crumbles
1	lb. Pack	Regular Cut Bacon
AR	-----	Kosher Salt
AR	-----	Fresh Ground Pepper
AR	-----	High Temperature, Neutral Oil (e.g Grapeseed)

The only reason I say "D'artagnan" here is that is what I have seen in the grocery stores (well, Wegman's anyways). If you have another source, feel free to use it

I don't remember the size of the Feta cheese container. It wasn't huge, but it wasn't small either. Maybe the size of the blue cheese crumbles I used recently. Maybe 4 oz.? Maybe 8?

Once again, I'll say Kunzler for the bacon, with Hormel Black Label as a second

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## SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Traeger Pellet Grill with Gourmet Pellets[i, iii]
- Butcher paper [ii]

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## PREPARATION

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- 1) Pull the Traeger out on your deck, fill with your pellets of choice, and set to smoke
- 2) Once you see smoke, close the lid and set to max temperature
- 3) Let it heat for at least 30 minutes
- 4) Scrape the grate with a wood scrapper then set it to shutdown cycle
- 5) Take the fat of the duck breast and trim off any remaining large bits of fat
- 6) Place a duck breast between two pieces of plastic wrap on a cutting board
- 7) Pound the duck breast thin with a meat mallet
- 8) Roll out the duck breast with a rolling pin
- 9) Repeat steps 7 and 8 three times or until the duck breast is very thin
- 10) Put the duck breast in the fridge
- 11) Repeat steps 6 – 10 for the second duck breast
- 12) Debone the rabbit [iv]
- 13) Split the rabbit into two portions
- 14) Spread a portion of rabbit between two pieces of plastic wrap on a cutting board.  
Try to keep the spread as even as possible
- 15) Pound the rabbit thin with a meat mallet
- 16) Roll out the rabbit with a rolling pin
- 17) Repeat steps 15 and 16 two times or until the rabbit is very thin
- 18) Repeat steps 14 – 17 for the second portion of rabbit
- 19) Make the bacon weave
- 20) Place a piece of wax paper over the bacon weave and roll flat with the rolling pin
- 21) Place the pounded duck breasts on top of the bacon weave for maximum coverage of the bacon with minimum overlap of the duck breasts
- 22) Spread the package of arugula over the duck
- 23) Place the pounded rabbit over the arugula for maximum coverage of the arugula with minimum overlap of the rabbit
- 24) Spread the feta cheese over the rabbit
- 25) Roll it all up as tight as possible
- 26) Tuck in the bacon ends at each end of the roll
- 27) Place the roll on ½ sheet cooling rack in a ½ sheet pan then place in fridge
- 28) Set the Traeger to smoke with the lid open
- 29) Once you see smoke, close the lid and set to 250 deg. F
- 30) Once the Traeger has reached temperature, grease the grate with a high temperature, neutral oil then put on the roll
- 31) Insert a temperature probe into the thickest part of the roll
- 32) Cook until the internal temperature reaches 160 deg. F
- 33) Pull the roll from the Traeger and wrap in butcher paper then towels
- 34) Put the wrapped roll in a cooler and let rest for 30 minutes or so
- 35) Pull the roll from the cooler and slice to your desired thickness

- 36) Plate with your sides of choice
- 37) ENJOY!!!

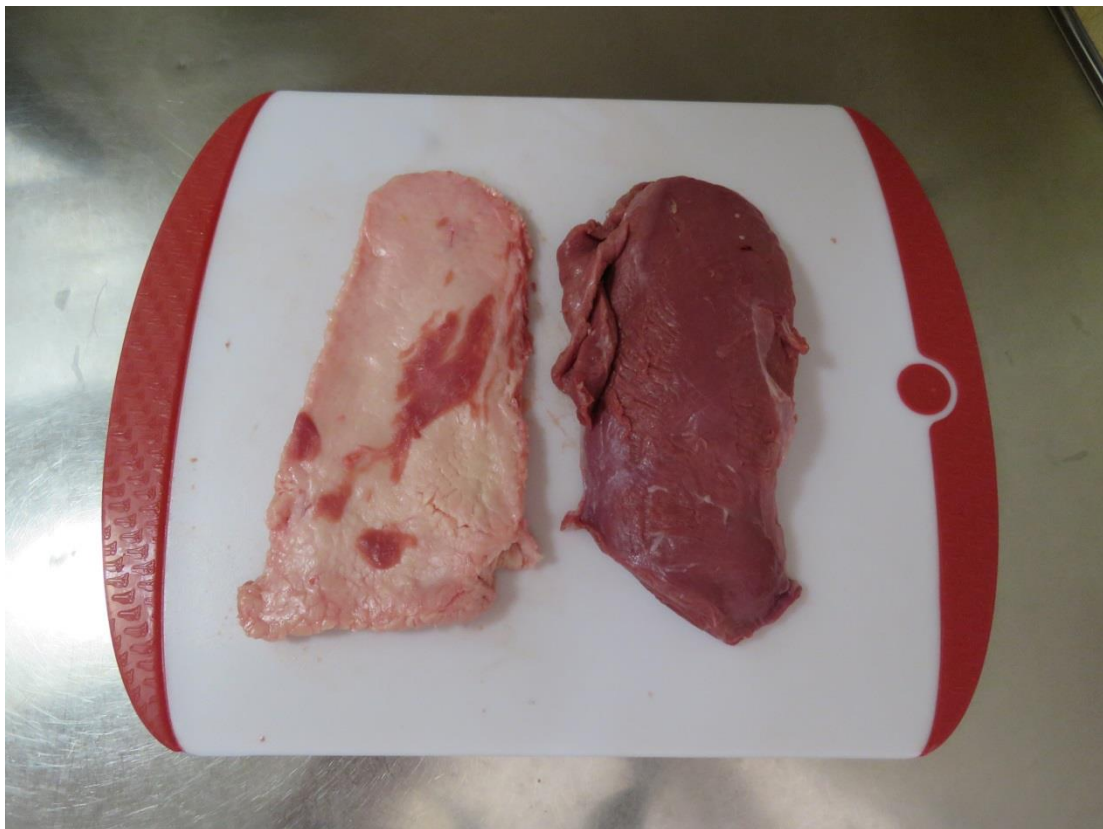
### NOTES

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- i. If you don't have a Traeger or the like, you can use the oven. You will, however, miss out on that great smoke flavor
- ii. Make sure you use uncoated butcher paper (i.e. no wax coating or otherwise). If you can't find it locally, you can get it from Amazon
- iii. The original recipe used Gourmet Blend (special from Traeger), but I think hickory or mesquite should do quite well.
- iv. This was much harder than I had anticipated and took quite a while. You might want to do a bit of research on this first

PICTURES

























## SESAME TUNA (WIP)

---

Every so often, the seafood counter at Martin’s has tuna steaks. When I see it, I take advantage. This is more or less the same as “Sous Vide Fish Steak”, but with an added twist; a sesame seed coating. That was an inspiration based on a Guga / Sous Vide Everything video I came across at some point, but I made some tweaks

Now here is where it gets tricky. The temperatures and cook times may be considered unsafe by some, so PLEASE do your own research to determine what is best for you and the people you are serving. DO NOT TRY THIS AT HOME!!!

20200918 (Friday):

I am changing this to a WIP. It was very good, BUT I think it will work better as a flash deep fry at 374 deg. F as opposed to a quick oven cook at 500 deg. F. I also want to see if I can get better coverage with the sesame seeds

### INGREDIENTS

---

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
AR	-----	Tuna Steaks
AR	-----	EVO
1	TSP per Steak	Lemon Juice
AR	-----	Kosher Salt
AR	-----	Fresh Ground Black Pepper
¼	Cup	Corn Starch
1	Egg per Two Steaks	Large Egg
AR	-----	White Sesame Seeds
AR	-----	Black Sesame Seeds

You should be able to get the white sesame seeds in the spice aisle of your local grocery market. For the black sesame seeds, you may have to travel to the international aisle

### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Vacuum Sealer [i]
- Vacuum Seal Bags [ii]
- Sous Vide Machine[iii]

### PREPARATION

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- 1) Check Sous Vide machine water.
  - a. Add / replace water as required
- 2) Heat the Sous Vide machine to 116 deg. F [v]



- 3) Make 1 vac seal bag for each steak [vi]
  - a. Create two seals, each one double sealed
- 4) Unwrap the fish and pat each steak dry with paper towels
- 5) Apply a thin coat of EVO all over each steak
- 6) Apply the salt and pepper to both sides. Pat in as required
- 7) Place one steak in each bag along with 1 TSP of lemon juice and vac seal
- 8) Stick vac sealed steaks in the fridge until the Sous Vide machine reaches temperature
- 9) Sous Vide for [v]
  - a. 45 minutes for non-frozen steaks
  - b. 60 minutes for frozen steaks
- 10) About 30 minutes out, heat your oven to 500 deg. F
- 11) When the Sous Vide is done, pull the steaks and remove from the bags. Be careful!  
The steaks can be fall apart tender
- 12) Gently pat the steaks dry
- 13) Lightly coat all sides of the steak in corn starch
- 14) Whisk the large egg then put in a flat bottom Tupperware container
- 15) Coat the tuna steaks in the whisked egg
- 16) Spread an even mix of the black and white sesame seeds in a flat bottom Tupperware container
- 17) Coat the fish on all sides with the sesame seed mix by laying the steaks in the sesame seeds. Don't forget the edges!
- 18) Place the steaks on ¼ sheet cooling racks in ¼ sheet pans
- 19) Cook in the 500 deg. F oven for 2 minutes
- 20) Plate with your sides of choice
- 21) ENJOY !!!

---

## NOTES

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- i. I use the Food Saver, but I do have a vac chamber sealer that I need to break out one of these days
- ii. Food Saver requires the special bags, but the vac chamber does not
- iii. I have the Sous Vide Supreme, but there are a lot of options out there
- iv. Sous Vide is generally pretty forgiving if you go long on cook times, but fish for some reason is not quite as forgiving. I've gone long before and the fish was still TASTY!
- v. OK... 116 deg. F was based on some research and was the last good temperature that I liked. Everything above that was overcooked in my opinion. Some people may consider this unsafe, so PLEASE do your own research to determine what is best for you and the people you are serving. DO NOT TRY THIS AT HOME!!!  
P.S. I may try 110 deg. F next time
- vi. If you have the pre-made quart bags, those work great here too

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## PICTURES

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No pic's yet!

## YOU CAN TUNE A PIANO BUT YOU CAN'T TUNA FISH

---

I have a recollection from my childhood of my grandmother's tuna melts. Just tasty and comforting. Now that I think about it, one of the few specific food experiences that I have a clear recollection of and that was many, many, MANY years ago. I am not sure I will be able to get back to that, but this is an attempt. Well, maybe not an attempt, but at least an homage.

NOTE: This is just for the tuna salad portion. The pictures show a "melt" on buns, but that was just an intermediate delivery system for the tuna fish salad. I'll get to the "melt" bit later

### INGREDIENTS

---

<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
1	4 oz. DRWT Can	Solid White Albacore Tuna
1	2.25 oz. DRWT Can	Black Olives
1/2	Cup	Duke's Mayonnaise
1/4	Cup	Diced Celery
1/4	Cup	Diced Shallots
1/4	Cup	Diced Green Onions
1	TBSP	Celery Seed
1/2	TSP	Cayenne Pepper
1/2	TSP	McCormick Minced Garlic
1	TBSP	Sweet Pickle Relish

Any good quality mayonnaise will do, but I like Duke's

The minced garlic is not fresh minced garlic, it is pre-packaged dried minced garlic from McCormick. I happened to have it in my spice cabinet and it worked out well

### SPECIAL TOOLS

---

- None!

### PREPARATION

---

- 1) Rinse the veggies and let drain in a colander for a few minutes
- 2) Drain the tuna fish and olives in separate metal strainers over separate 1 quart measuring cups
- 3) Cover the draining tuna fish and olives with saucers

- 4) Dry the celery and cut into a fine dice
  - a. Cut stalks lengthwise into three thin strips
  - b. Slice strips crosswise to get a dice
  - c. Dice again to get a finer dice
- 5) Dry the green onions and slice
  - a. Cut off the little bit of root ends and the dry craggly ends of the green onions
  - b. Remove any dry and / or over fibrous and chewy layers
  - c. Slice thinly crosswise
- 6) Dry the shallots and finely dice
- 7) Finely dice the black olives
- 8) Put all ingredients in a glass bowl and gently fold together with a wood spoon
- 9) Apply to delivery method of choice [i]
- 10) ENJOY!!!

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#### NOTES

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- i. This makes 4 decent sized portions for sandwiches, melts, etc.

PICTURES

































## SOUS VIDE SCALLOPS

---

So since I started getting into fish, I have been eying the scallops at the fish counter. Never really got around to trying them out, but recently I realized that I have gone through all the usual suspects, so I said, "What the heck?" I wasn't really sure what to expect, but it turned out pretty good!

### INGREDIENTS

---

<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Items</b>
1	lb	Scallops
AR	-----	EVO
AR	-----	Kosher Salt
AR	-----	Fresh Ground Black Pepper
AR	-----	Garlic Powder
2	TSP	Lemon Juice

The scallops... I would have liked bigger ones, something I could wrap bacon around, but no matter where you go... there you are. I really miss living in an area where there are still honest to God seafood stores

### SPECIAL TOOLS

---

- Vacuum Sealer [i]
- Vacuum Seal Bags [ii]
- Sous Vide Machine[iii]

### PREPARATION

---

- 32) Check Sous Vide machine water.
  - a. Add / replace water as required
- 33) Heat the Sous Vide machine to 140 deg. F
- 34) Make (2) 3-line vac seal bag for each filet
  - a. Create two seals, each one double sealed
- 35) Unwrap the scallops and pat dry with paper towels
- 36) Split the scallops over two plates
- 37) Drizzle you EVO of choice over the scallops
- 38) Sprinkle kosher salt, fresh ground black pepper, and garlic powder over the scallops
- 39) Stir around the scallops with your hands so that the scallops get evenly coated with the salt, pepper, and garlic powder
- 40) Add 1 TSP lemon juice to each bag
- 41) Put scallops in the vac seal bags, trying to get maximum separation between each scallop
- 42) Vac seal the scallops, but stop the vacuum cycle before the scallops get "squished"

- 43) Apply double seal
- 44) Create a second seal just above the first one and double seal
- 45) Stick vac sealed scallops in the fridge until the Sous Vide machine reaches temperature
- 46) Sous Vide for 40 – 60 minutes [v]
- 47) About 10 minutes out, start heating your cast iron pan on HI
- 48) Add enough oil to coat the bottom of the pan
- 49) Pull one bag of scallops from the Sous Vide. If you are not going to eat all of the scallops, put one bag in the fridge
- 50) Pat the scallops dry
- 51) If the scallops are large enough
  - a. Add to the pan one at a time
  - b. After you add the last scallop, go back to the first and flip
  - c. Flip the rest of the scallops in the sequence you added them to the pan
  - d. Repeat until you get a nice golden brown on the scallops
- 52) If they are not large enough
  - a. Add the scallops to the pan
  - b. Flip with a spatula frequently until you get a nice golden brown on the scallops
- 53) Plate with your sides of choice
- 54) ENJOY!!!

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#### NOTES

- iv. I use the Food Saver, but I do have a vac chamber sealer that I need to break out one of these days
- v. Food Saver requires the special bags, but the vac chamber does not
- vi. I have the Sous Vide Supreme, but there are a lot of options out there
- vii. Sous Vide is generally pretty forgiving if you go long on cook times, but fish for some reason is not quite as forgiving. I've gone long before and the fish was still TASTY!

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#### PICTURES

No pictures yet!

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## CARBS

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## OVEN ROASTED POTATOES

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Well, another day, another dinner. I had a bunch of stuff I wanted to cook, but at the time it was really too late to do anything complicated (once again, I had been distracted by too many shiny objects). I had some potatoes I was going to use for fries, so I said, "Self! Let's make something with roasted potatoes!" This is the first time I can remember having made something by the seat of my pants (I think I was wearing pants) based on what I have learned over the years that turned out pretty well!

---

### INGREDIENTS

---

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
AR	-----	Russet Potatoes
AR	-----	Extra Virgin Olive Oil [i]
AR	-----	Kosher Salt
AR	-----	Black Pepper

This is another one where all the ingredients are AR because it all depends on how much you are making and your seasoning preferences.

---

### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- (2) pizza stones

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### PREPARATION

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- 1) Place an oven rack in the middle of the oven
- 2) Place a second oven rack two positions above that
- 3) Place a pizza stone on the top rack
- 4) Place a second pizza stone on the bottom of the oven. Make sure no vents are obstructed by this pizza stone
- 5) Heat oven to 425 deg. F
- 6) Rinse potatoes and pat dry
- 7) Remove and nubbles from potatoes, but DO NOT PEEL!
- 8) Chop potatoes into bite size chunks
- 9) Put the potatoes in a glass bowl and toss with olive oil. Enough for a generous coating, but not enough so that it pools at the bottom of the bowl
- 10) Sprinkle potatoes with kosher salt to taste and toss
- 11) Sprinkle potatoes with black pepper to taste and toss
- 12) Check for taste and toss in additional seasoning as required
- 13) Spread potatoes on a metal cookie sheet and put in oven for 20 minutes
- 14) Flip potatoes and continue to cook until a nice golden brown
  - a. Check in at about 15 minutes after flipping and then every few minutes thereafter

- 15) Remove the potatoes from oven and let sit for 5 minutes
- 16) Enjoy!

---

#### NOTES

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- i. OK... Extra virgin olive oil has a lower smoke point than light olive oil. I have also heard that you should not use extra virgin olive oil in cooking applications because its flavor would most likely get lost. I said what the heck, let's see what happens, and it worked!

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#### PICTURES

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## OLD MAN'S SWEET POTATO FRIES

---

This one.... This one... This one has been one of my White Whales. For some reason, I became obsessed with making sweet potato fries. Not exactly sure when it started, but I think it was in the past year or so. All I know is that I think I am there. The recipe below is a little bit of a tweak on the best version I have made to date.

### INGREDIENTS

---

<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
AR	----	Sweet Potatoes
AR	----	Corn Starch
AR	----	Light Olive Oil
AR	----	Kosher Salt
AR	----	Peanut Oil

Everything is listed as AR because the actual quantity depends on how much you want. A medium sized sweet potato is probably good for a “single” serving. Corn starch depends on many factors, but start at 2 TBSP per potato. Kosher salt is season to taste. Olive oil is enough to coat things. Peanut oil is enough to fill your deep fryer (or pot, or Dutch oven, or etc) if it needs filling.

### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Food Saver (or similar vacuum sealer)
- Vacuum seal bags or bag rolls
- Counter top deep fryer

### PREPARATION

---

- 1) Weigh each sweet potato [i]
- 2) Rinse the sweet potatoes and pat dry
- 3) Peel the potatoes
- 4) Slice potatoes into ~ 1cm strips [ii]
- 5) Put potatoes into a glass bowl and cover with water
  - a. If you tap water is funky, use bottled water
- 6) Weigh the potatoes down with a glass or ceramic plate to make sure all fries are submerged
  - a. Add additional water as required
- 7) Let fries soak for 1 hour
- 8) Drain potatoes and rinse
  - a. Rinse the bowl too!
- 9) Put potatoes back in in the glass bowl and cover with your water of choice

- 10) Weigh the potatoes down with a glass or ceramic plate to make sure all fries are submerged
  - a. Add additional water as required
- 11) Let fries soak for 1 hour
- 12) Drain potatoes, rinse, and pat dry
- 13) Place the potatoes in glass bowls and put in the fridge, uncovered, overnight [iii]
  
- 14) Place one oven rack in the second position from the top and a second rack two positions below the first one
- 15) Preheat oven to 425 deg. F
- 16) Grease (Qty. 4) 15 in. x 10 in. cookie sheets with olive oil
- 17) Place fries on cookie sheet leaving about the width of a fry between each fry  
DO NOT CROWD THE FRIES! If all of the fries do not fit on the cookie sheets, set the remainder aside and cook in batches.
- 18) Brush the fries with olive oil on all sides
- 19) When oven has reached temperature, put the fries in the oven and set a timer for 4 minutes [iv]
- 20) Rotate the cookie sheets counter clockwise one position in the oven and set a timer for 4 minutes [iv]
  - a. Take the bottom-right cookie sheet out of the oven
  - b. Move the bottom-left cookie sheet to bottom-right
  - c. Move the top-left cookie sheet to bottom-left
  - d. Move the top-right cookie sheet to top-left
  - e. Put the cookie sheet that was taken out of the oven in the top-right position
- 21) Rotate the cookie sheets counter clockwise one position in the oven and set a timer for 4 minutes [iv]
- 22) Rotate the cookie sheets counter clockwise one position in the oven and set a timer for 4 minutes [iv]
- 23) Remove the fries from the oven and flip
- 24) Put the pans back in the oven in their original positions, but put the side of the pan that was towards the front of the oven towards the back. Set time for 4 minutes [iv]
- 25) Rotate the cookie sheets counter clockwise one position in the oven and set a timer for 4 minutes [iv]
- 26) Rotate the cookie sheets counter clockwise one position in the oven and set a timer for 4 minutes [iv]
- 27) Rotate the cookie sheets counter clockwise one position in the oven and set a timer for 4 minutes [iv]
- 28) Remove fries from the oven and let sit on cooling racks until they can be handled with bare hands
- 29) Put 2 TBSP of cornstarch in a gallon Ziplock bag
- 30) Shake about 1 handful fries at a time in the cornstarch until they are evenly coated.  
Add additional cornstarch to the bag as required
- 31) Knock excess cornstarch of the fries and set aside
- 32) When all fries have been coated, prepare (Qty. 5) 12 in. x 11 in. vacuum seal bags [v]
- 33) Place 1 row of 1 layer of fries in each vacuum seal bag and vacuum seal. Make sure the bag is clean and free of cornstarch, oil, water, etc in the area where the seal will be made



- 34) Place fries in fridge overnight
- 35) Fill the deep fryer with you oil of choice (I use peanut oil) and heat to 374 deg. F
- 36) Deep fry the fries in small batches (DON'T CROWD THE FRIES!!!) for 3 min. Fry in additional increments of 30 seconds until they are done to your liking
- 37) Drain for 15 seconds then immediately put in a bowl and toss with kosher salt to taste [vi]
- 38) Place fries on cooling racks and cover with paper towels until all fries are complete
- 39) Serve and enjoy!

---

### NOTES

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- i. Is this absolutely necessary? No, but if you keep track, it will help you to figure out how much you need to buy in the future
- ii. If you do a search on the ol' interwebs for sweet potato fries, you'll find that just about everyone says to cut the fries as uniform as possible. I felt bad about throwing away the too small pieces, so I kept them anyways. Ya know what? It provides a nice little taste and texture difference in the overall scheme of things because the small fries cook faster and get crispier.  
I recommend trying to make them uniform, but use everything. If the smaller ones are too done, you can always get rid of them after the fact.
- iii. This was not an original step; this was another case of me starting too late or getting distracted by a shiny object. I think it worked out well, so I kept it.
- iv. You can reduce or increase this cook time to match your preferred doneness. These times produce some charring (which I like).
- v. The number of bags you need depends on the amount of fries you need to bag, so adjust accordingly
- vi. It is important to add the salt while the fries are still hot so the salt sticks to the fries

PICTURES

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## “REGULAR” FRIES

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After my go around with “OLD MAN's Sweet Potato Fries”, I wanted to come up with a fries recipe that did not take three days. Well, this one is not it.

I have been doing a lot of reading on various techniques for fries and a good many of them recommend multi-stage cooking. My “Ah-Ha” moment with this came when I tried a variant of “quick” fries. For this attempt, I cooked them for 5 minutes at 374 deg. F, let them rest on a cooling rack, then cooked them again at 374 deg. F for 7 minutes. OK, but not great; I put the leftovers in the fridge. The “Ah-Ha” moment came the next day when I re-fried them again at 375 deg. F for 5 minutes. TASTY! Nice and crispy, but needed a little work.

This go around the fries were great, but not GREAT. Nice and crispy, but a tad dry. The recipe below reflects slightly reduced cook times for the two “pre-cook” stages to counter the slight dryness. Once I dial those in, these will be GREAT. It is still at least a two day recipe, however.

### INGREDIENTS

---

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
2	-----	Medium-largish Russet Potatoes
AR	-----	Kosher Salt
AR	-----	Peanut Oil (or deep frying oil of choice)

I originally was doing 3 potatoes, but one potato works out to one serving and fits nicely with one vac seal bag and ¼ sheet cooling rack / ¼ sheet pan. 2 potatoes is a good for “let’s make some for this weekend, and some for later”. Multiply depending on how many people you are serving (or how hungry you are!).

### SPECIAL TOOLS

---

- Fry cutter with ½ in. grate [i]
- Counter top deep fryer
- Food Saver (or similar vacuum sealer)
- Vacuum seal bags or bag rolls

### PREPARATION

---

#### PART I

---

- 1) Rinse potatoes and pat dry
- 2) Remove and nubbles, but do not peel
- 3) Spray fry cutter grate with PAM to lubricate
- 4) Cut potatoes into fries with fry cutter

- 5) After you cut each potato, put the fries in the glass bowl and cover with water.  
If your tap water is funky, use bottled distilled water
- 6) Weigh potatoes down with glass plate to make sure all fries are submerged
  - a. Add water as required
  - b. Add weight on top of the plate as required. Measuring cups filled with water work great for this
- 7) Let the fries soak for 1 hour
- 8) Drain fries
- 9) Rinse the fries and bowl
- 10) Put potatoes back in glass bowl and cover with water
- 11) Weigh potatoes down with glass plate to make sure all fries are submerged
  - a. Add water as required
  - b. Add weight on top of the plate as required
- 12) Let the fries soak for 1 hour
- 13) Drain fries
- 14) Rinse the fries and bowl
- 15) Place the fries in a colander on a plate and let sit in the fridge overnight

---

## PART II

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- 1) Fill deep fryer with peanut oil or oil of choice
- 2) Heat to 320 deg. F
- 3) Fry fries in batches (DON'T CROWD!) for 8 minutes, agitating the basket occasionally
- 4) Shake the basket over the fryer and let drain for 30 seconds
- 5) Shake the basket again the place fries on  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet cooling rack in  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet pan and cover with another  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet pan. You may need more than one set of  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet pans and cooling racks depending on the amount of fries you are making
- 6) When the last batch is done, raise the deep fryer temperature to 374 deg. F
- 7) Fry fries in batches (DON'T CROWD!) for 3 minutes, agitating the basket occasionally
- 8) Shake the basket over the fryer and let drain for 30 seconds
- 9) Shake the basket again the place fries on  $\frac{1}{4}$  cooling rack in  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet pan and cover with another  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet pan. You may need more than one set of  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet pans and cooling racks depending on the amount of fries you are making
- 10) Let fries cool until the can be handled comfortably with a bare hand
- 11) Make (1) 4 line vac seal bag per potato
- 12) Vac seal fries
- 13) Put in freezer overnight (or until frozen if you got started early enough in the day)

---

## PART III

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- 1) Heat deep fryer to 374 deg. F
- 2) Fry in batches for 5 minutes or until desired doneness is achieved, agitating the basket occasionally. 1 pack (1 potato) at a time should be good depending on the size of your deep fryer
- 3) Shake the basket over the fryer and let drain for 30 seconds



- 4) Immediately toss fries in a glass bowl with kosher salt
- 5) Place fries on  $\frac{1}{4}$  cooling rack in  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet pan and cover with another  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet pan. You may need more than one set of  $\frac{1}{4}$  sheet pans and cooling racks depending on the amount of fries you are making
- 6) If it is going to be a while before you get to them, place them in an oven set to "warm". If your oven's warm setting is too warm, leave the door open a crack
- 7) ENJOY!!!

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### NOTES

- i. OK... not STRICTLY necessary, but it gives nice, uniform fries

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### PICTURES













## MCDOWELL'S FRIES (WIP)

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I have been researching this one for a while, and I think I got it. However, I have not tried it yet. This should be fun.

By the way... Has anyone gotten the McDowell's reference yet?

### INGREDIENTS

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<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
4	-----	Good Size Russet Potatoes
12	Cups	Distilled Water
1/2	Cup	Corn Syrup
1/2	Cup	White Sugar
3	TBSP	Powdered Beef Bouillon
AR	-----	Kosher Salt
AR	-----	Distilled Water
AR	-----	Peanut Oil
AR	-----	PAM

Don't like peanut oil or are allergic? Any high temperature, neutral oil should work

### SPECIAL TOOLS

---

- Fry Cutter With ¼ Inch Grate [i]
- Countertop Deep Fryer [ii]
- Sous Vide Supreme Machine [iii]
- Immersion Blender
- Food Saver (or similar vacuum sealer)
- Vacuum seal bags or bag rolls

### PREPARATION

---

#### DAY 01

---

- 1) Thoroughly clean and rinse the Sous Vide Supreme water bath container
- 2) Make (Qty. 4) 4-line vac seal bags [iv]
- 3) Rinse potatoes and remove nubbles
- 4) Peel potatoes and immediately submerge in a bowl of water
- 5) Assemble the fry cutter with the ¼ inch grate and spray the grate with PAM
- 6) Put potatoes through the cutter and immediately submerge in a fresh bowl of water

- 7) When the last potato is cut and under water, thoroughly mix the 12 cups of distilled water, ½ cup corn syrup, ½ cup white sugar, and 3 TBSP beef bouillon with an immersion blender
- 8) Pour the mix into the Sous Vide Supreme water basin and set to 170 deg. F
- 9) Once the Sous Vide Supreme reaches temperature, fill the deep fryer and heat to 374 deg. F
- 10) Rinse the potatoes and cover with a fresh batch of water
- 11) Cook the fries in the Sous Vide Supreme in batches for 15 minutes
- 12) Drain on cooling racks in half sheet pan covered with a second half sheet pan
- 13) When all batches are done, pat the fries dry of any excess water
- 14) Deep fry the fries in batches for 60 seconds
- 15) Drain on cooling racks in half sheet pan covered with a second half sheet pan and let cool until handleable
- 16) Vacuum seal 1 potatoes worth of fries per vac seal bag and put in freezer overnight

---

## DAY 02

---

- 1) Fill the deep fryer and heat to 374 deg. F
- 2) Deep fry in batches for 3 – 3 ½ minutes or until light golden brown
- 3) Let each batch drain in the basket for 15 second then immediately toss with kosher salt
- 4) Transfer to a cooling rack in a half sheet pan and cover with a second half sheet pan
- 5) If you are making more than one batch of fries, keep the sheet pans in an oven set to warm with the door open.
- 6) ENJOY!!!

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## NOTES

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- i. You don't necessarily need a fry cutter, but it does make things easier. Don't have one? A good sharp knife will do. Just try to cut the fries as uniformly as possible
- ii. This one is nonnegotiable. You NEED a deep fryer for this one
- iii. This one is also nonnegotiable AND it has to be the Sous Vide Supreme. This is the only one that I know of that has a sealed water bath container with no open circulators or elements. You will be cooking directly in the water bath with no bags
- iv. Make double seals to be sure!

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## PICTURES

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No pictures yet!



## HOW TO COOK WHITE RICE

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I never really considered cooking rice a challenge. I always pretty much just followed the instructions on the package of whatever rice I was cooking and it turned out OK. But the more I got into food research and experimentation, the more I started coming across reports of people having trouble with rice. Along with that, I came across more methods of cooking rice apart from the standard “follow the instructions method”. However, nothing really piqued my interest until I heard about the “spaghetti method” (it might have been in an Adam Ragusa (spelling?) video, I’m not sure). Then I thought “What about the oven method?”, “What about Sous Vide”, “What about...”. And here we go down yet another rabbit hole...

A general word of caution... The times listed here are just what works for me in my kitchen. Your results may vary, so be open to a little experimentation while you dial in what works for you.

20201029 (Thursday):

Which one do I like best? Well....

From a stric taste / texture standpoint, I think I gotta give it to Sous Vide with the rice cooker coming in a VERY close second

Taking the easiness factor into account as well, it is the rice cooker hands down. If you regularly eat rice, it is well worth your money to buy one

### INGREDIENTS

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<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
1	Cup	Uncooked Rice of Choice
AR	-----	Water
AR	-----	Morton’s Kosher Salt
1	TBSP	Unsalted Butter

If your tap water is a little funky, use distilled or bottled water

Why specifically Morton’s? Different salts have different weights per volume. If you use something different, make sure you adjust the number of tablespoons accordingly. Samin Nosrat’s book, **Salt Fat Acid Heat**, has a good conversion table on this

Insert standard disclaimer about salted vs unsalted butter here. HOWEVER, in this case, it may not be as critical

### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- None!!! Unless....
- Sous Vide Method
  - Vacuum Sealer [i]
  - Vacuum Seal Bags [v]
  - Sous Vide Machine[iii]

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## PREPARATION

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### THE POT ON STOVE METHOD

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- 1) Place a measuring cup on a kitchen scale and zero the weight
- 2) Measure out 1 cup of uncooked rice and record the weight
- 3) Rinse the rice [ii]
  - a. Cover the rice to at least twice its height with water in a 3 or 4 quart pot
  - b. Swirl around and massage with your hand
  - c. Drain the water
  - d. Repeat until the water runs clear or 5 times, whichever comes first
- 4) Place a measuring cup on a kitchen scale and zero the weight
- 5) Place the rinsed rice in the measuring cup and record the weight
- 6) Calculate the weight of the water in the rinsed rice by subtracting the weight from step 2 from the weight from step 5
- 7) Place a measuring cup on a kitchen scale and zero the weight
- 8) Measure out the recommend water from the rice cooking instructions
- 9) Remove the amount of water from step 6
- 10) Put water, and the recommended amount of salt, in a 3 or 4 quart pot and bring to a boil
- 11) Add the rice, reduce heat to VERY low, and cover
- 12) Heat, stirring occasionally, until water is full absorbed [iii]
- 13) Remove from heat
- 14) Add the recommended amount of butter (unsalted) and gently fold in until it melts and is thoroughly distributed
- 15) Let sit uncovered for at least 5 minutes
- 16) ENJOY !!!

---

### THE SPAGHETTI METHOD

---

- 1) Place a measuring cup on a kitchen scale and zero the weight
- 2) Measure out 1 cup of uncooked rice and record the weight
- 3) Rinse the rice [ii]
  - a. Cover the rice to at least twice its height with water in a 4 quart pot
  - b. Swirl around and massage with your hand
  - c. Drain the water
  - d. Repeat until the water runs clear or 5 times, whichever comes first
- 4) Drain the rinsed rice through a metal strainer into a 1 quart measuring cup and cover with a saucer
- 5) Add 2 quarts water to the 4 quart pot
- 6) Add 2 TBSP Morton's Kosher Salt to the water
- 7) Heat water on HI until you achieve a nice rolling boil
- 8) Add the rice and set timer to 8 minutes [vi]
- 9) Immediately reduce the heat to low and drain the rice evenly through two metal strainers into two 1 quart measuring cups. DO NOT cover these with saucers

- 10) Melt 1 TBSP butter in the pot
- 11) Once the butter has melted, add the rice and **GENTLY** fold in the butter until well incorporated
- 12) Let sit uncovered for at least 5 minutes
- 13) ENJOY!!!

---

### THE OVEN METHOD

---

A quick note about this one before I get into it

- Most, if not all, of the recipes I came across in research said to pre-boil the rice. That seemed like too much work to me so I skipped that step. I REALLY did not see any benefit to the two step method, but if you have an oven safe pot, it might not be such a big deal

And here... we... go....

- 1) Heat oven to 375 deg. F
- 2) Place a measuring cup on a kitchen scale and zero the weight
- 3) Measure out 1 cup of uncooked rice and record the weight
- 4) Rinse the rice [ii]
  - a. Cover the rice to at least twice its height with water in a 3 or 4 quart pot
  - b. Swirl around and massage with your hand
  - c. Drain the water
  - d. Repeat until the water runs clear or 5 times, whichever comes first
- 5) Drain the rice through a metal strainer into a 1 qt. measuring cup until needed
- 6) Place a measuring cup on a kitchen scale and zero the weight
- 7) Place the rinsed rice in the measuring cup and record the weight
- 8) Calculate the weight of the water in the rinsed rice by subtracting the weight from step 3 from the weight from step 7
- 9) Place a measuring cup on a kitchen scale and zero the weight
- 10) Measure out the recommend water from the rice cooking instructions
- 11) Remove the amount of water from step 8
- 12) Add the rice to a 1.5 qt. glass "loaf" pan
- 13) Pour in the water
- 14) Add 1 TBSP butter and 1 TSP salt
- 15) Tightly cover with aluminum foil and put in the oven
- 16) Set timer for 30 minutes
- 17) At the end of the 30 minutes, take a peak in the oven and see if the water has been absorbed into the rice [xii]
- 18) Set the timer for another 5 - 15 minutes depending on how far it looks to go [xiii]
- 19) Pull and check for doneness. If it is not done yet, stick back in the oven in increments of 5 minutes until it is cooked to your liking
- 20) Pull the glass "loaf" pan from the oven, loosen the foil and let sit for 5 minutes
- 21) Gently stir and fluff with a wood spoon and fork
- 22) Plate
- 23) ENJOY!!!

---

### THE SOUS VIDE METHOD [VIII]

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- 1) Check Sous Vide machine water.
  - a. Add / replace water as required
- 2) Heat the Sous Vide machine to 200 deg. F [vii]
- 3) Make (Qty. 1) 4-line vac seal bag
  - a. Create two seals, each one double sealed
- 4) Add 1 cup of rice to the bag along with 1 TBSP butter, 1 TSP [xi] salt, and 1 cup water
- 5) OK... this next part might get a bit tricky... The goal is to vacuum seal the rice, butter, and water with as little leftover air as possible WITHOUT sucking liquid into the vacuum sealer [x]
  - a. Position the vacuum sealer near the edge of a counter
  - b. Squeeze out as much air as possible from the bag
  - c. Position the bag in the vacuum sealer so that it hangs over the edge of the counter [iv]
  - d. Pull a vacuum as long as possible until liquid just about reaches the vacuum sealer and trigger the seal function
  - e. After one minute, re-trigger the seal function
  - f. After one minute, pull the bag and wipe out any liquid between the top of the bag and the seal line
  - g. Reposition the bag to place a second seal just above the first one and trigger the seal function
  - h. After one minute, re-trigger the seal function
- 6) Put bag o' rice in sous vide machine
- 7) When sous vide machine recovers temperature, set timer for 30 minutes
- 8) When the timer goes off, pull the bag o' rice. Careful! It will be hot!!!
- 9) Cut one corner off the bag to let vent and gently massage to break up the rice. Careful! It will be hot!!!
- 10) Let rice sit in bag for 5 minutes
- 11) Empty rice into glass bowl and fluff with fork and wood spoon
- 12) ENJOY!!!

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### THE RICE COOKER METHOD

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A quick note about THIS one. In all the years I owned a rice cooker, I used it almost exclusively for steaming vegetables with the exception of sushi rice. I don't think I ever really used it for "regular" rice until now and BOY was I missing out. One word of caution, however: The "cup" provided with the rice cooker may not be an imperial units cup (mine is ~180 ml), so make sure you adjust accordingly

- 1) Determine how many rice cooker cups correspond to 1 imperial cup
- 2) Measure out 1 imperial cup of uncooked rice
- 3) Rinse the rice [ii]
  - a. Cover the rice to at least twice its height with water in a 3 or 4 quart pot
  - b. Swirl around and massage with your hand

- c. Drain the water
- d. Repeat until the water runs clear or 5 times, whichever comes first
- 4) Add rice to rice cooker pot
- 5) Fill with water to line that corresponds to 1 imperial cup of rice
- 6) Set to "regular" or whatever corresponds to regular white rice on your rice cooker
- 7) When rice cooker is done, mix in 1 TSP of salt, ¼ TSP at a time, stirring and fluffing with a fork and wood spoon
- 8) Add 1 TBSP butter, close the lid, and set a timer for 5 minutes
- 9) Stir and fluff with a fork and wood spoon
- 10) Plate
- 11) ENJOY!!!

---

### CHEF JOHN'S [FOODWISHES] PERSIAN RICE METHOD

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I saw this on his You Tube channel and was intrigued. It looked very tasty, but I did not include in this round of rice experiments. Why? Well, I didn't think it quite fit here (or maybe it was laziness). I do recommend you check it out, however.

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### RICE FOR FRIED RICE

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- 1) Once you rice is done...
- 2) Fluff and spread the rice on a ¼ sheet pan and put in the fridge overnight

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### NOTES

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- i. There are many different ways of doing this, so do what works for you! Some will argue that this does not do anything significant, but it works for me
- ii. The cook time will depend on your rice, but for the stuff I use, it is generally in the ballpark of 15 - 20 minutes
- iii. 8 minutes is what worked for me for the brand of rice I used. Start checking around the 5 minute mark and taste for doneness
- iv. I use the Food Saver, but I do have a vac chamber sealer that I need to break out one of these days
  - v. Food Saver requires the special bags, but the vac chamber does not
  - vi. I have the Sous Vide Supreme, but there are a lot of options out there
  - vii. Mine took about 1 hour and 15 minutes
- viii. Notice something missing? I forgot to rinse the rice for this one. It turned out so well, however, I decided to leave it out for this method!
- ix. Make sure you clamp down and lock the vacuum sealer before you let go of the bag!!!
- x. You also want to avoid sucking water into the area of the bag where it is going to seal. I was not quick enough this last time and it took many attempts to get a good seal

- xi. I'm not sure... I MIGHT want to add a tad more salt
- xii. One of the BIG benefits of using a glass pan for this
- xiii. I did 8 minutes

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## PICTURES

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No pictures yet!!!

## HOW TO COOK BAKED POTATOES

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This is pretty much inspired by my “How to Cook White Rice” write up; I guess I never really gave much thought to this one either. Baked potatoes seem pretty simple, but they are also not too hard to screw up either. I’ve got three methods so far, but I may have a few more up my sleeve for later.

By the way, the term “baked” is used somewhat loosely here

20201113 (Friday): The Sous Vide method is a work in progress, so please keep that in mind if you give it a try, but I am really excited about this method

### INGREDIENTS

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<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
AR	-----	Russet Potatoes
AR	-----	EVO of Choice
AR	-----	Morton’s Kosher Salt
AR	-----	Land O’ Lakes Salted Butter

Insert standard disclaimer about salted vs unsalted butter here.

### SPECIAL TOOLS

---

- None!!! Unless....
- Sous Vide Method
  - Vacuum Sealer [i]
  - Vacuum Seal Bags [v]
  - Sous Vide Machine[iii]

### PREPARATION

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#### REGULAR OL’ IN THE OVEN

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- 1) Heat oven to 350 deg. F
- 2) Rinse potatoes and remove any nubbles, but DO NOT PEEL!!!
- 3) Dry potatoes thoroughly
- 4) Pierce potatoes all over with fork and lightly coat with EVO
- 5) Place potatoes on ¼ sheet cooling racks in ¼ sheet pans then place in oven
- 6) Set timer for 60 min
- 7) When timer goes off, check for tenderness[iv]
- 8) If not done yet, continue to cook in increments of 10 minutes, checking for tenderness each time, until done [v]
- 9) Pull potatoes from oven and let sit for 5 minutes
- 10) Make a shallow cut down the long axis and press ends together to open

- 11) Apply toppings of choice
- 12) ENJOY!!!

---

### MICROWAVE METHOD

---

- 1) Rinse potatoes and remove any nubbles, but DO NOT PEEL!!!
- 2) Dry potatoes thoroughly
- 3) Pierce potatoes all over with fork and lightly coat with EVO
- 4) Place potato on microwave safe plate and microwave on high for 2 minutes
- 5) Flip potato and check for tenderness [iv, vi]
- 6) Repeat steps 4 and 5 until done [vii]
- 7) Let potato sit for 5 minutes
- 8) Make a shallow cut down the long axis and press ends together to open
- 9) Apply toppings of choice
- 10) ENJOY!!!

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### THE SOUS VIDE METHOD [WIP]

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- 1) Check Sous Vide machine water and replace as required
- 2) Heat the Sous Vide machine to 195 deg. F [viii]
- 3) Rinse potatoes and remove any nubbles, but DO NOT PEEL!!!
- 4) Dry potatoes thoroughly and pierce all over with fork
- 5) Place each potato in a 1 quart vac seal bag along with a pat of butter and vac seal
- 6) Place potatoes in Sous Vide machine
- 7) Once sous vide temperature has recovered, set timer to 60 minutes
- 8) About 30 minutes out, heat oven to 450 deg. F
- 9) At the end of 60 minutes, pull the potatoes from the Sous Vide machine
- 10) Gently roll the potato around in the bag so that the potato is coated on all sides with butter
- 11) Place potatoes on ¼ sheet cooling racks in ¼ sheet pans then place in oven for 5 minutes
- 12) Pull potatoes from oven and let sit for 5 minutes
- 13) Make a shallow cut down the long axis and press ends together to open
- 14) Apply toppings of choice
- 15) ENJOY!!!

---

### THE SMOKER METHOD

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Coming Soon! (Well, whenever I get around to it anyway)



## NOTES

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- i. I use the Food Saver, but I do have a vac chamber sealer that I need to break out one of these days
- ii. Food Saver requires the special bags, but the vac chamber does not
- iii. I have the Sous Vide Supreme, but there are a lot of options out there
- iv. There should be a some give when lightly squeezed or you should be able to easily pierce them with a fork
- v. Mine took 70 minutes
- vi. If your microwave does not have a turn table, also rotate by 90 deg.
- vii. Mine took 4 rounds for a total of 8 minutes
- viii. It takes my machine about 1 hour, 15 minutes to get to 200 deg. F

## PICTURES

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No pictures yet!!!

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## VEGGIES

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## SPAGHETTI SQUASH

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I don't do this one too often, but I think I should probably do it more. This is a little bit of a tweak on my last known good recipe. There is also a microwave version that actually works pretty well and is fairly easy to execute. More on that later (perhaps).

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### INGREDIENTS

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<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
1	N.U.	Spaghetti Squash
2	TBSP	Land O' Lakes Salted Butter
AR	-----	Olive Oil
AR	-----	Brown Sugar
AR	-----	Shredded Parmesan
4	Slices	Low and Slow Bacon (crumbled)

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### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Glass baking pan
- (2) Pizza stones
- Heat resistant gloves

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### PREPARATION

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- 1) Place 1<sup>st</sup> oven rack in the middle position in the oven
- 2) Place 2<sup>nd</sup> oven rack in the next position above the first rack
- 3) Place one pizza stone in bottom of oven
- 4) Place the second pizza stone in the rack above the middle rack
- 5) Heat oven to 350 deg. F
- 6) Rinse spaghetti squash and scrub of any rough spots, dirt, less than desirable spots, etc.
- 7) Cut squash lengthwise with a good, heavy cleaver
- 8) Scoop out seeds and gunk
- 9) Oil glass baking pan with olive oil
- 10) Thinly slice 2 TBSP butter and spread across the glass baking pan
- 11) Place spaghetti squash halves face down on glass pan and put in oven for 35 minutes
- 12) Pull squash from oven
- 13) Scoop out squash (use heat resistant gloves to handle hot squash) and spread evenly on glass pan. Discard squash skin.
- 14) Sprinkle bacon evenly across squash
- 15) Sprinkle generously with brown sugar
- 16) Put back in oven for 10 minutes [i]
- 17) Sprinkle with shredded parmesan cheese
- 18) Put back in oven for 10 minutes

- 19) Remove from oven and let sit for 5 minutes
- 20) Serve and enjoy!

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NOTES

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- i. The last time I did this, I only gave it 5, but it did not melt quite as much as I would have liked

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PICTURES

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## FRIED GREEN ZUCCHINI

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This one went through a few iterations, but not quite as many as OLD MAN's Sweet Potato Fries. I think I am there on this one too.

### INGREDIENTS

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<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
3	N.U.	Decent Sized Zucchini
1/2	Cup	All Purpose Flour
1/2	Cup	Unseasoned Bread Crumbs
1/2	TBSP	Black Pepper
1/2	TBSP	Cayenne Pepper
2	N.U.	Decent Sized Eggs
2	TBSP	Buttermilk [Regular milk is OK if you don't have buttermilk]
1	TSP	Worcestershire Sauce
AR	----	Kosher Salt
AR	----	Peanut Oil

Kosher salt is season to taste. Peanut oil is enough to fill your deep fryer (or pot, or Dutch oven, or etc) if it needs filling.

### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Counter top deep fryer

### PREPARATION

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- 1) Fill deep fryer and heat to 374 deg. F
- 2) Rinse zucchini
- 3) Peel zucchini [i]
- 4) Slice zucchini into ~ 1cm slices (give or take)
- 5) Put zucchini slices on a stainless steel cooling rack over a baking sheet and sprinkle with kosher salt
- 6) Flip the slices and sprinkle with kosher salt
- 7) Cover lightly with cheese cloth and let sit for 30 - 60 minutes
- 8) Pat dry, flip, then pat dry the other side
- 9) Pre-coat the slices in AP flour and put back on the cooling rack
- 10) Whisk together the post-coat
  - a. Unseasoned Bread Crumbs
  - b. Black Pepper
  - c. Cayenne Pepper
- 11) Whisk together the egg wash
  - a. Decent Sized Eggs

- b. Buttermilk [Regular milk is OK if you don't have buttermilk]
- c. Worcestershire Sauce
- 12) Coat the slices in egg wash (one at a time) and knock off excess [ii]
- 13) Coat the slices in the post-coat (one at a time) and knock off excess [ii]
  - a. If the post-coat becomes too lumpy with extraneous egg wash, sift it through a mesh strainer
  - b. Mix additional post-coat as required
- 14) Place the coated slices on the cooling rack until all slices are coated
- 15) Deep fry in small batches (DON'T CROWD) for 2 – 4 minutes per batch depending on how done you want it
  - a. Flip slices half-way through the cook time
  - b. Drain for 15 sec
- 16) Place slices on stainless steel cooling rack over a baking sheet and cover with paper towels to keep warm
- 17) Serve and enjoy!

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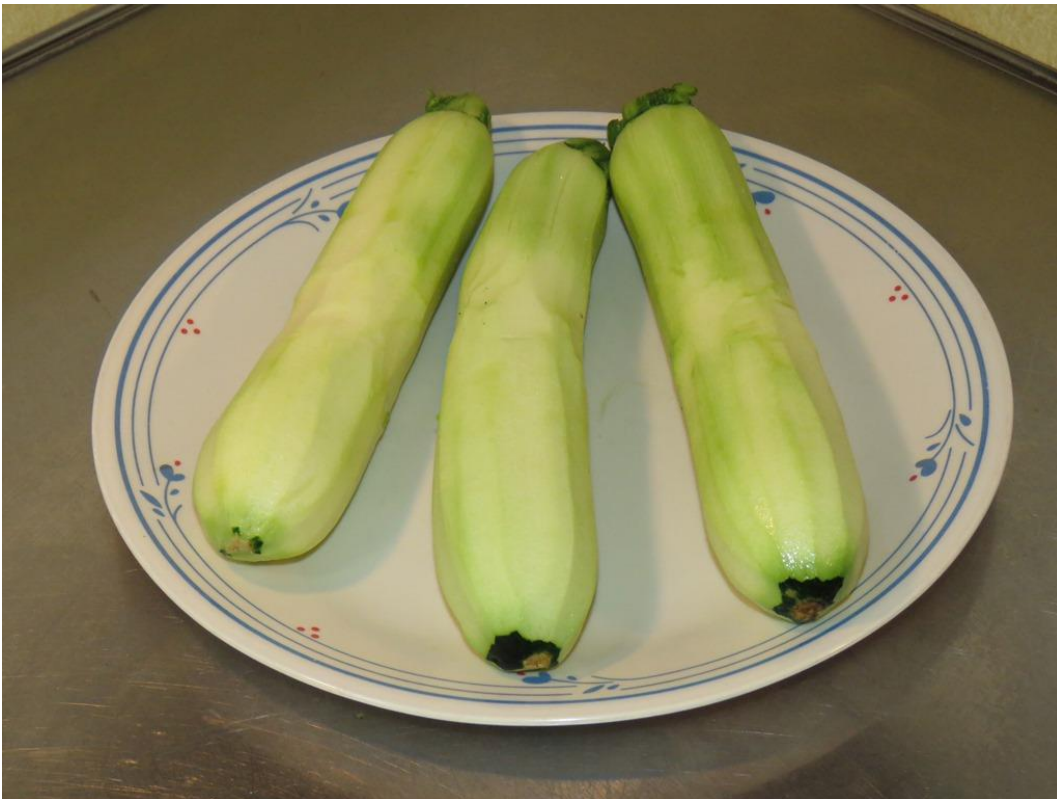
#### NOTES

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- i. This step is VERY important. The pre-coat, egg wash, and therefore post-coat DO NOT adhere to the skin.
- ii. Sticking to a “dry hand” “wet hand” technique really helps cutting down on lumps in the post-coat. Apply egg wash with one hand, drop in the post-coat, and cover in the post-coat with the other hand
- iii. Pictures are from a “slightly” different version

PICTURES [III]

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## ROASTED VEGETABLES

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I can't believe it took me so long to embrace roasted vegetables. Usually I would steam them, but roasting them makes them SO tasty! And it's easy! If you do a little poking around, you'll probably find recommended temperatures all over the spectrum. The ones I have listed in the section are what have worked for me, but your mileage may vary, so find what works for you!

### INGREDIENTS

---

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
AR	-----	Vegetable of Choice
AR	-----	Extra Virgin Olive Oil (EVO)
AR	-----	Light Virgin Olive Oil (LVO)
AR	-----	Kosher Salt
AR	-----	Black Pepper

Everything is AR because it really depends on how much you have and how much seasoning you like. As far as the Extra Virgin Olive oil goes..., well some will tell you that it is wasted in higher temperature cooking, but I tried it and really liked it. I am woefully ignorant when it comes to the differences between the various types and brands, so experiment and find what you like! You might find that you like different olive oils for different vegetables.

### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- NONE!

### PREPARATION

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#### BROCCOLI

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- 1) Rinse broccoli. Shake to get excess water out then allow to drain for a bit
- 2) Heat oven to 400 deg. F
- 3) Chop florets from the crown into, let's say, about double bite size chunks
- 4) If you have the stalk, the bulk of that is edible too. Just cut away any of the tough "woody" type pieces, peel the skin (if you want), and chop into similar sized bits as the florets [i]
- 5) Toss broccoli in glass bowl with the EVO [ii]. You want enough for a nice coating, but not so much that you have it pooling at the bottom of the bowl. Add a little at a time
- 6) Toss in kosher salt to taste
- 7) Toss in black pepper to taste
- 8) Spread broccoli in a single layer on a baking sheet (DON'T CROWD!) and put in the preheated oven for 15 min
- 9) Flip (probably will wind up being a stir) the broccoli florets

- 10) If roasting multiple pans, rotate the pan positions in the oven
- 11) Roast for an additional 15 minutes [iii]
- 12) Remove from oven and let cool for a tick-tock
- 13) ENJOY!

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### BRUSSEL SPROUTS

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- 1) Rinse Brussel sprouts and allow to drain for a few minutes
- 2) Heat oven to 425 deg. F
- 3) Pat brussel sprouts dry
- 4) Cut off any excess woody stem and remove any funky outer leaves
- 5) Slice brussel sprouts in half along the axis from stem to top
- 6) Toss in glass bowl with EVO [ii]
- 7) Toss in kosher salt and black pepper to taste
- 8) Lightly grease cookie sheet with EVO
- 9) Place brussel sprouts on cookie sheet cut side down. DO NOT CROWD! Split between multiple cookie sheets and cook in batches if necessary
- 10) Put the brussel sprouts in oven for 20 minutes
- 11) Check on brussel sprouts. If not done to your liking, roast in additional increments of 5 minutes [iv]
- 12) Remove from oven and let cool for a tick-tock
- 13) ENJOY!

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### CAULIFLOWER

---

- 1) Rinse cauliflower. Shake to get excess water out then allow to drain for a bit
- 2) Heat oven to 400 deg. F
- 3) Chop florets from the crown into, let's say, about double bite size chunks
- 4) If you have the stalk, the bulk of that is edible too. Just cut away any of the tough "woody" type pieces, peel the skin (if you want), and chop into similar sized bits as the florets [i]
- 5) Toss cauliflower in glass bowl with the EVO [ii]. You want enough for a nice coating, but not so much that you have it pooling at the bottom of the bowl. Add a little at a time
- 6) Toss in kosher salt to taste
- 7) Toss in black pepper to taste
- 8) Spread cauliflower in a single layer on a baking sheet (DON'T CROWD!) and put in the preheated oven for 15 min
- 9) Flip (probably will wind up being a stir) the cauliflower florets
- 10) If roasting multiple pans, rotate the pan positions in the oven
- 11) Roast for an additional 15 minutes [iii]
- 12) Remove from oven and let cool for a tick-tock
- 13) ENJOY!

---

CARROTS

---

Additional Ingredients:

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
AR	-----	Brown Sugar

- 1) Heat oven to 375 deg. F
- 2) Rinse, pat dry, and peel 1 lb of carrots
- 3) Cut carrots into 0.5 inch slices. I prefer to cut them on a bias for longer slices. Another technique is to rotate the carrot as you slice so you get kinda random shaped slices (There is a name for this, but I don't know what it is)  
Don't feel like cutting carrots? Use a package of baby carrots.
- 4) Toss carrots in a glass bowl with EVO, kosher salt, fresh ground black pepper, and brown sugar to taste
- 5) Lightly grease a large cookie sheet with LVO
- 6) Spread carrots on the cookie sheet (DON'T CROWD!!!) and put in the oven
- 7) Roast carrots for 27 minutes
- 8) Stir carrots with wood spoon
- 9) Roast for an additional 20 minutes [iii]
- 10) Remove from oven and let cool for a tick-tock
- 11) ENJOY!

---

CORN ON THE CURB

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Additional Ingredients:

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
2	TBSP	Unsalted butter [v]

- 1) Heat oven to 425 deg. F
- 2) Shuck, rinse corn, and pat dry
- 3) Coat corn with EVO and sprinkle with kosher salt and fresh ground pepper
- 4) Lightly grease a cookie sheet with LVO
- 5) Place corn on the cookie sheet (DON'T CROWD!!!) and put in oven
- 6) Melt 2 TBSP of unsalted butter on low in the microwave
- 7) Roast corn for 8 minutes [iii]
- 8) Rotate corn 90 degrees
- 9) Roast corn for 8 minutes [iii]
- 10) Rotate corn 90 degrees
- 11) Roast corn for 8 minutes [iii]
- 12) Rotate corn 90 degrees
- 13) Roast corn for 8 minutes [iii]
- 14) Pull corn and coat with the butter
- 15) Remove from oven and let cool for a tick-tock
- 16) Coat corn with the melted butter
- 17) ENJOY!

---

RING OF SQUASH

---

- 1) Heat oven to 400 deg. F
- 2) Rinse squash and pat dry
- 3) Cut squash perpendicular to the axis into 1 inch rings. You will need a good cleaver for this!
- 4) Remove guts and seeds from each ring
- 5) Coat squash rings with EVO then apply kosher salt and fresh ground black pepper to taste
- 6) Lightly grease a cookie sheet with LVO
- 7) Place squash on the cookie sheet (DON'T CROWD!!!) and put in oven
- 8) Roast squash for 30 minutes
- 9) Pull squash and flip
- 10) Roast for an additional 10 minutes [iii]
- 11) Remove from oven and let cool for a tick-tock
- 12) If you have a filling to put in the rings, add it now; this works great for leftovers
- 13) ENJOY!!!

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ZUCCHINI

---

- 1) Heat oven to 425 deg. F
- 2) Rinse zucchini and pat dry
- 3) Slice of the ends and slice in half length wise
- 4) Slice each half into 3 wedges lengthwise
- 5) Coat zucchini with EVO then apply kosher salt and fresh ground black pepper to taste
- 6) Lightly grease a cookie sheet with LVO
- 7) Place zucchini on the cookie sheet (DON'T CROWD!!!) and put in oven
- 8) Roast for 15 minutes
- 9) Flip the zucchini
- 10) Roast for 15 minutes [iii]
- 11) Remove from oven and let cool for a tick-tock
- 12) ENJOY!!!

---

EGGPLANT

---

Additional Ingredients:

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
AR	-----	Sea Salt

- 1) Rinse Egg Plant and pat dry
- 2) Remove the leafy stuff (I don't know what to call it) at the stem end
- 3) Peel the skin
- 4) Cut into ½ inch slices
- 5) Place slices of eggplant on a cooling rack in a sheet pan
- 6) Generously sprinkle (but not too generously) the eggplant with sea salt
- 7) Flip the eggplant slices and sprinkle again with sea salt

- 8) Cover with a second sheet pan and let sit for 30 minutes
- 9) After 30 minutes, pat the eggplant dry
- 10) Flip the eggplant slices and pat dry
- 11) Cover with the second sheet pan and let sit for 30 minutes
- 12) Heat oven to 425 deg. F
- 13) After 30 minutes, pat the eggplant dry
- 14) Flip the eggplant slices and pat dry
- 15) Sprinkle eggplant slices with EVO and IMMEDIATELY spread / rub in with hands
- 16) Flip the eggplant slices, sprinkle with EVO and IMMEDIATELY spread / rub in with hands
- 17) Apply a light sprinkling of fresh ground black pepper
- 18) Flip the eggplant slices, and apply a light sprinkling of fresh ground black pepper
- 19) Lightly grease a cookie sheet with LVO
- 20) Place eggplant on the cookie sheet (DON'T CROWD!!!) and put in oven
- 21) Roast for 17 minutes
- 22) Flip eggplant
- 23) Roast for 17 minutes [iii]
- 24) Remove from oven and let cool for a tick-tock
- 25) ENJOY!!!

---

## ASPARAGUS

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- 1) Heat oven to 425 deg. F
- 2) Rinse asparagus and pat dry
- 3) Cut off the woody ends and discard (or put in your compost pile)
- 4) Optional: use a vegetable peeler to remove the skin near the bottom of the stalk. Even though you have removed the woody part, the skin on that end may still be a bit tough
- 5) Drizzle asparagus with EVO and spread to cover with your fingers
- 6) Apply kosher salt and fresh ground black pepper to taste
- 7) Lightly grease a cookie sheet with LVO
- 8) Place asparagus on the cookie sheet (DON'T CROWD!!!) and put in oven
- 9) Roast for 10min
- 10) Flip asparagus
- 11) Roast for 10 minutes [iii]
- 12) Remove from oven and let cool for a tick-tock
- 13) ENJOY!!!

---

## NOTES

---

- i. OK, I have not done this yet, but it makes sense!
- ii. I recently found myself starting to refer to Extra Virgin Olive Oil as "EVO". I found myself thinking that I was sounding pretentious, but then I realized I am being brainwashed by the cooking shows on ye'ole boob tube and interwebs.
- iii. If you like it a bit darker, add a few minutes. Not so much? Subtract a few minutes.
- iv. A total of 25 minutes worked for me and my oven.
- v. See standard disclaimer about salted vs unsalted butter

## THE STOP LIGHT QUINTOLOGY

---

This started out as a part of my “The Great Sausage Sub” experiment. Many, many years ago when I started playing around with sausage subs, I always fried the peppers, onions, and mushrooms, but I never really LOVED them because they were too greasy. I eventually moved on to steaming them which worked out great, but it was missing a little something. Enter the year 2020 (or maybe it was 2019) when I started getting into roasting veggies. Eventually the dim light bulb in my head fizzled on and I said to myself, “Self! Let’s try roasting the peppers, onions, and mushrooms for the sausage subs!” and WOW, did that work! And ya know what? It works great for pizza too! I was going to put this in the Roasted Vegetables section, but I thought it was just too important, and a little too involved, for it to not be on its own.

Update 2020-05-03 (Sunday):

So I tweaked things a little bit. Nothing TOO terribly complicated BUT the veggies are now added to the oven in stages in order to get just the right cook on each of the vegetables. Feel free to adjust based on your preferences!

### INGREDIENTS

---

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
1	-----	Medium to Medium-Large Red Bell Pepper
1	-----	Medium to Medium-Large Yellow Bell Pepper
1	-----	Medium to Medium-Large Green Bell Pepper
1	-----	Medium to Medium-Large Red Onion
2	8 oz. Package	Plain ol’ Generic Mushrooms
AR	-----	Extra-Virgin Olive Oil of Choice
AR	-----	Light Olive Oil of Choice
AR	-----	Kosher Salt
AR	-----	Fresh Ground Black Pepper

There are those who say that EVO is wasted on most cooking and roasting, but I tried it and liked it!

### SPECIAL TOOLS

---

- NONE!

### PREPARATION

---

- 1) Pre-heat oven to 425 deg. F
- 2) Rinse peppers, onions, and mushrooms [iii] and pat dry
- 3) For each pepper [i]
  - a. Cut around the stem at the top of the pepper and pull it out



- b. Slice the pepper in half, and remove the seeds and white ribs
- c. Slice peppers into ~ 1cm strips
- 4) Split the peppers into 3 even portions [ii] with as even color distribution as possible
- 5) Cut off the root and stem ends of the onion
- 6) Remove the outer skin
- 7) Cut from root to stem into ~ 1 cm wedges
- 8) Separate the layers and remove as much of the paper skin from between layers as is practical
- 9) Split into 3 even portions [ii]
- 10) Slice mushrooms into about 1 cm slices
- 11) Split into 3 even portions [ii]
- 12) Lightly grease a 15 in. X 10 in. (or larger) cookie sheet with light olive oil
- 13) Toss one portion of the peppers in a glass bowl with EVO
- 14) Toss in kosher salt to taste
- 15) Toss in fresh ground black pepper to taste
- 16) Spread peppers over the cookie sheet (DO NOT CROWD!)
- 17) Put the peppers in the oven and set the timer for 2 minutes.
- 18) In the meantime
  - a. Toss one portion of the mushrooms in a glass bowl with EVO
  - b. Toss in kosher salt to taste
  - c. Toss in fresh ground black pepper to taste
- 19) When the 2 minute timer has expired, pull the cookie sheet and add the mushrooms evenly across the cookie sheet
- 20) Put the peppers and mushrooms back in the oven and set the timer for 5 minutes
- 21) In the meantime
  - a. Toss one portion of the red onion in a glass bowl with EVO
  - b. Toss in kosher salt to taste
  - c. Toss in fresh ground black pepper to taste
- 22) When the 5 minute timer has expired, pull the cookie sheet and add the red onions evenly across the cookie sheet
- 23) Put the peppers, mushrooms, and red onions back in the oven and set the timer for 10 minutes
- 24) When the 10 minute timer has expired, pull the cookie sheet and stir the veggies with a wood spoon
- 25) Put the peppers, mushrooms, and red onions back in the oven and set the timer for 15 minutes (more or less depending on your preferred level of char)
- 26) Pull out of the oven and let cool for a few minutes
- 27) ENJOY!
  
- 28) Vac seal and refrigerate the portions you are not going to use that night. Freeze them if it is going to be longer before you get to them
- 29) Thaw frozen pepper, onions, and mushrooms in the fridge overnight
- 30) Let thawed or refrigerated peppers, onions, and mushrooms sit at room temperature for 30 minutes before proceeding to step 12.

## NOTES

---

- i. OK, this is probably the LEAST efficient way EVER to slice bell peppers, but I wanted to maximize the length of the pepper strips
- ii. Why split into 3 even portions at each step? Well, if I mix them all together THEN split into three portions, I never seem to get a good even distribution of peppers, onion, and mushrooms in each. One always seems to be mushroom heavy, one pepper heavy, and one onion heavy.
- iii. There are those who say you should not rinse mushrooms, but just brush off the dirt. Given what mushrooms are grown in, I prefer to rinse them, but I have never done the rinse vs no rinse experiment.
- iv. Keep a light hand on this; you don't want too much. On the third hand, it is "to taste"
- v. If cooking more than one portion at a time, make sure you rotate the cookie sheets and swap their positions in the oven throughout the process to ensure even cooking  
You may need to alter the cook times as well depending on your oven

## PICTURES

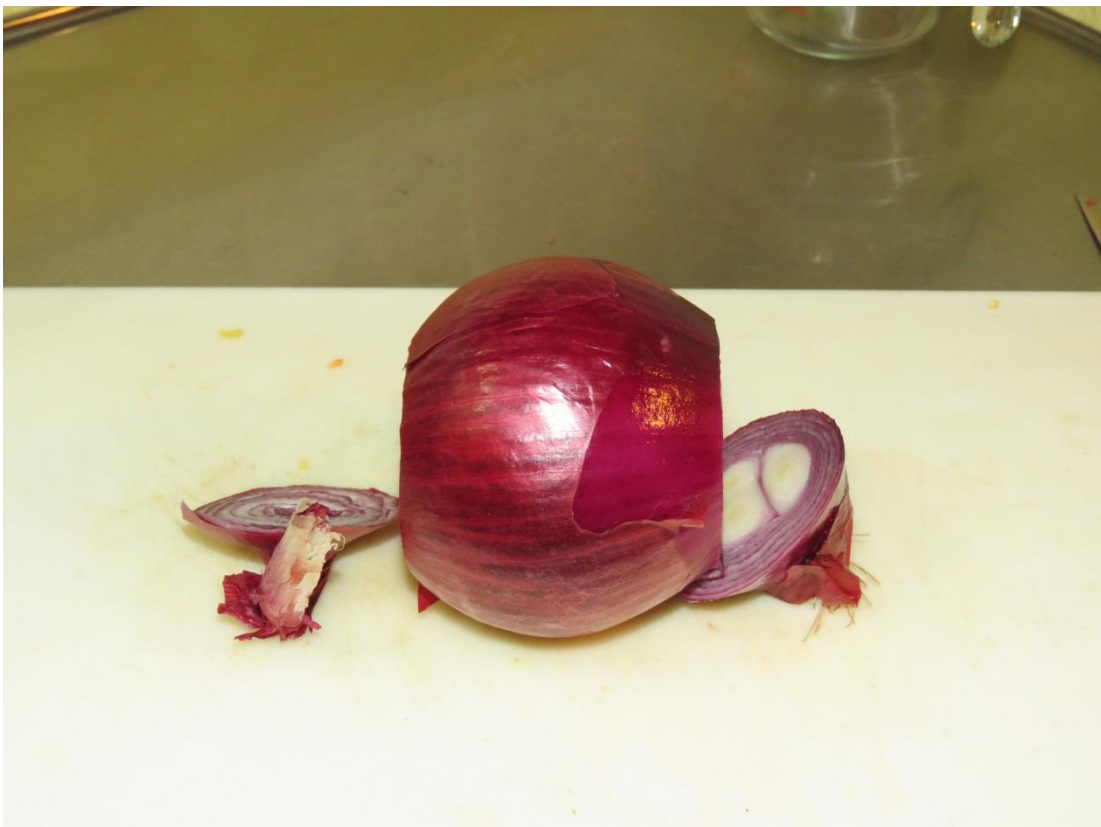
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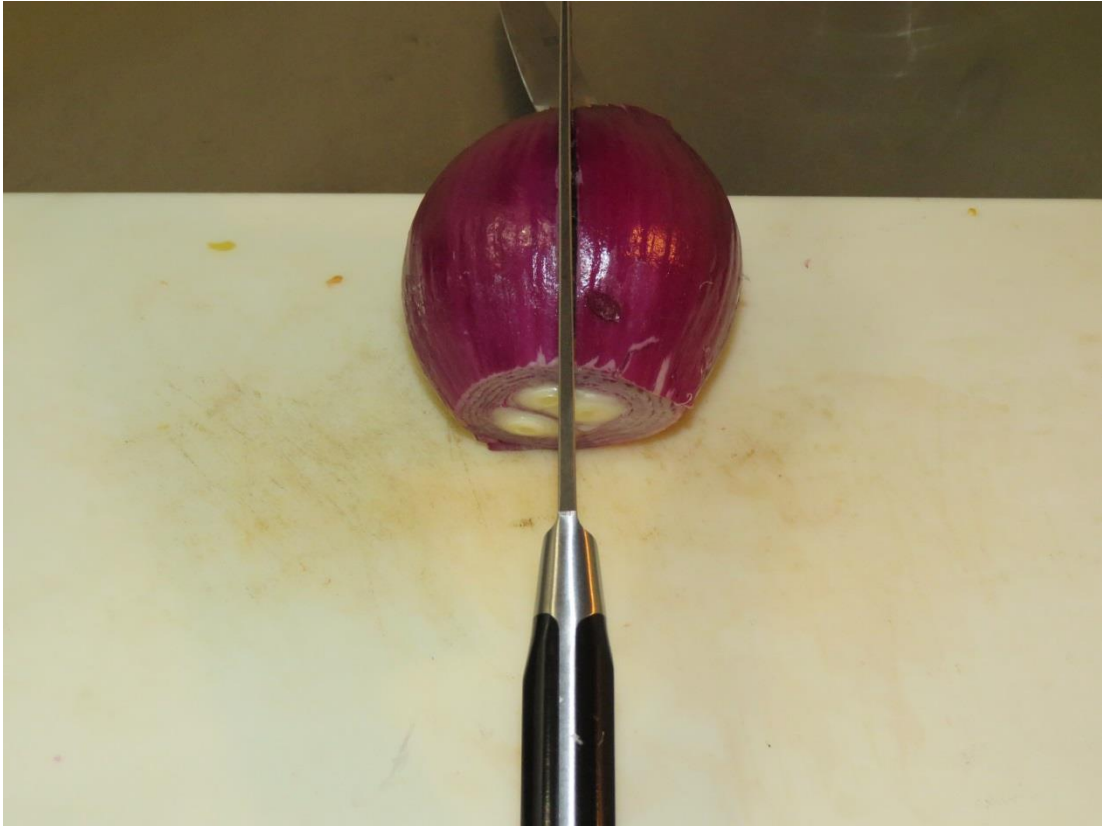
















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## DAVE'S SALAD #000

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This is stupid simple, but I really like it. Crisp and refreshing, I would be happy eating this without any dressing, but I must confess that I dig chunky bleu cheese.

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### INGREDIENTS

---

<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
1	1 lb pack	Carrots
2	Largish	Cucumbers
2	1 pt. packs	Cherry / Plum Tomatoes
AR	-----	Dressing / Seasoning of Choice

---

### SPECIAL TOOLS

---

- NONE!

---

### PREPARATION

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- 1) Rinse and peel the carrots
- 2) Cut carrots into approximately ¼ inch slices [i]
- 3) Rinse and peel the cucumbers
- 4) Cut cucumbers into approximately ¼ inch slices [i]
- 5) Rinse the cherry / plum tomatoes [ii]
- 6) Thoroughly mix the carrots, cucumbers, and tomatoes in a glass bowl until all veggies are evenly distributed
- 7) Plate (or should I say "bowl") and apply dressing / seasoning of choice
- 8) ENJOY !!!

---

### NOTES

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- i. Want a little variety? Try julienning, dicing, sticks, etc, etc, etc
- ii. You don't have to keep these whole. Try quartering, slicing, dicing, etc.

PICTURES

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## DAVE'S SALAD #001

---

Another stupid simple salad, but another one that is also crisp and refreshing. Added bonus? You can use leftovers in a bunch of other dishes, cold or hot

### INGREDIENTS

---

<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
1	-----	Medium to Medium-Large Red Bell Pepper
1	-----	Medium to Medium-Large Yellow Bell Pepper
1	-----	Medium to Medium-Large Green Bell Pepper
1	Bunch	Green Onions
2	8 oz. Package	Plain ol' Generic Mushrooms

Do the ingredients look familiar? Almost the same as “The Stop Light Quintology”. The difference? Green onions. It seems that many of the videos I have been watching have been singing the praises of green onions. I thought why not? The red onions would be overpowering and sweet onions did not seem quite right. The green onions were PERFECT. Just make sure to rinse them thoroughly

### SPECIAL TOOLS

---

- NONE!!!

### PREPARATION

---

- 1) Rinse peppers, onions, and mushrooms [iii] and pat dry
- 2) For each pepper [i]
  - a. Cut around the stem at the top of the pepper and pull it out
  - b. Slice the pepper in half, and remove the seeds and white ribs
  - c. Slice peppers into ~ 1cm strips
- 3) Split the peppers into 3 even portions [ii] with as even color distribution as possible
- 4) Cut off the root end of the green onions. Just the very root end mind you
- 5) Cut the green onions into ~ 1 cm slices, from the white end through the green ends  
Discard and extra limp or floppy parts
- 6) Split into 3 even portions [ii]
- 7) Slice mushrooms into about 1 cm slices
- 8) Split into 3 even portions [ii]
- 9) Toss one portion of the peppers, green onions, and mushrooms in a glass bowl. If you want to add some dressing, now would be a good time [iv]
- 10) Put the other portions into Tupperware containers and stick in the fridge [v]

## NOTES

---

- i. OK, this is probably the LEAST efficient way EVER to slice bell peppers, but I wanted to maximize the length of the pepper strips
- ii. Why split into 3 even portions at each step? Well, if I mix them all together THEN split into three portions, I never seem to get a good even distribution of peppers, onion, and mushrooms in each. One always seems to be mushroom heavy, one pepper heavy, and one onion heavy
- iii. There are those who say you should not rinse mushrooms, but just brush off the dirt. Given what mushrooms are grown in, I prefer to rinse them, but I have never done the rinse vs no rinse experiment
- iv. Dressing? Not necessary, but sometimes a little bleu cheese is nice or maybe some oil and vinegar
- v. If you intend on storing these any longer than a few days, vacuum seal the veggies. They will last much longer and do well when frozen

PICTURES

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## PANTRY MEALS

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## SPAM MAC AND CHEESE

This one.... I am not sure where it started, but I know it is not a new idea. I do, however, quite clearly remember talking to a coworker about this and he told me about frying up the SPAM first. WOW, what a difference it makes! At some point I started adding canned corn so I could get some sort of veggie in there. Then, for whatever reason, I started adding the canned diced tomato. I have since swapped the corn out with peas so I could get a nice spectrum of color.

### INGREDIENTS

Qty.	Unit	Item
1	12 oz. can	SPAM
1	15 oz. can	Peas
1	15 oz. can	Diced Tomatoes (No Salt Added)
1	7.3 oz. Box	Kraft Mac and Cheese
4	TBSP Butter	Land O' Lakes Salted Butter
¼	Cup	Milk
8	Oz.	Shredded Cheese of Choice
AR	-----	Italian Seasoned Panko
AR	-----	Fresh Ground Black Pepper
AR	-----	Neutral oil with high smoke point (e.g. Grapeseed Oil)

The amount of salt in salted butter may vary widely between brands, so I specified the brand I normally use. If I had to do it again, I would probably specify unsalted butter and salt overall mix to taste

There are those who will tell you to grate your own cheese at the time you need it as opposed to using pre-shredded cheese from a bag. The pre-shredded stuff generally has anti-caking agents and mold inhibitors and generally does not melt as well as freshly grated. I dunno. I almost always use Sargento brand shredded cheese and have been pretty happy with it, but maybe next time I will grate my own.

You should be able to find Panko in most grocery stores these days. If not, regular old Italian seasoned bread crumbs should work.

### SPECIAL TOOLS

- NONE!



---

## PREPARATION

---

---

### PHASE I

---

- 1) Dice the SPAM.
- 2) Drain the canned peas and diced tomatoes.
- 3) Preheat pan to mediumish.
- 4) Lightly coat pan with oil.
- 5) Pan fry the SPAM tossing occasionally. The goal is to get a nice crust on the outside, but still leave it tender on the inside.
- 6) When the SPAM is getting close to being done, start boiling the water for the macaroni.
- 7) Drain the macaroni, but do not rinse.
- 8) Add the butter and milk to the macaroni pot and melt over low heat.
- 9) Add the cheese mix to the milk and butter and mix well.
- 10) Add the peas and tomatoes top the cheese sauce and mix well.
- 11) Add the fried SPAM to the mixture and mix well.
- 12) Add the macaroni to the mixture and mix well.
- 13) Continue to heat the mixture over low heat for somewhere in the neighborhood of 10 minutes stirring occasionally.
- 14) If you want to eat now
  - a. Put the mixture in a bowl and top with shredded cheese and fresh ground pepper to taste.
  - b. ENJOY!
- 15) If you have a little bit more time and want to kick it up a notch, proceed to Phase II.

---

### PHASE II

---

- 1) Preheat oven to 425 deg. F. [i]
- 2) Spread SPAM Mac and Cheese mixture in a 9" x 13" glass pan.
- 3) Sprinkle approximately 2/3 of the shredded cheese evenly over the mixture
- 4) Sprinkle a generous amount of panko over the mixture. Pay special attention to any areas with exposed mac.
- 5) Sprinkle the remaining cheese on top.
- 6) Put in the oven for about 15 - 20 minutes or until the SPAM Mac and Cheese is nicely golden brown.
- 7) Remove from oven and let sit for about 5 minutes.
- 8) ENJOY!

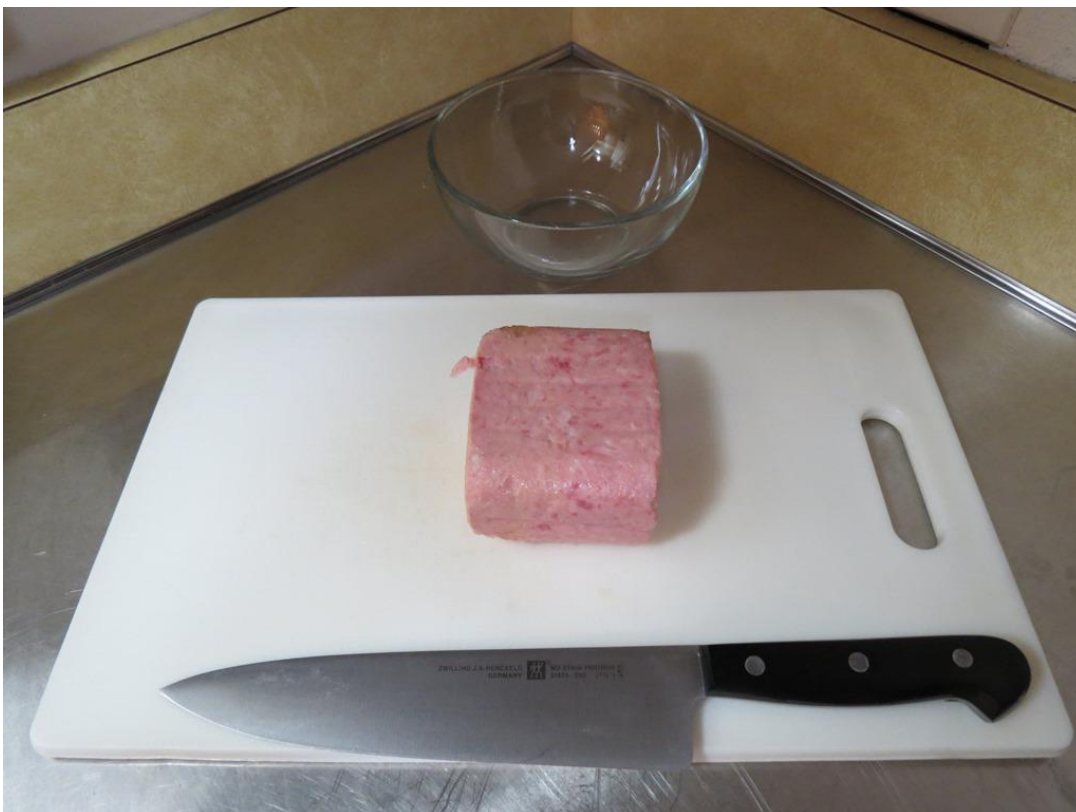
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### NOTES

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- i. If it takes longer than 10 minutes to pre-heat the oven, no worries! The SPAM Mac and Cheese can continue to heat on low until the oven is ready.
- ii. I don't have pic's for Phase II yet. Sorry!

PICTURES

























## HAWAIIAN SPAM MAC AND CHEESE

---

This is another riff on SPAM Mac and Cheese that I have been meaning to write up for a while. I think I got the idea from my love of SPAM Hawaiian pizza. It has a little bit of a sweet flavor, but not overpoweringly so. The sesame oil, soy sauce, and sugar is a new addition, but gives it a nice little subtle extra flavor.

### INGREDIENTS

---

<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
1	12 oz. can	SPAM (Original)
1	15 oz. can	Whole Yellow Corn
2	8 oz. can	Pineapple Chunks
1	7.3 oz. Box	Kraft Mac and Cheese (Original)
4	TBSP	Land O' Lakes Salted Butter
¼	Cup	Whole Milk
8	Oz.	Sargento Shredded Mozzarella Cheese
AR	-----	Plain Panko
1	TBSP	Sesame Seed Oil
1	TBSP	Soy Sauce
1/2	TBSP	White Sugar
AR	-----	Neutral oil with high smoke point (e.g. Grapeseed Oil)

Make sure you get pineapple “chunks”. None of the other cuts seem to work for me

The amount of salt in salted butter may vary widely between brands, so I specified the brand I normally use. One of these days I'll get around to specifying unsalted butter and salt overall mix to taste

Insert standard disclaimer about shredding your own cheese here. I almost always use Sargento brand shredded cheese and have been pretty happy with it, but any type of good quality shredded cheese will work. I think Mozzarella worked particularly well in this application, but feel free to swap it out for another cheese.

You should be able to find Panko in most grocery stores these days. If not, regular old plain bread crumbs should work.

### SPECIAL TOOLS

---

- NONE!

## PREPARATION

---

- 1) Drain the corn and pineapple through metal strainers into 1 qt. measuring cups
- 2) Cover the strainers with saucers and set aside
- 3) Heat cast iron pan to clean
- 4) Wipe out any gunk or old oil
- 5) Apply a light coating of fresh neutral, high temperature oil and reduce heat to mediumish
- 6) Dice SPAM
- 7) Fry SPAM in cast iron pan over mediumish heat, stirring occasionally, until nicely browned [i]
- 8) Slice the pineapple chunks into 4 slices, or as thin as possible
- 9) Reduce cast iron pan heat to low and stir in corn and pineapple chunks
- 10) Add the sesame seed oil, soy sauce, and sugar to a small jar with a tight lid and shake vigorously until all components are mixed
- 11) Stir the mix into the SPAM, pineapple, and corn mix
- 12) Cover and stir occasionally
- 13) Cook the blue box mac and cheese
  - a. Bring water to a boil
  - b. Add mac to the water and cook for 4 minutes [ii], stirring occasionally
  - c. Drain the mac in a colander
  - d. In the meantime, reduce the mac pot to low
  - e. Add the  $\frac{1}{4}$  milk and 4 TBSP butter to the mac pot and heat until the butter melts, stirring occasionally
  - f. Stir in the cheese powder a little bit at a time until everything is well incorporated
  - g. Add mac back to pot and stir gently until all the noodles are coated
- 14) Slowly fold in the SPAM, pineapple, and corn into the mac and cheese a little bit at a time
- 15) Cover and heat on VERY LOW, stirring occasionally
- 16) Preheat your oven to 425 deg. F
- 17) Set timer for 30 minutes
- 18) When the 30 minute timer has expired, spread the SPAM mac and cheese into a 13 x 11 glass pan
- 19) Spread 2/3 of the shredded cheese over the SPAM mac and cheese
- 20) Spread panko over the SPAM mac and cheese making sure to cover any exposed noodles
- 21) Spread the rest of the shredded cheese over the SPAM mac and cheese
- 22) Apply another coat of panko, once again making sure to cover any exposed noodles
- 23) Put the SPAM mac and cheese in the oven and cook until cheese is melted and panko is browned, about 15 minutes
- 24) Remove from oven and let cool for about 5-10 minutes
- 25) Plate
- 26) ENJOY!!!

## NOTES

---

- i. If it seems like it is taking too long to brown the SPAM, bump up the heat a tad
- ii. The box recommends 7 minutes 30 seconds, but the mac and cheese will continue to cook in later steps. It is best to under cook it a little bit at this step so it does not overcook in the later steps

## PICTURES

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## DINNER IN A CAN (FOR THE MOST PART) #000

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This started out with another night of saying to myself, “I want something to eat, but I don’t want to spend a lot of time on it.” After wasting an embarrassingly long amount of time staring into my pantry, I came up with the predecessor to this. It had always been tasty, but a tad heavy. This last time I made it, however, I had one of those rare, “Wow!”, “Eureka!”, “Holy !#\$#” moments. You see, I have been doing a lot more reading lately into cooking. Not recipes, but more along the lines of underlying principles. One of those books is Samin Nosrat’s “Salt Fat Acid Heat”. This time, inspired by Samin, I said to myself, “Lets see what happens when I add some acid”, and WOW!, I am so glad I did. So many more doors are open now.

By the way, you may be asking yourself, “Why is “For The Most Part” in the title?” Well, the original iteration was one of the early pieces in my “Dinner In A Can” series which was intended to be made entirely from items in a can, box, jar, or bottle. There are two ingredients in this which don’t really meet that definition.

### INGREDIENTS

---

<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
1	12 oz. Can	SPAM
1	15 oz. Can	Sweet Peas
2	15 oz. Can	Diced Potatoes
1	4 oz.	Sliced Mushrooms
1	-----	Medium-ish / Large Lemon
AR	-----	Baby Carrots
AR	-----	Grapeseed Oil

I had some baby carrots left over in a bag that I had been randomly snacking on. Seemed to be a good fit to add some color and texture

If you don’t have grapeseed oil, any neutral oil with a high-ish smoke point will do

### SPECIAL TOOLS

---

- NONE! [i]

---

## PREPARATION

---

- 1) Heat cast iron pan to medium-ish, maybe medium-high-ish
- 2) Drain the peas, potatoes, and mushrooms
- 3) Dice the SPAM
- 4) Toss the diced SPAM and potatoes in a glass bowl with a little grapeseed oil; just enough to lightly coat
- 5) Add a little grapeseed oil to the cast iron pan; just enough to lightly coat
- 6) Add SPAM and potatoes to pan. Cook stirring around every so often, until the SPAM and potatoes become nicely browned
- 7) Add mushrooms and peas to the pan and stir until evenly distributed
- 8) Heat until the mushrooms and peas are, well, heated, but not necessarily crispy
- 9) In the meantime
  - a. Juice the lemon
  - b. Julienne enough baby carrots for a decent amount of garnish
- 10) Put the peas / mushrooms / SPAM / potatoes into a decent sized glass bowl
- 11) Add the juice from the lemon and stir thoroughly, but try not to mash the peas and mushrooms
- 12) Serve in regular size bowl topped with the julienned carrot garnish
- 13) ENJOY!

---

## NOTES

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- i. If you don't have a cast iron pan, you really need to get one!

PICTURES

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## THE TUNA GARBANZO EXPERIENCE

---

OK... So, when I started to get a bit more into food experimentation, I keep my notes written on note pads that charities kept sending me and I put those in a metal bin. Sometimes I stapled some of these pieces of paper together. These days, I keep my notes in those marble composition books that we used to use in school all those years ago. This recipe harks from the metal bin days and was one of those, "I don't really feel like putting much effort into cooking dinner tonight" things. It is probably one of the fastest of my recipes to put together and is actually quite good!

NOTE 1: The dressing is still in flux, but what I have here is my best estimate of what I think will work. As always, if it does not work for you, do what you like!

NOTE 2: "She may not look like much, but she has it where it counts."

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### INGREDIENTS

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#### THE SALAD [III]

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<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
3	5 oz can	Solid White Albacore Tuna
1	15.5 oz can	Garbanzo Beans
1	2.25 oz can	Black Olives
1	4 oz can	Sliced Mushrooms
1	15.25 oz can	Yellow Sweet Corn

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#### THE DRESSING [I]

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<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
2	TBSP	Vinegar of Choice
1	TSP	Lemon Juice
2	TSP	French's Yellow Mustard
2	TBSP	Neutral Oil of Choice
2	TBSP	Extra Virgin Olive Oil of Choice

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---

#### SPECIAL TOOLS

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NONE!!!!



## PREPARATION

---

- 1) Drain all of the canned products through stainless steel mesh strainers into quart measuring cups for about 10 minutes [ii]
- 2) Pour the dressing ingredients into a jar (with a lid!) of appropriate size
- 3) Shake the dressing somewhat vigorously then put in the fridge
- 4) Fold all of the canned stuff together in a glass bowl with a wood spoon
- 5) Pull the dressing from the fridge and give it another shake
- 6) Gently fold the dressing into the canned stuff until incorporated
- 7) Plate
- 8) ENJOY !!!

## NOTES

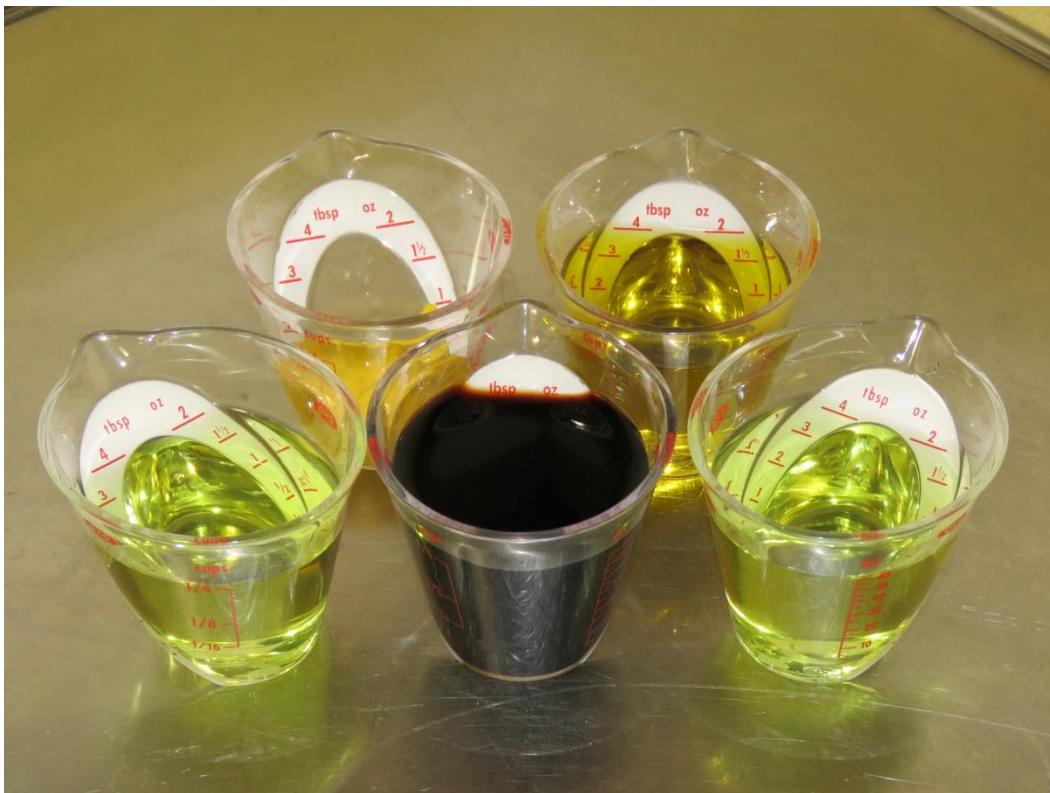
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- i. When I made this to write this up, I made WAY too much dressing. The pictures show this, but the recipe reflects what I think it should be. Also... the lemon juice is new. CAVEAT EMPTOR!!!!
- ii. You may be able to use the drainings for other things. For example, I think the juice from the canned garbanzo beans is called "Aqua Fava" (or something like that) and can be used as a substitute for stuff in vegan recipes
- iii. The pictures only show two cans of tuna, but I called an audible and decided to go with three.

PICTURES

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## THANKSGIVING MAC AND CHEESE

---

This is a relatively new recipe; maybe within the past month or so. As I am writing this, I am trying to remember how I thought of this. I have done various Thanksgiving themed dishes before, but when did this pop into my head? I need to figure out a way to download my random thoughts directly

### INGREDIENTS

---

<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
1	12 oz. can	Turkey SPAM
1	15 oz. can	Cut Green Beans
2	4 oz. can	Sliced Mushrooms
1	14 oz. can	Whole Berry Cranberry Sauce
1	7.3 oz. Box	Kraft Mac and Cheese (Original)
4 + 4	TBSP	Land O' Lakes Salted Butter
¼	Cup	Whole Milk
1	6 oz. Box	Stove Top Traditional Sage Stuffing Mix
AR	-----	Neutral oil with high smoke point (e.g. Grapeseed Oil)

The amount of salt in salted butter may vary widely between brands, so I specified the brand I normally use. One of these days I'll get around to specifying unsalted butter and salt overall mix to taste

I like the Sage stuffing and think it works really well here. I am not sure if I can recommend using another flavor, but heck!, give it a try!

### SPECIAL TOOLS

---

- NONE!

### PREPARATION

---

- 1) Heat a cast iron pan on medium-ish
- 2) Drain the green beans and mushrooms through metal strainers into 1 qt. measuring cups
- 3) Cover the strainers with saucers and set aside
- 4) Dice the can of Turkey SPAM
- 5) Add neutral oil to pan and give it a tick-tock to heat

- 6) Add the diced SPAM
- 7) Fry SPAM in cast iron pan over mediumish heat, stirring occasionally, until nicely browned [i]
- 8) Reduce cast iron pan heat to very low and stir in green beans and mushrooms. Stir occasionally as it heats
- 9) Right after you add the mac to the boiling water in the next step, stir in the cranberry sauce to the SPAM, green beans, and mushrooms in the cast iron pan. Stir occasionally as it heats
- 10) Cook the blue box mac and cheese
  - a. Bring 6 cups of water to a boil
  - b. Add mac to the water and cook for 4 minutes [ii], stirring occasionally
  - c. Drain the mac in a colander
  - d. In the meantime, reduce the mac pot to low
  - e. Add the ¼ milk and 4 TBSP butter to the mac pot and heat until the butter melts, stirring occasionally
  - f. Stir in the cheese powder a little bit at a time until everything is well incorporated
  - g. Add mac back to pot and stir gently until all the noodles are coated
- 11) Preheat your oven to 425 deg. F
- 12) Set timer for 30 minutes
- 13) Slowly fold in the mac and cheese into the SPAM, green beans, mushrooms, and cranberry sauce in the cast iron pan a little bit at a time
- 14) Reduce heat to VERY LOW, stirring occasionally as it heats
- 15) Make the Stove Top Stuffing as per the directions on the box
- 16) When the 30 minute timer has expired, spread the SPAM mac and cheese mix into a 13 x 11 glass pan
- 17) Spread the stuffing evenly over the SPAM mac and cheese
- 18) Put the Thanksgiving mac and cheese in the oven and cook until the stuffing starts to brown (about 15 minutes)
- 19) Remove from oven and let cool for about 5 minutes
- 20) Plate
- 21) ENJOY!!!

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## NOTES

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- i. If it seems like it is taking too long to brown the SPAM, bump up the heat a tad
- ii. The box recommends 7 minutes 30 seconds, but the mac and cheese will continue to cook in later steps. It is best to under cook it a little bit at this step so it does not overcook in the later steps



PICTURES

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## SPAM FRIED RICE

I really need to do a better job of documenting when I have an idea. I actually have a note book specifically designate for food ideas, but I don't know where I put it. Anyways, I am not quite sure where this one came from either. It was most likely a random YouTube video on fried rice which I saw and said, "Hey! I can put SPAM in that". I know I have been gathering fried rice videos for a while. I think I am pretty much there, although there may be a bit of tweaking here and there later

### INGREDIENTS

<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
3	Cups	Cooked Basmati
AR	-----	Kosher salt
1	TBSP	Unsalted Butter
AR	-----	Grapeseed oil
1	12 oz. can	SPAM Original
1/2	Cup	Frozen Corn
1/2	Cup	Frozen Peas
1/2	Cup	Frozen Diced Carrots
3	Cloves	Garlic
3	TBSP	Refined Sesame Seed Oil
1	TSP	Toasted Sesame Seed Oil
1 2/3	TBSP	Soy Sauce
1	TSP	Fish Sauce
1	TBSP	Rice Wine Vinegar

OK... about the rice. First, notice I said "cooked". You need enough uncooked rice to make what the package says will make 3 cups of cooked rice. Second, notice I said "basmati". I like basmati, but you'll probably see all sorts of different recommendations

Insert standard disclaimer about salted vs unsalted butter here

No grapeseed oil? Any other neutral oil with a high smoke point will due

Yes, you need both the refined and toasted sesame seed oils. The refined is used for frying the rice, the toasted is used for post cooking flavoring. DO NOT SWAP THEM!!!

If you want less salt, use lite soy sauce. By the way 1 2/3 TBSP = 1 TBSP + 2 TSP

### SPECIAL TOOLS

- NONE!!!
- Well, none, unless you don't have a kitchen scale

---

## PREPARATION

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---

### THE RICE [I]

---

- 13) Place a measuring cup on a kitchen scale and zero the weight
- 14) Measure out 1 cup of uncooked rice and record the weight
- 15) Rinse the rice [ii]
  - a. Cover the rice to at least twice its height with water in a 3 or 4 quart pot
  - b. Swirl around and massage with your hand
  - c. Drain the water
  - d. Repeat until the water runs clear or 5 times, whichever comes first
- 16) Place a measuring cup on a kitchen scale and zero the weight
- 17) Place the rinsed rice in the measuring cup and record the weight
- 18) Calculate the weight of the water in the rinsed rice by subtracting the weight from step 2 from the weight from step 5
- 19) Place a measuring cup on a kitchen scale and zero the weight
- 20) Measure out the recommend water from the rice cooking instructions
- 21) Remove the amount of water from step 6
- 22) Put water, and the recommended amount of salt, in a 3 or 4 quart pot and bring to a boil
- 23) Add the rice, reduce heat to VERY low, and cover
- 24) Heat, stirring occasionally, until water is full absorbed [iii]
- 25) Remove from heat
- 26) Add the recommended amount of butter (unsalted) and gently fold in until it melts and is thoroughly distributed
- 27) Let sit uncovered for at least 5 minutes
- 28) Fluff and spread the rice on a ¼ sheet pan and put in the fridge overnight [iv]

---

### THE OTHER STUFF

---

- 1) Heat cast iron pan on HI
- 2) Dice the SPAM
- 3) Apply a light coating of grapeseed oil to the cast iron pan
- 4) Add the SPAM
- 5) Cook SPAM, stirring occasionally, until nicely browned on all sides. DON'T LET IT BURN!
- 6) Remove the SPAM and set aside
- 7) Measure out ½ cups of the frozen corn, peas, and carrots
- 8) Measure out 3 cups of the cooked rice from the ¼ sheet pan in the fridge
- 9) Peel and mince the garlic
- 10) Add 3 TBSP of REFINED sesame oil to the cast iron pan
- 11) Add the garlic to the pan. Let it brown a tad, but by no means let it burn
- 12) Add the rice to the cast iron pan and stir
- 13) Cook the rice, stirring frequently, until you notice a slight texture change; a handful of minutes [v]
- 14) Add the SPAM back in and stir until evenly incorporated
- 15) Add the corn, peas, and carrots and stir until evenly incorporated

- 16) Add the soy sauce and stir
- 17) Add the fish sauce and stir
- 18) Add the rice wine vinegar and stir
- 19) Add the TOASTED sesame seed oil and stir
- 20) Remove heat and let sit for at least 5 minutes
- 21) Plate
- 22) ENJOY!!!

#### NOTES

---

- i. This is what I did for the rice I used. It may vary depending on the rice you use, so when in doubt, go by the instructions on the package. If they offer a “drier” version of the recipe, use that one. You’ll eventually figure out a brand of rice you like along with the wetness of the rice you like
- ii. There are many different ways of doing this, so do what works for you! Some will argue that this does not do anything significant, but it works for me
- iii. The cook time will depend on your rice, but for the stuff I use, it is generally in the ballpark of 20 minutes
- iv. If you can’t wait for the next day, at least give it an hour
- v. Want crunchier rice? Cook it a bit longer. Want less crunchy rice? Cook it until just heated

#### PICTURES

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No pictures yet!!!

## EGG FRIED RICE

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So I sent my SPAM Fried Rice recipe to my family. My mother responded asking if I had tried adding in eggs. I had thought about it, but for some reason, it did not fit with the SPAM. So enter another night when I wound pacing my house, cursing, and wondering what I was going to make for dinner that night. Hey! I still have some leftover rice and I have eggs! Let's give this a try!!!

### INGREDIENTS

---

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
3	Cups	Cooked Basmati
AR	-----	Kosher salt
1	TBSP	Unsalted Butter
3	4 oz. Cans	Sliced Mushrooms
3	Largish	Eggs
3	Cloves	Garlic
3	TBSP	Refined / Light Olive Oil
1	TSP	Toasted Sesame Seed Oil
3	TBSP	Soy Sauce
1 ½	TBSP	Fish Sauce
1 ½	TBSP	Rice Wine Vinegar
AR	-----	Chives

OK... about the rice. First, notice I said "cooked". You need enough uncooked rice to make what the package says will make 3 cups of cooked rice. Second, notice I said "basmati". I like basmati, but you'll probably see all sorts of different recommendations

Insert standard disclaimer about salted vs unsalted butter here

If you want less salt, use lite soy sauce

As far as the chives go, if you have fresh GREAT!!! If not, the regular ol' dried chives will work

### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- NONE!!!
- Well, none, unless you don't have a kitchen scale

---

## PREPARATION

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### THE RICE [I]

---

- 1) Place a measuring cup on a kitchen scale and zero the weight
- 2) Measure out 1 cup of uncooked rice and record the weight
- 3) Rinse the rice [ii]
  - a. Cover the rice to at least twice its height with water in a 3 or 4 quart pot
  - b. Swirl around and massage with your hand
  - c. Drain the water
  - d. Repeat until the water runs clear or 5 times, whichever comes first
- 4) Place a measuring cup on a kitchen scale and zero the weight
- 5) Place the rinsed rice in the measuring cup and record the weight
- 6) Calculate the weight of the water in the rinsed rice by subtracting the weight from step 2 from the weight from step 5
- 7) Place a measuring cup on a kitchen scale and zero the weight
- 8) Measure out the recommend water from the rice cooking instructions
- 9) Remove the amount of water from step 6
- 10) Put water, and the recommended amount of salt, in a 3 or 4 quart pot and bring to a boil
- 11) Add the rice, reduce heat to VERY low, and cover
- 12) Heat, stirring occasionally, until water is full absorbed [iii]
- 13) Remove from heat
- 14) Add the recommended amount of butter (unsalted) and gently fold in until it melts and is thoroughly distributed
- 15) Let sit uncovered for at least 5 minutes
- 16) Fluff and spread the rice on a ¼ sheet pan and put in the fridge overnight [iv]

---

### THE OTHER STUFF

---

- 1) Drain the mushrooms through a strainer over a 1 quart measuring cup
- 2) Heat cast iron pan on HI
- 3) Rinse the eggs
- 4) Crack eggs and whisk in a bowl
- 5) Measure out 3 cups of the cooked rice from the ¼ sheet pan in the fridge
- 6) Peel and mince the garlic
- 7) Spread the mushrooms on a clean towel or paper towels and pat dry
- 8) Add 3 TBSP of refined / light olive oil to the cast iron pan
- 9) Add the garlic to the pan. Let it brown a tad, but by no means let it burn
- 10) Add the rice to the cast iron pan and stir
- 11) Cook the rice, stirring frequently, until you notice a slight texture change; a handful of minutes [v]
- 12) Add the mushrooms and stir until evenly incorporated
- 13) Add the soy sauce and stir
- 14) Add the fish sauce and stir
- 15) Add the rice wine vinegar and stir
- 16) Add the TOASTED sesame seed oil and stir

- 17) Re-whisk the eggs and stir into the rice mix
- 18) Heat for another minute or two
- 19) Remove heat and let sit for at least 5 minutes
- 20) Plate
- 21) Sprinkle on chives
- 22) ENJOY!!!

---

### NOTES

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- i. This is what I did for the rice I used. It may vary depending on the rice you use, so when in doubt, go by the instructions on the package. If they offer a “drier” version of the recipe, use that one. You’ll eventually figure out a brand of rice you like along with the wetness of the rice you like
- ii. There are many different ways of doing this, so do what works for you! Some will argue that this does not do anything significant, but it works for me
- iii. The cook time will depend on your rice, but for the stuff I use, it is generally in the ballpark of 20 minutes
- iv. If you can’t wait for the next day, at least give it an hour
- v. Want crunchier rice? Cook it a bit longer. Want less crunchy rice? Cook it until just heated

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### PICTURES

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No pictures yet!!!

## STEAK FRIED RICE

Yes, another fried rice recipe. It seems this and jalapeno poppers are my current muses. I think this will be another one which I will obsess about and continue to research.

### INGREDIENTS

Qty.	Unit	Item
1	-----	London Broil / Top Round / Eye of Round, etc
2	Cups	Diced Dave's Salad #001
3	Cups	Cooked Basmati
AR	-----	Morton's Kosher salt
1	TBSP	Unsalted Butter
AR	-----	Grapeseed oil
3	TBSP	Refined Sesame Seed Oil
1	TSP	Toasted Sesame Seed Oil
1 2/3	TBSP	Soy Sauce
1	TSP	Fish Sauce
1	TBSP	Rice Wine Vinegar

I wanted a cut of beef with not too high of a fat content. London broil, etc are perfect for this. This last go around, I used an Eye of Round Roast. Tasty!!!

The "Dave's Salad #001" uses green onions. If you want a bit more bite, dice the uncooked veggies from "The Stop Light Quintology"; it has red onion in it!

OK... about the rice. First, notice I said "cooked". You need enough uncooked rice to make what the package says will make 3 cups of cooked rice. Second, notice I said "basmati". I like basmati, but you'll probably see all sorts of different recommendations

Why specifically Morton's? Different salts have different weights per volume. If you use something different, make sure you adjust the number of tablespoons accordingly. Samin Nosrat's book, **Salt Fat Acid Heat**, has a good conversion table on this

Insert standard disclaimer about salted vs unsalted butter here

No grapeseed oil? Any other neutral oil with a high smoke point will do

Yes, you need both the refined and toasted sesame seed oils. The refined is used for frying the rice, the toasted is used for post cooking flavoring. DO NOT SWAP THEM!!!

If you want less salt, use lite soy sauce. By the way 1 2/3 TBSP = 1 TBSP + 2 TSP



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## SPECIAL TOOLS

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- NONE !!!

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## PREPARATION

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### THE RICE [I]

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- 1) Place a measuring cup on a kitchen scale and zero the weight
- 2) Measure out 1 cup of uncooked rice and record the weight
- 3) Rinse the rice [ii]
  - a. Cover the rice to at least twice its height with water in a 4 quart pot
  - b. Swirl around and massage with your hand
  - c. Drain the water
  - d. Repeat until the water runs clear or 5 times, whichever comes first
- 4) Drain the rinsed rice through a metal strainer into a 1 quart measuring cup and cover with a saucer
- 5) Add 2 quarts water to the 4 quart pot
- 6) Add 2 TBSP Morton's Kosher Salt to the water
- 7) Heat water on HI until you achieve a nice rolling boil
- 8) Add the rice and set timer to 8 minutes [vi]
- 9) Immediately reduce the heat to low and drain the rice evenly through two metal strainers into two 1 quart measuring cups. DO NOT cover these with saucers
- 10) Melt 1 TBSP butter in the pot
- 11) Once the butter has melted, add the rice and **GENTLY** fold in the butter until well incorporated
- 12) Let sit uncovered for at least 5 minutes
- 13) Fluff and spread the rice on a ¼ sheet pan and put in the fridge overnight [iv]

---

### THE MEAT

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- 1) Heat your trusty cast iron pan on VERY HI until rippin' hot (about 5 – 10 minutes) [iv]
- 2) Oil the pan with grapeseed oil and wipe away excess
- 3) Pull the beef from the fridge
- 4) Slice away any silver skin and excess fat then pat dry
- 5) Slice the beef in half with the grain
- 6) Apply oil all over both pieces of beef and set one aside
- 7) Sear the steak 15 seconds
- 8) Flip and sear for 15 seconds
- 9) Repeat steps 7 and 8 until you have a nice crust
- 10) Sear the edge of the steak 15 seconds
- 11) Flip to the next edge and sear for 15 seconds
- 12) Repeat steps 10 and 11 for all edges, except for the cut side, until you have a nice crust
- 13) Repeat steps 7 – 12 for the second half of the beef

- 14) Slice the beef into ~1/4 slices parallel to the first cut
- 15) Sear the slices in batches (DON'T CROWD) flipping every 15 seconds until you have a nice crust. De-gunk the pan and add oil as necessary
- 16) Let the slices cool until handleable
- 17) Dice the beef slices into 1/4 cubes
- 18) Add grapeseed oil to the pan as required and sear the steak cubes in batches, stirring frequently, until you get a nice crust on all sides. This should not take too long, maybe 1-3 minutes. Give them a nice crust, but DON'T LET THEM BURN!!!
- 19) Measure out 2 cups of the diced steak and set aside. Put the rest in a Tupperware container in the fridge

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### PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

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- 1) De-gunk the pan, add grapeseed oil, and wipe away excess
- 2) Add 3 TBSP of REFINED sesame oil to the cast iron pan
- 3) Add the rice to the cast iron pan and stir [viii]
- 4) Cook the rice, stirring frequently, until you notice a slight texture change; a handful of minutes, maybe less [v]
- 5) Add the beef back in and stir until evenly incorporated
- 6) Add the veggies
- 7) Add the soy sauce and stir
- 8) Add the fish sauce and stir
- 9) Add the rice wine vinegar and stir
- 10) Add the TOASTED sesame seed oil and stir
- 11) Remove heat and let sit for at least 5 minutes
- 12) Plate
- 13) ENJOY!!!

---

### NOTES

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- i. This is what I did for the rice I used. This was also the second time I used the "spaghetti method" for rice, and WOW did it work great for this
- ii. There are many different ways of doing this, so do what works for you! Some will argue that this does not do anything significant, but it works for me
- iii. The cook time will depend on your rice, but for the Carolina Basmati I used for this round, it 8 minutes was pretty good.
- iv. If you can't wait for the next day, at least give it an hour
- v. Want crunchier rice? Cook it a bit longer. Want less crunchy rice? Cook it until just heated
- vi. 8 minutes is what worked for me for the brand of rice I used. Start checking around the 5 minute mark and taste for doneness
- vii. Make sure your exhaust fans are on and windows are open (if possible)
- viii. This will spatter and pop, so make sure you have a spatter screen close by!

PICTURES

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No pictures yet!!!

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## SANDWICHES

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## SMASH BURGERS

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I think this one is fairly recent, maybe within the last year. I am not sure exactly how this entered my realm of consciousness, but it is a good bet it was You Tube or the Food Network. Now the strange thing about this method is that it produces burgers which are more towards the medium-well, well done side of things and I am a medium-rare guy. Why do I like it so much? It has to be the crust! The other kind of strange thing is that the patties are not seasoned. Heresy you say? Well, I tried it with salt and pepper one time and it was just too much, but if that is your thing, by all means, give it a go. Be careful, however; you'll need less than you think.

Oh... sir? Just one more thing. This cook goes pretty fast, so you'll probably want to have whatever else you are eating with this done before you start cooking these.

Update 2020-05-02 (Saturday):

Tried these last night with sliced raw jalapenos in place of the Roma tomatoes, Wow! This is definitely a keeper. I'll get around to updating the pictures one of these days.

Update 2020-05-22 (Friday):

Bumped up the cook time from 30 seconds per side to 42 seconds per side and revamped the immediate post cook steps slightly to optimize cheese meltness.

## INGREDIENTS

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<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
1	~1.3 lb	Package of 80/20 Ground Beef
AR	Slices	Kraft Deluxe American Cheese
AR	Rolls	Martin's Sandwich Potato Rolls
AR	-----	Vidalia Onion
AR	-----	Jalapenos Peppers
AR	-----	Kosher Dill Hamburger Pickles
6	grams	Ghee
AR	-----	PAM

The "1 lb" packages of ground beef generally come in at about 1.3 lbs, at least at the stores I go to. 80/20 is the right ratio of fat to meat as far as I can tell. After all, "fat is flavor"! Now, there is no real guarantee what cuts of beef you will be getting in ground "beef"; it will most likely be whatever scraps are left over from butchering the rest of the cow. If it is labeled ground "chuck", or some other cut, that should be the cut of meat contained therein. If you are lucky enough to have an honest to God butcher shop close by, you can most likely request them to ground whatever cut you want. If you have a really good meat department at your local grocery store, you might be able to request the same (It doesn't hurt to ask!). If you REALLY want to get serious, you can always ground your own. I have not gone down this road yet, but I really want to try it. I think first I will try a mix of short rib and chuck.

Now on to the cheese... The cheese purist may scoff at American cheese, but it is probably the best type of cheese for burgers. It just melts really well and gets all gooey without clumping or getting oily (I'm looking at you cheddar). And, quite honestly, I like the taste. At one point in the more distant past, I came to the realization that I really like the Kraft Deluxe. I think that surprised me a little at the time. I also think that this is also the reason that I did not like the salted versions of the burger; the cheese will actually have a fair amount of salt as it is. What if you want to use another type of cheese? By all means, do what you like! After all, it is your burger! I myself want to experiment with Gouda.

Now on to the rolls... Quite frankly, the Martin's Sandwich Potato rolls are PERFECT for smash burgers; just the right size, just the right taste, just the right texture. The Kaiser rolls I have tried are generally too big, don't have that slight sweetness, and are too crumbly (if that is a word). I have not tried fancier rolls yet, nor have I tried making my own. I hear the brioche rolls are pretty good.

Now on to the onion... I like the sweeter, more subdued flavor of Vidalia or sweet onions for this application. I think the stronger, more pungent onions will over power everything else. I also like the little bit of crunch the onion adds.

Now on to the tomatoes... Well, as you can see, I have bumped the Roma's in favor of jalapenos and it REALLY works well. Raw is the way to go as you get a nice texture component and still have that little bit of heat.

Now on to the pickles... This is the only other ingredient other than the ground beef which I believe is truly required. I don't know why (I never really used to like pickles on burgers), but for some reason it just works to the point of being integral. As far as brand, I like Mt. Olive, but have not really tried a bunch of varieties.

As for the ghee... I usually say if you don't have ghee, you can use a neutral high temperature oil such as grapeseed. The more I use ghee, however, the more I like it and what it brings to whatever I am cooking. It is pretty easy to make from regular ol' unsalted butter, so I highly recommend you give it a try.

Wow! That is the most extra discussion about the ingredients I have ever done

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## SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Big 'o Grill Press (about 8  $\frac{3}{4}$  in.) [i]

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## PREPARATION

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- 1) Rinse the jalapenos and pat dry
- 2) Slice the jalapenos crosswise (thin but not too thin) and put in a Tupperware container in the fridge until needed. DO NOT REMOVE THE SEEDS!!!
- 3) Rinse the onion and pat dry
- 4) Cut off the onion stem and root ends and remove the outer skin
- 5) Slice the onion (perpendicular to the root-to-stem axis), and put in a Tupperware container in the fridge until needed

- 6) Weigh out ground beef into 2 oz. balls. You should get about 10
- 7) Split leftover ground beef (should be less than 2 oz.) between the beef balls and re-shape as required
- 8) Put the burger balls in a Tupperware container in the fridge until needed
- 9) Heat cast iron pan on high for at least 5 minutes
- 10) Add the ghee to the pan and spread around so that it coats the pan
- 11) Spray grill press with PAM
- 12) Add two burger balls to the pan spaced so that they will not touch when smashed
- 13) Smash the balls with the grill press to fairly thin
- 14) Set timer for 42 seconds
- 15) Flip burgers
- 16) Set timer for 42 seconds
- 17) Remove burgers and put on a quarter sheet cooling rack in a quarter sheet pan
- 18) Put one slice of cheese on each burger and cover with a second quarter sheet pan. If you are not going to eat them almost immediately, put in your oven set to warm. If your oven's warm setting is TOO warm, open the oven door a crack
- 19) Is your cheese not melty enough when you are ready to assemble? Places the burgers under the broiler for a tick tock (or, if you have one, break out your SearzAll!)
- 20) Assemble the burger in the following order from bottom to top
  - a. Bun
  - b. Pickles
  - c. Burger patty with cheese
  - d. Sliced onion
  - e. Burger patty with cheese
  - f. Sliced jalapenos
  - g. Bun
- 21) Revel in what you have created and, of course, ENJOY!

## NOTES

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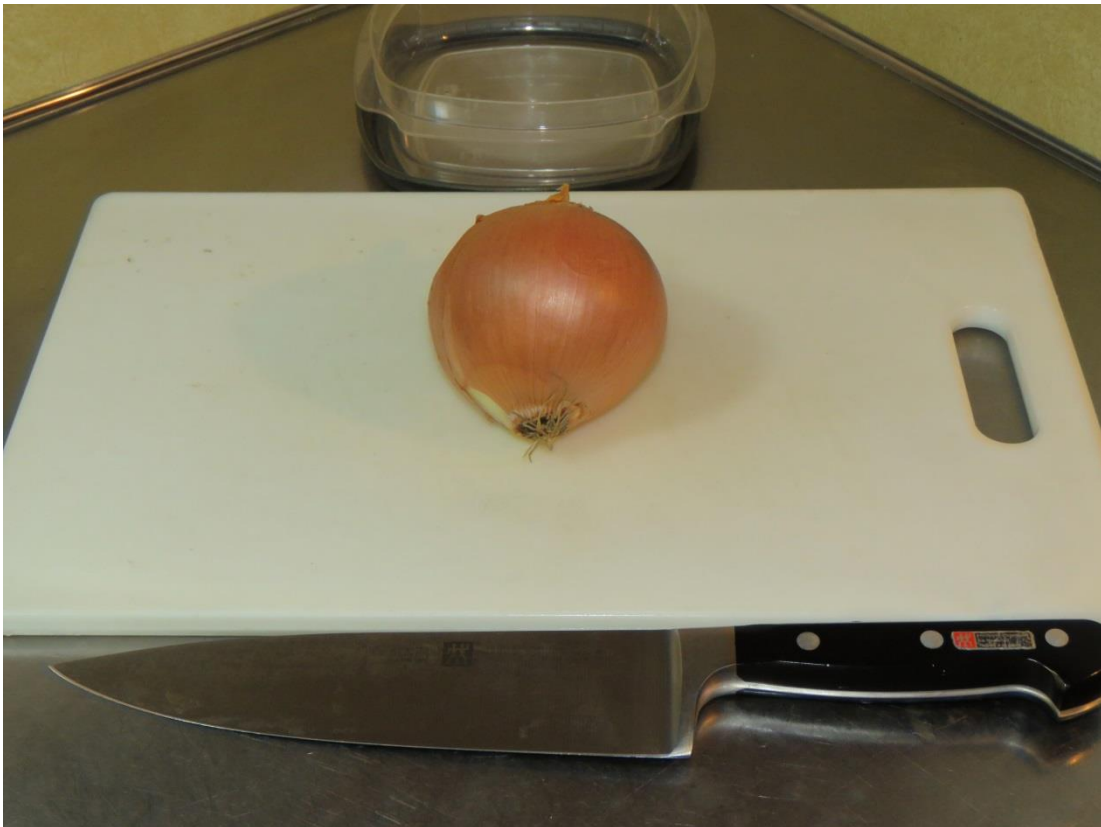
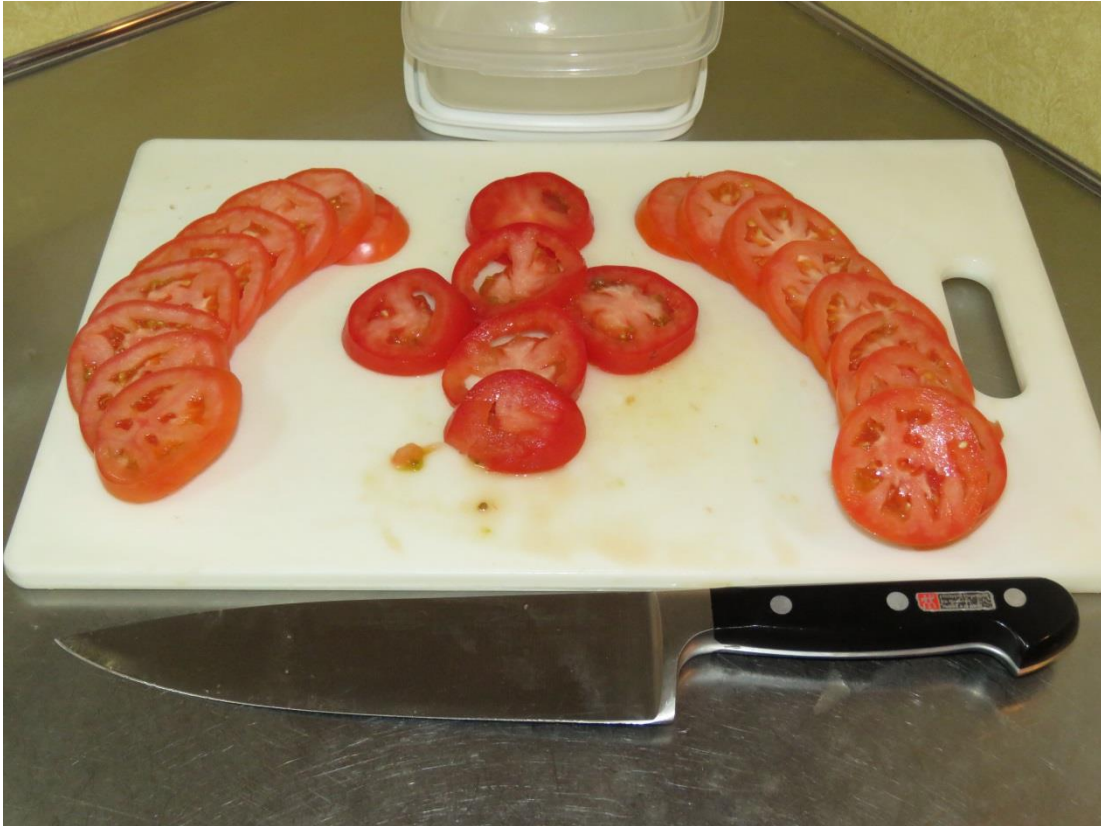
- I. If you do a search on "smash burgers", you'll probably find "heavy spatula" and "heavy dowel". I like my grill press. It works perfectly
- II. I don't have pic's of the burgers as they were cooking because the cook went too fast. Maybe next time I'll set up a video camera and get a screen capture from that
- III. The pic's still show the Roma's instead of the jalapenos. I'll get around to taking new pic's one of these days!

PICTURES [II, III]

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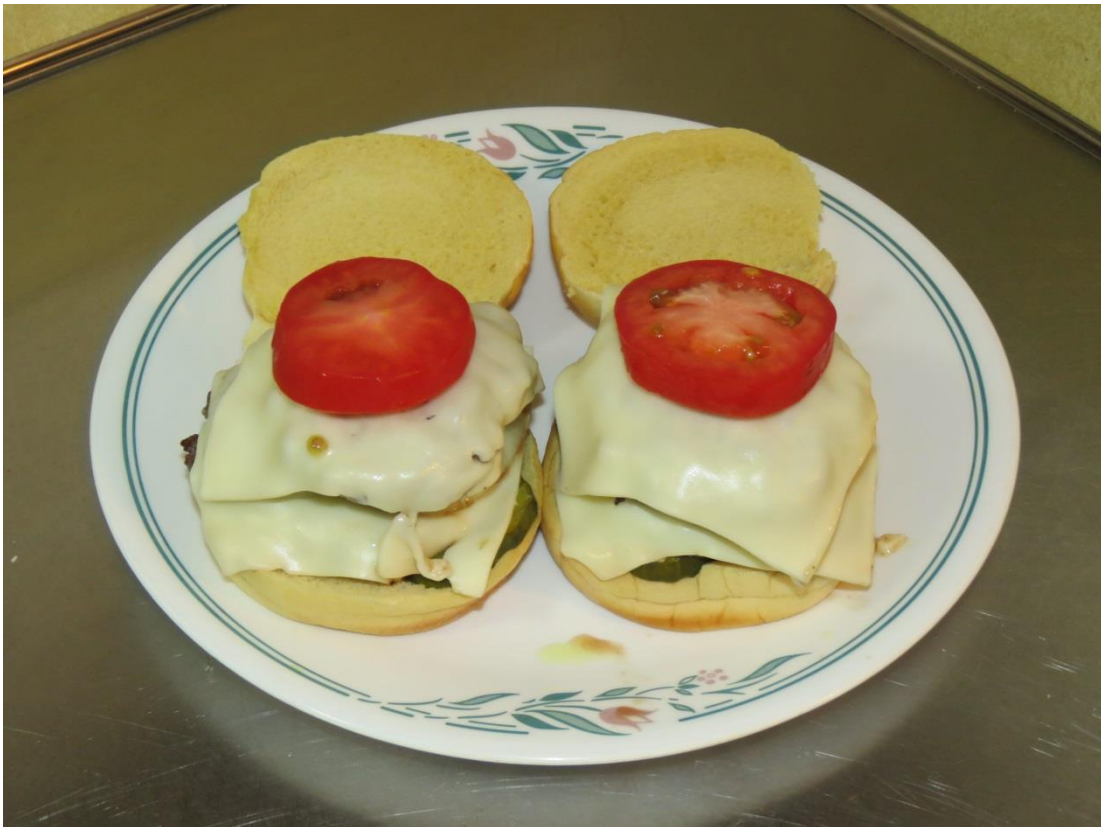














## THE SERIES OF FORTUNATE EVENTS BURGER

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Well, if you have read through any of these recipes, you realize that most of them take a little bit of time to make. At some point, I really need to focus on stuff that is quick and easy to make. With that in mind, last night I tried something with stuff I had on hand; one portion of veggies for “The Stop Light Quintology” and (Qty. 4) ~2 oz. burger balls in the freezer. WOW! What a great happy accident! I was expecting something more or less tasty, but I did not expect how well all the flavors worked together.

P.S. No, it was not exactly quick

### INGREDIENTS

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<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
1	Portion	Leftover “The Stop Light Quintology” veggies (uncooked)
4	2 oz.	Frozen Burger Balls
AR	-----	Kraft Deli Deluxe Yellow American Cheese
4	-----	Martin’s Potato Dinner Rolls
AR	-----	Grapeseed Oil

Insert standard disclaimer about American Cheese here.

No Grapeseed Oil? Any neutral oil with a high temperature smoke point should work.

### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Sous Vide Machine [i]
- Heavy Grill Press

### PREPARATION

---

- 1) Heat Sous Vide to 120 deg. F
- 2) Prepare 1 portion of “The Stop Light Quintolgy”
- 3) About 20 minutes before “The Stop Light Quintology” is done, stick the burger balls in the Sous Vide machine
- 4) About 5 minutes before “The Stop Light Quintology” is done, heat a cast iron pan on high
- 5) When “The Stop Light Quintolgy” is done, pull them from the oven and cover with a second cookie sheet of the same (or similar) size
- 6) Once the burger balls are thoroughly thawed, apply a light coating of Grapeseed Oil to the cast iron pan with a paper towel
- 7) Wipe the grill press with a light coating of Grapeseed Oil
- 8) Add two burger balls to the pan spaced so that they will not touch when smashed
- 9) Smash the balls with the grill press to fairly thin
- 10) Set timer for 42 seconds
- 11) Flip burgers

- 12) Set timer for 42 seconds
- 13) Remove burgers and put on a quarter sheet cooling rack in a quarter sheet pan
- 14) Put one slice of cheese on each burger and cover with a second quarter sheet pan. If you are not going to eat them almost immediately, put in your oven set to warm. If your oven's warm setting is TOO warm, open the oven door a crack
- 15) Repeat steps 8 through 14 for the remaining burger balls
- 16) Is your cheese not melty enough when you are ready to assemble? Places the burgers under the broiler for a tick tock (or, if you have one, break out your SearzAll!)
- 17) Assemble the burger in the following order from bottom to top [ii]
  - a. Bun
  - b. Burger patty with cheese
  - c. A good amount of "The Stop Light Quintology"
  - d. Bun
- 18) ENJOY!!!

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#### NOTES

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- i. You may ask yourself, "How Did I Get Here?" And the answer is no, a Sous Vide machine is not totally necessary. I am just using it to thaw the frozen burger balls. You can just as easily do it with hot tap water OR thaw it in the refridgideezer overnight.
- ii. You will note that this is not a double burger like my recipe for smash burgers. The idea here is that "The Stop Light Quintology" acts as the second patty. I gotta tell ya... it works!

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#### PICTURES

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Sorry! No pictures yet. Maybe next time I make this.



## THE ACCIDENTAL SLOPPY JOE

Alright... I had / have a series of recipes that I was calling “WTF To Do For Dinner Tonight”. They basically start out with me getting too involved with something before dinner and before I realize it, it is too late to do anything too “interesting”. I invariably wind up pacing back and forth between my pantry and kitchen cursing at myself until I figure something out or give up and eat a can of Campbell’s Chunky Soup. That usually lasts AT LEAST a half hour.

So it was with this one. This one, however, was one of the few great ones where I just say to myself, “Holy 2#\$@#\$ is that good!” I was not expecting this at all. I can’t really call it a pantry meal because it relies on my bacon wrapped pork tenderloin (recipe coming), but “Holy 2#\$@#\$ is it good!”

Side Note: I used an onion (sliced) that I had dehydrated about 2 years ago and some portabella mushrooms that I dehydrated about 4 ½ ago. Whoda thunk it? I really need to dehydrate some more onions and portabellas!

20200823 (Sunday): After dehydrating another round of mushrooms and onions, I think it was 3 dehydrated 6 oz. packs of sliced portabella mushrooms. Updated it from 1.

### INGREDIENTS

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
AR	-----	Kaiser Rolls
1	Lb	Left Over Bacon-Wrapped Pork Tenderloin
2	15 oz. can	Diced (Petite if Available) Unsalted Diced Tomatoes
1	-----	Dehydrated Sliced Sweet / Vidalia Onion
3	-----	Dehydrated 6 oz. Pack of Sliced Portabella Mushrooms
2	Large Cloves	Garlic
AR	-----	Kosher Salt
AR	-----	Fresh Ground Black Pepper
AR	-----	Cayenne Pepper
AR	-----	Ground Cumin
3	TBSP	EVO

Rolls... I go back and for between Martin’s Potato Rolls and Maien’s Italian Kaiser Rolls. I love both, but I think that Kaiser rolls are a better fit for this

So you probably won’t be able to easily find the dehydrated sliced onion and dehydrated sliced portabella mushrooms, if you can find them at all. Where did I get mine? I dehydrated them myself! Placed in a vac seal bag, they apparently last forever! The texture wound up being FANTASTIC!

The cumin is new, but I think this was just SCREAMING for it

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## SPECIAL TOOLS

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- NONE!

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## PREPARATION

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- 1) Chop up the dehydrated onions into approximately 1 cm lengths [i]
- 2) Chop up the dehydrated portabella mushrooms into approximately 1 cm squares [i]
- 3) Heat a 3 qt. pot on low
- 4) Mince the garlic
- 5) Add EVO to the pot
- 6) Once the EVO starts to shimmer, add the garlic and stir.
- 7) Heat garlic, stirring occasionally, until slightly brown and fragrant. DON'T LET IT BURN!
- 8) While garlic is heating, chop the leftover Bacon-Wrapped Pork Tenderloin into approximately 1 cm cubes
- 9) Transfer the oil and garlic to a big-ish pot
- 10) Heat until the oil starts to shimmer again
- 11) Add the chopped Bacon-Wrapped Pork Tenderloin to the pot and turn up heat a tad
- 12) Add the chopped dehydrated onion and mushrooms
- 13) Heat for about 6 minutes, stirring occasionally
- 14) Add the (2) cans of diced tomatoes to the pot, liquid and all!
- 15) Heat for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- 16) Add fresh ground pepper to taste (for me, a handful of twists of the pepper mill) and stir
- 17) Add kosher salt to taste (for me, maybe 2 – 3 pinches) and stir
- 18) Add cayenne pepper to taste (for me, a light sprinkling) and stir
- 19) Add cumin to taste (TBD) and stir
- 20) Heat, stirring occasionally, for about 10 additional minutes or until it the onions and mushrooms are rehydrated and the mix reduces to your desired level of consistency
- 21) Remove heat and let sit for 5 – 10 minutes
- 22) Generously portion the mix on to the Kaiser rolls [ii]
- 23) ENJOY!!!

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## NOTES

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- i. This will gum up your knife (or maybe I need to sharpen mine). You may need to clean it occasionally
- ii. Cheese, sauce, toppings, etc? Well, that is up to you. I think, however, that this works pretty well by itself. If I were going to try anything, it would be some creamy coleslaw [iii]
- iii. Great.... Now I have to figure out how to make creamy coleslaw

## PICTURES

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No pictures yet! This was just a spur of the moment thing!

## SURF AND TURF BURGER (WIP)

This one is from October 2017, so not too terribly long ago. I consider this one a work in progress; it has great potential, but is not quite there yet. As with just about anything I write now, I don't remember what exactly precipitated it. Probably something on the Food Network. I can tell you that the crab cake recipe is Andrew Zimmern's "Baltimore-Style Crab Cakes" recipe from [www.foodandwine.com](http://www.foodandwine.com) (June 2012) which he said was "verbatim" his best friend's wife's mother's recipe.

Now, what needs to be improved? Really the cooking method / time. Generally, I like burgers on the rare side and I think 2 minutes, 15 seconds per side in a hot cast iron pan was a bit too long. On the other hand, the outer char was REALLY nice! The crab, however, was a little on the cool side. I'll need to think about this a bit. I think that this would be perfect for a low and slow smoking (which I have done, but need to track down my notes) followed by a high temperature sear.

### INGREDIENTS

Qty.	Unit	Item
-----	-----	Ingredients for Andrew Zimmern's "Baltimore-Style Crab Cakes" recipe from <a href="http://www.foodandwine.com">www.foodandwine.com</a> (June 2012)
~1.3	Lb	80 / 20 Ground Beef
AR	-----	Bacon
1	-----	Beefsteak Tomato
AR	-----	Roll of Choice
AR	-----	Sliced Cheese of Choice

My bacon of choice for this these days is Kunzler Regular Cut closely followed by Hormel Black Label

I know I say beefsteak tomato here, but I am wondering if roma's might be a better choice

Roll of choice??? I think Meier's Kaiser Roll's works pretty well here. I don't think Martin's Potato Rolls are as good a fit for this as they are for smash burgers

Sliced cheese of choice??? I think provolone is a good fit; you don't want it to overpower the "surf" part of the burger. I think Gouda would be my second choice and American my third (at least at this point in time)

### SPECIAL TOOLS

- 4 ½ burger press [i]
- Copper Crisper [iii]
- Pre-cut wax paper squares [iv]

## PREPARATION

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- 1) Prepare crab cake mix as per Baltimore Style Crab Cakes Andrew Zimmern's "Baltimore-Style Crab Cakes" recipe from [www.foodandwine.com](http://www.foodandwine.com) (June 2012)
- 2) While the crab cakes mix is chillin', cook the bacon with your method of choice on the Copper Crisper. My method of choice is generally low-and-slow, but I did not have the time this go around, so I did them in the oven; 400 deg. F [no oven preheat!] until crispy [ii]
- 3) Slice the tomatoes and put in fridge until needed
- 4) Divvy the ground beef into 2 oz. portions
- 5) Set your burger press for a thin patty with a 2 oz. portion of beef
- 6) For each ground beef portion
  - a. Place a wax paper square on the bottom of the burger press
  - b. Place a ground beef portion about 1/3 of the way between the center of the press and the hinge-side edge of the press
  - c. Place a second wax paper square on top of the burger portion
  - d. Press
  - e. Rotate 90 deg.
  - f. Press
  - g. Rotate 90 deg.
  - h. Press
  - i. Rotate 90 deg.
  - j. Press
- 7) For each burger
  - a. Remove the top wax paper square from one patty of beef
  - b. Place 1 TBSP of crab cake mix in the center of the patty
  - c. Place a second patty of beef on top
  - d. Lightly wet your hands and place the burger in one hand [v]
  - e. Press /fold the edges together, rotating and occasionally lightly cupping between your hands and flipping, until the two patties become one
- 8) Heat a well-seasoned (but free of gunk!) cast iron pan over high, but not VERY HI, heat.
- 9) Fry in the cast iron pan for about 2 minutes, 15 seconds
- 10) Flip and cook for another 2 minutes, 15 seconds
- 11) Remove the burger to a cooling rack in a sheet pan
- 12) Place bacon on top of the burger
- 13) Place cheese on top of the bacon
- 14) Cover the burgers with a heat dome and place in an oven set on "warm" with the door open
- 15) Place the burger patties on your roll of choice
- 16) Place tomato slice(s) on burger
- 17) ENJOY!!!

## NOTES

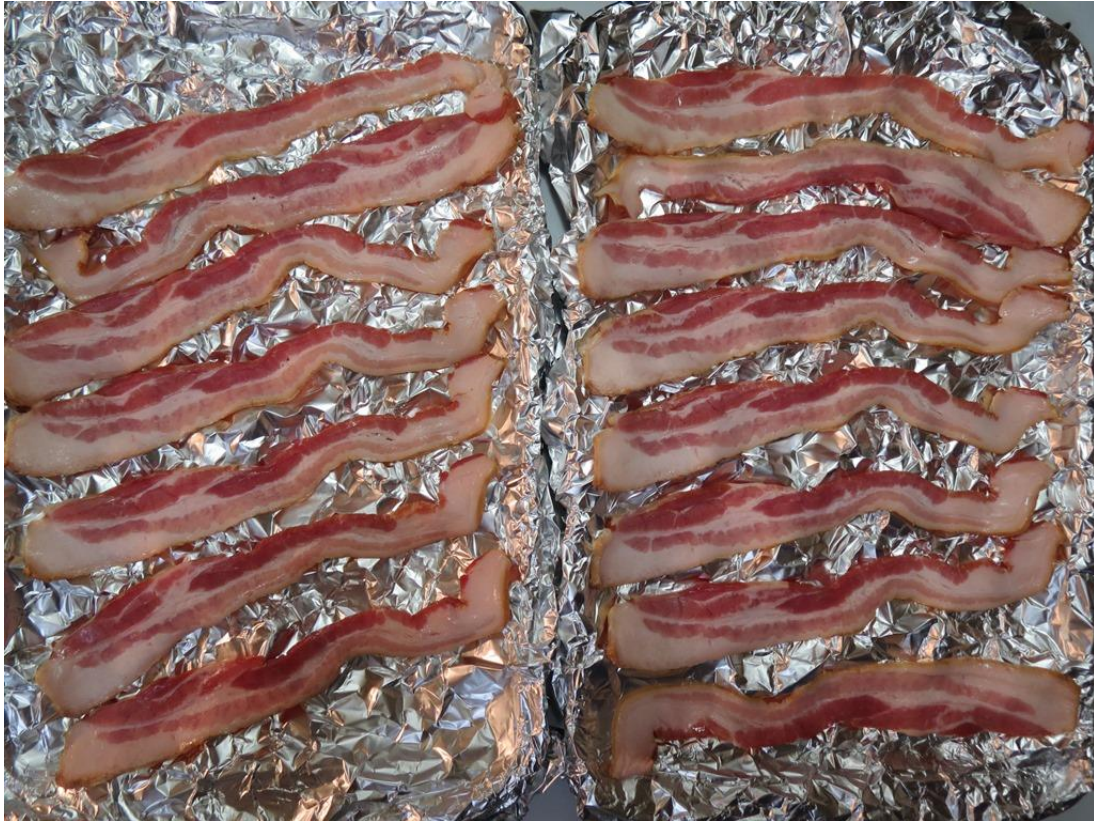
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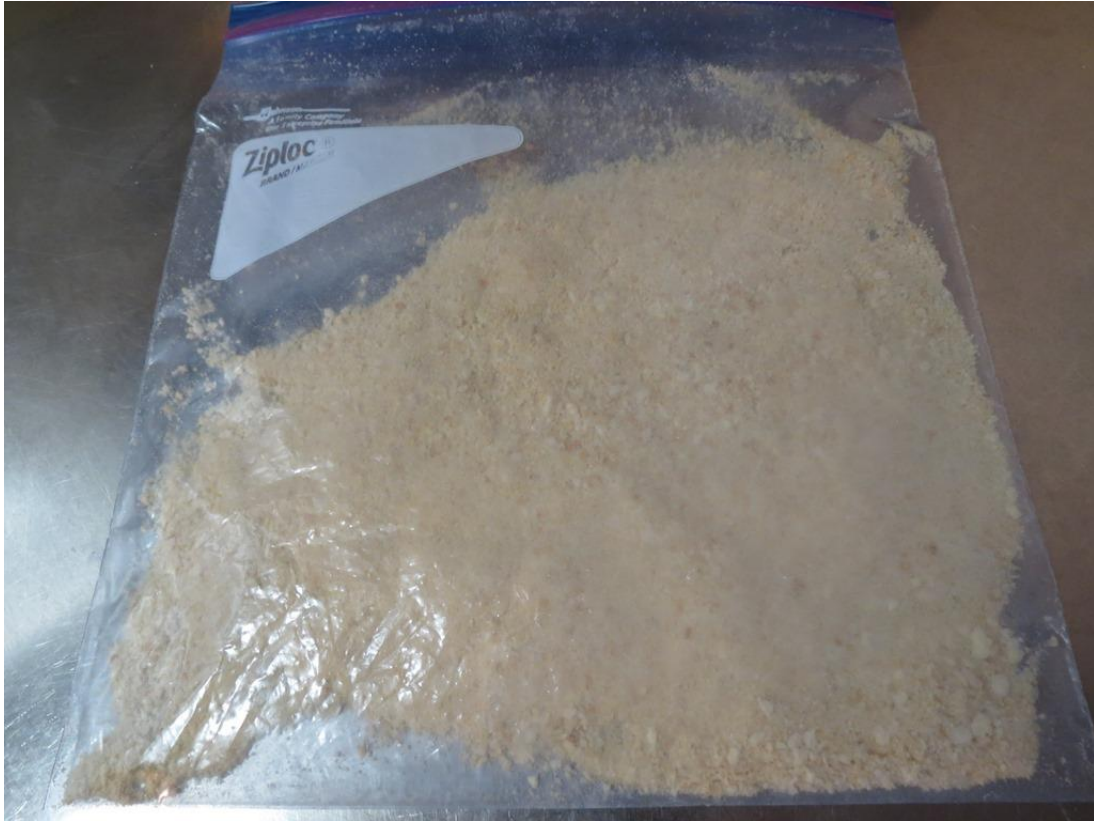
- i. This is not 100% necessary, but sure makes making consistent patties easier. I did not have one of these my first go around with this burger
- ii. Low and slow is 200 deg. F for at least 2 hours upwards of 3 depending on how crispy you like it. The high and fast is 400 deg. F starting from a cold oven for about 17 minutes to 30 minutes, once again depending on how crispy you like it. The pictures show that I obviously let it go a little too long for this go around.
- iii. Are these really necessary? Well, no, but I bought a couple a while back and found them very useful for this type of stuff. A half sheet cooling rack in a half sheet pan should work just as well
- iv. The pre-cut wax paper squares make things much easier
- v. This makes the beef less likely to stick to your fingers

## PICTURES

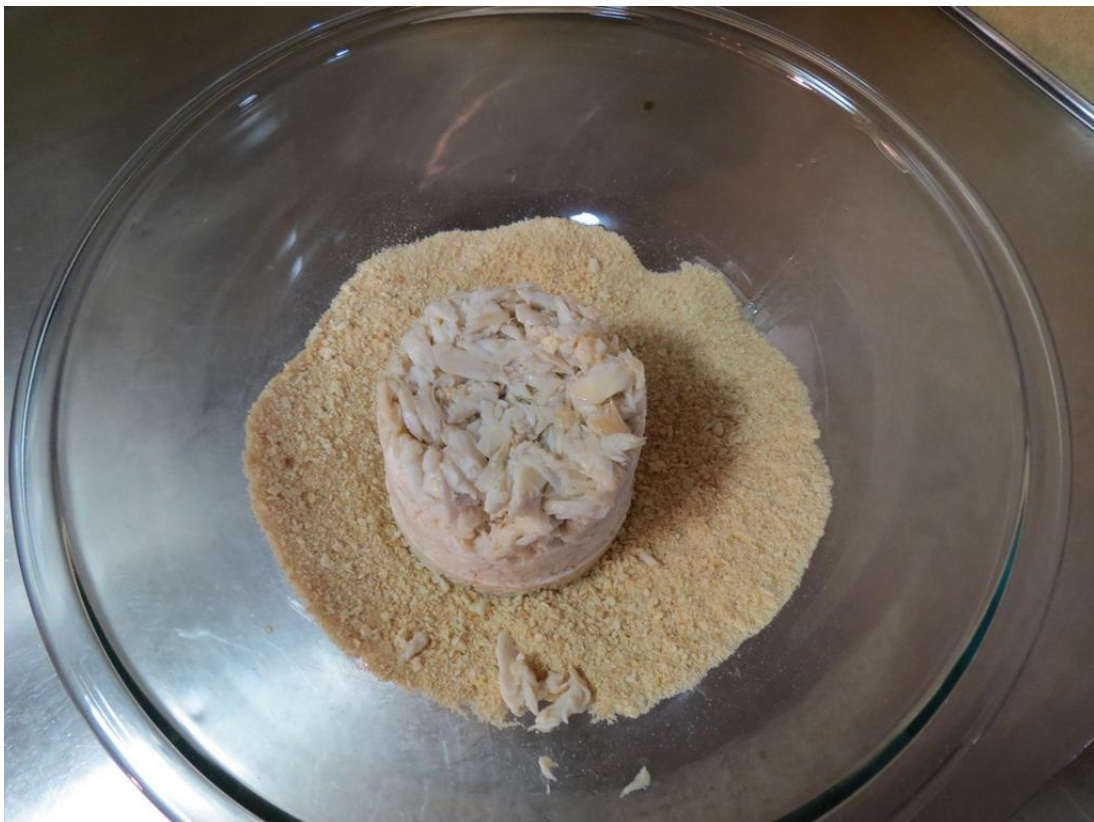
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## BLEU CHEESE BURGER (WIP)

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Let's see... this one was from May of 2017. As with the Surf and Turf Burger, I consider this one a work in progress; it has great potential, but is not quite there yet. This was inspired by one of the food shows I watch. I don't remember which one, but they had a cheeseburger with cheese in the middle. In retrospect, I think the cheeseburger in question was the "Juicy Lucy"

Also as with the Surf and Turf Burger, this could use a few tweaks. Once again it is really about the cooking method / time. Generally, I like burgers on the rare side and I think the 1 minute, 30 seconds per side in a hot cast iron pan was a bit too long. On the other hand, the outer char was REALLY nice! This is also a great candidate for a low and slow smoking (which I have done, but need to track down my notes) followed by a high temperature sear.

### INGREDIENTS

---

<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
~1.3	Lb	80 / 20 Ground Beef
1	1.4 oz. Pack	Knorr's French Onion Soup Mix
1	4 oz. container	Crumbled Blue Cheese
1	-----	Beefsteak Tomato
1	-----	Vidalia Onion
AR	-----	Roll of Choice
AR	-----	Sliced Cheese of Choice
AR	-----	Ketchup

I know I say beefsteak tomato here, but I am wondering if roma's might be a better choice

I generally like potato rolls or kaiser rolls, depending on the burger, but the brioche rolls I used for this were quite tasty!

I almost did not put the sliced cheese on the burger. But then I thought, "CHEESE IS GOOD!" I don't recall what type I used at the time, but I think provolone is a good fit.

### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- 4 ½ burger press [i]
- Pre-cut wax paper squares [iv]



## PREPARATION

---

- 1) Slice the tomatoes and put in fridge until needed
- 2) Slice the onions and put in fridge until needed
- 3) Hand mix the ground beef and Knorr's French Onion Soup Mix in a bowl
- 4) Divvy the ground beef into 2 oz. portions
- 5) Set your burger press for a thin patty with a 2 oz. portion of beef
- 6) For each ground beef portion
  - a. Place a wax paper square on the bottom of the burger press
  - b. Place a ground beef portion about 1/3 of the way between the center of the press and the hinge-side edge of the press
  - c. Place a second wax paper square on top of the burger portion
  - d. Press
  - e. Rotate 90 deg.
  - f. Press
  - g. Rotate 90 deg.
  - h. Press
  - i. Rotate 90 deg.
  - j. Press
- 7) For each burger
  - a. Remove the top wax paper square from one patty of beef
  - b. Place 1 TBSP of bleu cheese crumbles in the center of the patty
  - c. Place a second patty of beef on top
  - d. Lightly wet your hands and place the burger in one hand [v]
  - e. Press /fold the edges together, rotating and occasionally lightly cupping between your hands and flipping, until the two patties become one
- 8) Place the burgers in fridge until needed
- 9) Heat a well-seasoned (but free of gunk!) cast iron pan over high, but not VERY HI, heat (about 5 - 10 minutes)
- 10) Fry burgers in the cast iron pan for about 1 minute, 30 seconds
- 11) Flip and cook for another 1 minute, 30 seconds
- 12) Place the burger patties on the roll of choice and top with a slice of cheese of choice.
- 13) If you are so inclined, put on some ketchup.
- 14) Place onion slice(s) on burger.
- 15) Place tomato slice(s) on burger.
- 16) ENJOY!!!

## NOTES

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- i. This is not 100% necessary, but sure makes making consistent patties easier. I did not have one of these my first go around with this burger
- ii. The pre-cut wax paper squares make things much easier
- iii. This makes the beef less likely to stick to your fingers

PICTURES













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## POPPERS !!!

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## OG POPPERS

Well, now that I have a whole new section in my book o’ recipes for poppers, let’s go back to the first one. After a bunch of research (i.e. poking around on the ol’ interwebs), I based this mostly on Diva Q’s recipe in her book, **Divia Q’s Barbeque**. Damn they were good AND they opened up a whole new multiverse of food exploration

### INGREDIENTS

<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
1	lb	Jalapeno Peppers
1 - 2	16 oz. Pack	Regular Cut Bacon
1	8 oz. Pack	Cream Cheese
1/2	Cup	Shredded Parmesan
1/2	Cup	Shredded Mozzarella
1/2	Cup	Shredded Cheddar
1	-----	Sweet Onion
2 ½	TSP	Tabasco
1	TSP	Paprika
2	TSP	Ground, Smoked Thai Chili Peppers
1	Clove	Garlic

Thai (Bird / Vietnamese) chili peppers... Probably not going to find them your general run of the mill grocery store, but you will most definitely find them in your local international market. If you haven’t been to one, check them out; you will find a whole WORLD of stuff you have never seen

As far as the smoking part of the peppers, I’ll have to write something on that one of these days

My original listing for the garlic had “granulated” crossed out followed by “minced”. I think, but am not entirely sure, that I originally used some form of dried garlic

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## SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Food Saver (or similar vacuum sealer) [xi]
- Vacuum seal bags or bag rolls [xi]
- Traeger Pellet Grill with Mesquite Pellets[i]
- Copper Crispers [x]

---

## PREPARATION

---

- 1) Rinse the jalapenos and pat dry
- 2) Remove the stems, but be careful not to remove the stem root; if we do this, the filling will leak out!
- 3) Slice the jalapenos in half length-wise
- 4) Scope out the ribs and seeds with the 1/8 TSP metal measuring spoon and set aside. Make sure to NOT remove the stem base so that the filling will not drain out
- 5) Put jalapenos in fridge, uncovered, until needed later
- 6) Put the ribs and seeds in a separate container and put in the fridge. These will not be used for this recipe, but can be used for something else
- 7) Rinse, pat dry, then finely dice the onion
- 8) Measure out ½ cup of the onion and set aside. Put the rest in a Tupperware container in the fridge
- 9) Mince the garlic and set aside
- 10) Slice the cream cheese into thin strips
- 11) Pull the slices apart into bits and spread evenly along the bottom of a large glass bowl in a single layer
- 12) Spread the diced onion over cream cheese
- 13) Sprinkle shredded mozzarella over diced onion
- 14) Sprinkle shredded parmesan over mozzarella
- 15) Sprinkle shredded cheddar over parmesan
- 16) Sprinkle on garlic
- 17) Sprinkle on Tabasco
- 18) Sprinkle on ground smoked Thai chili peppers
- 19) Sprinkle on paprika
- 20) Gently mix everything with a wood spoon until well incorporated
- 21) Pull the Traeger out on your deck and fill with your pellets of choice [vi]
- 22) Set the Trager to smoke with the lid open
- 23) Once you see smoke, close the lid and set to 250 deg. F
- 24) For each pepper half
  - a. Fill with the cheese mix so that it is mounded a little bit above the top of the pepper half
  - b. Wrap in bacon such that the entire pepper is wrapped with a single layer with overlapping edges. You don't want to be able to see the filling. If the bacon is too long for the pepper, fold the remaining length of bacon so that it lays on top of the popper
  - c. Place on Copper Crisper. DON'T CROWD THE PEPPERS!

- 25) If you are not going to make all the poppers, vacuum seal the left overs and put in freezer. Tupperware and wax paper is fine if you are going to make the rest in the next day or so
- 26) Place the poppers in the Traeger
- 27) Cook until the bacon is nice and crispy, about 2 ½ hours. Start checking around the 2 hour mark to see how they are doing, but remember, “If you’re looking, you ain’t cooking”
- 28) Pull the poppers inside and let rest for at least 5 minutes
- 29) Plate and...
- 30) ENJOY!!!

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### NOTES

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- i. The vacuum sealer is GREAT for storing leftover bacon. Keeps it much fresher with no gray development like you might get in a regular old zip top bag
- ii. If you don’t have a Traeger or the like, you can use the oven. You will, however, miss out on that great smoke flavor.
- iii. Are these really necessary? Well, no, but I bought a couple a while back and found them very useful for this type of stuff. A half sheet cooling rack in a half sheet pan will work just as well
- iv. Either Mesquite or Hickory works well here

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### PICTURES

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No pictures yet!!!

## RIVER COUNTRY POPPERS

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This one was inspired by Wayne at the River Country Store in Shannondale, WV. I don't recall exactly how it came about, but he told me about sliced jalapenos over peanut butter on Ritz crackers. I tried it and it was one of the most surreal taste experiences that I can recall. At some time after that I said to myself, "Self! Let's make poppers out of that!"

### INGREDIENTS

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<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
20	Cracker	Nabisco Original Saltines [i]
1	TBSP	Tabasco Sauce
1	TBSP	Worcestershire Sauce
1	Cup	Jif Creamy Peanut Butter
AR	N/A	Semi-Sweet Chocolate Chips
1.25	lb	Jalapenos [ii]
1 - 2	lb packs	Regular Cut Bacon [iii]

### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Food Saver (or similar vacuum sealer) [iv]
- Vacuum seal bags or bag rolls [iv]
- Grill / smoker with mesquite wood / pellets. [v]
- 1/8 TSP measuring spoon [vi]
- Copper Crisper [vii]

### PREPARATION

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- 1) Rinse the jalapenos and pat dry
- 2) Remove the stems, but be careful not to remove the stem root; if we do this, the filling will leak out!
- 3) Slice the jalapenos in half length-wise
- 4) Scope out the ribs and seeds with the 1/8 TSP measuring spoon and set aside. Make sure to NOT remove the stem base so that the filling will not drain out
- 5) Put jalapenos in fridge until needed later
- 6) Mince the ribs and seeds as fine a possible with a chef's knife and set aside.
- 7) Put the Saltines into a gallon Ziploc bag. Lightly crush with a rolling pin (NOT TOO FINE!!!).
- 8) Measure out 1 cup of the peanut butter and put in glass bowl
- 9) Mix in Worcestershire Sauce, Tabasco, and 4 TBSP lightly packed minced seeds and ribs a little bit at a time.
- 10) Mix in the lightly crushed saltines a little bit at a time.
- 11) Fill the jalapeno halves with the peanut butter mix .
- 12) Press in chocolate chips evenly across the jalapenos [viii].

- 13) Wrap the jalapenos in bacon across their entire length. One piece should be enough, but a little stretching may be required.
- 14) If you are not going to cook them now, vacuum seal and put in the freezer.
- 15) Heat smoker to 250 deg. F.
- 16) When the smoker reaches temperature, put the poppers on the copper crispers and put into the smoker.
- 17) Cook for about 2 ½ hours, checking occasionally, until the bacon is nice and crisp.
- 18) Let cool on the counter for about 5 minutes.
- 19) EAT AND ENJOY!!!

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### NOTES

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- i. This should be about a half sleeve.
- ii. Decent size jalapenos, but not too big! Maybe around 10 or so Jalapenos to the pound. It came out to 12 peppers for 1 lb 3.4 Oz.
- iii. Use regular cut bacon, about 16 slices to a pound. Thick cut bacon may not crisp up as nicely in the smoker. There will be some leftover bacon; I suggest vacuum sealing to maximize the storage time in the fridge.
- iv. Only really required if you plan on doing the prep work in advance or if you want to vacuum seal the leftover bacon. The poppers freeze great! Just let them thaw in the fridge overnight before throwing on the smoker.
- v. If you don't have this, the oven should be fine, but you won't get that "little bit of extra."
- vi. This is not really a common size, but is perfect for this task. If you don't have it, use whatever else that will let you get the ribs and seeds out without scraping out too much pepper.
- vii. Cooling racks and sheet pans will also work.
- viii. This is you main sweetness component. Add less for less sweetness or leave out completely. It is up to you!

PICTURES



















## SCOTTY POPPERS

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Why do I call these Scotty Poppers? Because Scotty gave me the tasty jalapenos I used in this recipe from his garden and the inspiration for the recipe came to me after I talked to him for a while about the River Country Poppers. Scotty is the MAN!

I have a couple of other popper ideas as well. I just may have to create a separate section for popper recipes!

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### INGREDIENTS

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#### BRINE

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<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
2	12 oz. Bottles	Sierra Nevada Pale Ale
2	TBSP	Kosher Salt
4	TBSP	Brown Sugar
4	TBSP	White Sugar
5	oz.	Tabasco Original
1	TSP	Rosemary
1	TSP	Thyme
1	TSP	Garlic Power
Several	N.U.	Bay Leaves

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#### SAUCE

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<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
8	TBSP	Land o' Lakes Salted Butter [i]
5	oz.	Tabasco Original
2	N.U.	Small limes
1	6 oz. can	Tomato Paste
2	Cloves	Garlic
AR	-----	Corn Starch

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THE POPPERS

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<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
1 1/2	Lbs	Jalapeno Peppers
1 - 2	16 oz. Pack	Regular Cut Bacon
4	Thighs	Bone-In, Skin-On Chicken Thighs
1	4 oz. container	Crumbled Blue Cheese

I don't know that I have a preference for Blue Cheese Brand, but for this round I used "Salemville Smokehaus Blue - Blue Cheese Crumbles". Quite tasty!

I do know that I like Kunzler bacon, with the Hormel Black Label being a close second

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SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Immersion blender
- Sous vide machine [v]
- Food Saver (or similar vacuum sealer) [v, xi]
- Vacuum seal bags or bag rolls [v, xi]
- Traeger Pellet Grill with Mesquite Pellets[i]
- Copper Crispers [x]

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PREPARATION

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BRINE

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Not much to this part...

- 1) Split the ingredients between (Qty. 2) 1 quart Pyrex measuring cups and mix with an immersion blender
- 2) Cover with plastic wrap or saucers and set aside until needed
- 3) If it will be a while, blend the brine again just before you add it to the chicken in the Sous Vide bags

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POPPERS – PART I

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- 1) Heat Sous Vide Machine 140 deg. F
- 2) Make (Qty. 2) 4-line vac seal bags [iv]
- 3) Add 2 chicken thighs to each bag
- 4) Split brine evenly between the two bags
- 5) OK... this next part might get a bit tricky... The goal is to vacuum seal the chicken thighs and brine with as little leftover air as possible WITHOUT sucking liquid into the vacuum sealer
  - a. Position the vacuum sealer near the edge of a counter
  - b. Squeeze out as much air as possible from the bag
  - c. Position the bag in the vacuum sealer so that it hangs over the edge of the counter [iv]
  - d. Pull a vacuum as long as possible until liquid just about reaches the vacuum sealer and trigger the seal function
  - e. After one minute, re-trigger the seal function
  - f. After one minute, pull the bag and wipe out any liquid between the top of the bag and the seal line
  - g. Reposition the bag to place a second seal just above the first one and trigger the seal function
  - h. After one minute, re-trigger the seal function
  - i. Place the bag o' chicken in the fridge
  - j. Repeat Steps 5a through 5h for the second bag
- 6) Once the Sous Vide machine has reach temperature, add both the bags o' chicken
- 7) Add additional water as required to cover the bags o' chicken [v]
- 8) When the Sous Vide machine temperature recovers, set a timer for
  - a. 4 hours for non-frozen chicken
  - b. 4 ½ hours for frozen chicken
- 9) About 2 hours out, take the Traeger out on your deck, fill with your pellets of choice, and set to smoke
- 10) Once you see smoke, close the lid and set to max temperature
- 11) Let it heat for at least 30 minutes, then set it to shutdown cycle
- 12) About 1 hour out, rinse the jalapenos and pat dry
- 13) Remove the stems, but be careful not to remove the stem root; if we do this, the filling will leak out!
- 14) Slice the jalapenos in half length-wise
- 15) Scope out the ribs and seeds with the 1/8 TSP metal measuring spoon and set aside. Make sure to NOT remove the stem base so that the filling will not drain out
- 16) Put jalapenos in fridge, uncovered, until needed later
- 17) Put the ribs and seeds in a separate container and put in the fridge. These will not be used for this recipe, but can be used for something else
- 18) When timer goes off, pull the Sous Vide chicken and drain through fine mesh strainer on top of a quart measuring cups
- 19) Allow chicken to cool until it can be handled with bare hands



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## SAUCE

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About ½ hour from the Sous Vide chicken being done (or after you have finished slicing the jalapenos)

- 1) Chop / mince the garlic
- 2) Add butter to a small sauce pan and melt over low heat
- 3) Add the rest of the ingredients and whisk [ii]
- 4) Use a hand-held immersion mixer after the initial mixing to get the ingredients REALLY integrated
- 5) Reduce heat to VERY low
- 6) Continue to heat on VERY low for a while (or when you're are ready to eat) whisking occasionally [iii]
- 7) If you want the sauce a little, thicker, stir in corn starch ½ TSP at a time

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## POPPERS – PART II

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- 1) Once chicken has cooled, pour the drained chicken juice into 1 quart Ball jars and put in fridge. This will not be used in the recipe, but might be useful later.
- 2) Set the Traeger to smoke
- 3) Once you see smoke, close the lid and set to 250 deg. F
- 4) Remove the skin and bone from the chicken
- 5) Save the skin, but discard the bone
- 6) Dice the chicken into fine pieces, just this side short of a mince, and place in a glass bowl
- 7) Fold in the blue cheese crumbles
- 8) Fold in the sauce 2 TBSP at a time until the mixture gives a nice bite and the texture of the mix is a little on the wet side, about 6 TBSP total [ix]
- 9) Cover the sauce and remove heat
- 10) For each pepper half
  - a. Fill with the chicken mix so that it is mounded a little bit above the top of the pepper half
  - b. Wrap in bacon such that the entire pepper is wrapped with a single layer with overlapping edges. You don't want to be able to see the filling. This may take only a ½ piece of bacon for small peppers, but up to 1 entire piece of bacon for large peppers. Start with an entire piece and trim as required. The scraps can either be used to fill gaps in bacon coverage or saved for another project
  - c. Place on Copper Crisper. DON'T CROWD THE PEPPERS!
- 11) If you are not going to make all the poppers, vacuum seal the left overs and put in freezer. Tupperware and wax paper is fine if you are going to make the rest in the next day or so
- 12) Place the poppers in the Traeger
- 13) Cook until the bacon is nice and crispy, about 2 ½ hours. Start checking around the 2 hour mark to see how they are doing, but remember, "If you're looking, you ain't cooking"
  - a. Also at the 2 hour mark, put the heat back on sauce at VERY low

- 14) Pull the poppers inside and let rest for 5 minutes
- 15) Vacuum seal leftover bacon and stick in the fridge
- 16) Plate and top with extra sauce from the pot or put the sauce on the side
- 17) ENJOY!!!

## NOTES

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- i. I have never really given thought to unsalted vs salted butter until recently. Butter is butter right? Well, turns out that the amount of salt in salted butter may vary between brands (which is why I specified Land o' Lakes for this one). It is much easier to control the salt levels when you don't have to guess.
- ii. Make sure you use a Teflon whisk if you are using non-stick cookware.
- iii. If it becomes too separated, use the immersion mixer as needed.
- iv. If you don't have a Traeger or the like, you can use the oven. You will, however, miss out on that great smoke flavor.
- v. Is the Sous Vide machine really necessary? I think in this case yes. We are essentially using it to pasteurize the chicken thighs at a lower temperature so that when we put the poppers in the smoker, the chicken does not overcook.
- vi. Make double seals to be sure!
- vii. Make sure you clamp down and lock the vacuum sealer before you let go of the bag!!!
- viii. Don't go over the max fill line!
- ix. Adjust to taste, but you don't want it to be too wet or too dry
- x. Are these really necessary? Well, no, but I bought a couple a while back and found them very useful for this type of stuff. A half sheet cooling rack in a half sheet pan should work just as well
- xi. The vacuum sealer is GREAT for storing leftover bacon. Keeps it much fresher with no gray development like you might get in a regular old zip top bag

PICTURES

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BRINE

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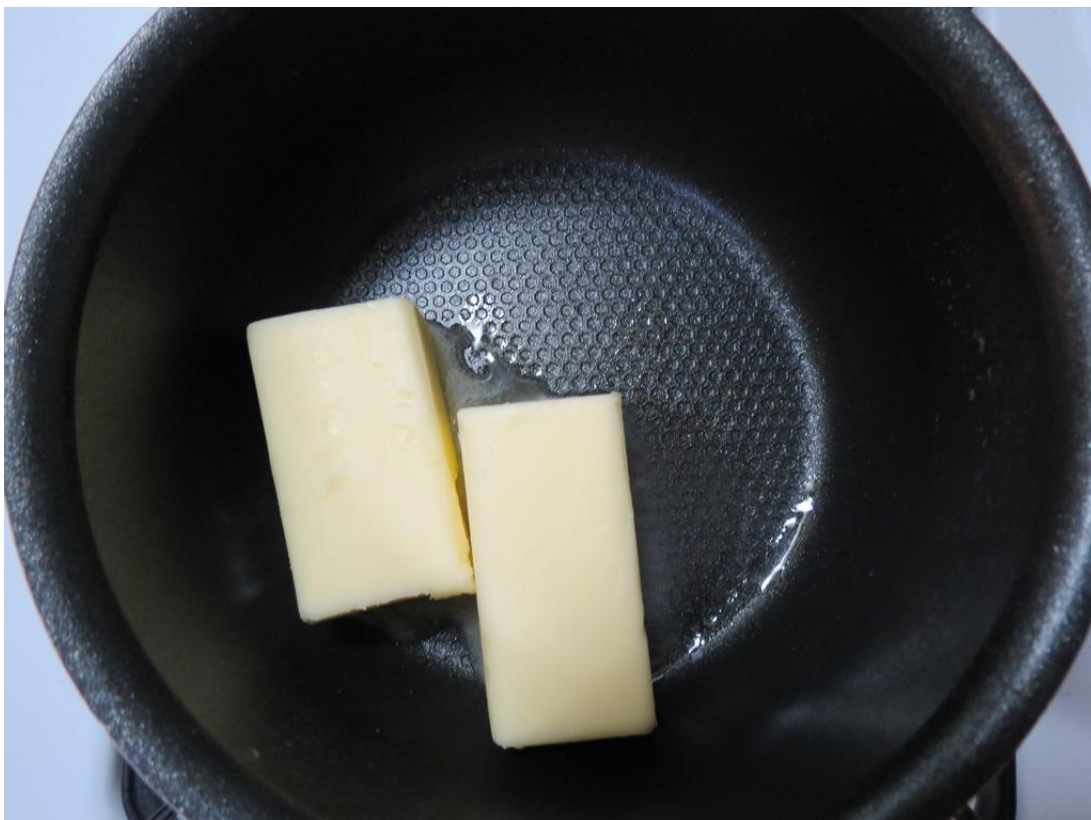




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SAUCE

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POPPERS

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No pictures of this part yet!

## MD POPPERS

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Ahh... Another popper variant. This was one of the other inspirations that came to me after I talked to Scotty for a while about the River Country Poppers. The other bit of it is that it gave me the chance to use my canned crab meat which I have been meaning to do for a while. Was it good? YES IT WAS!!!

A quick note about the canned crab meat... It was not quite what I expected. I was thinking that I would get something closer to lump meat, but it was more like a crab puree or pate. I guess it was all the leftover stuff. Still not too shabby! Next time I go to the store, I am going to have to do a price comparison between this stuff and the lump crab meat

## INGREDIENTS

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<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
-----	-----	Ingredients for Andrew Zimmern's "Baltimore-Style Crab Cakes" recipe from <a href="http://www.foodandwine.com">www.foodandwine.com</a> (June 2012)
3	6 oz. cans	Canned Crab Meat
1 1/2	Lbs	Jalapeno Peppers
1 - 2	16 oz. Pack	Regular Cut Bacon

The canned crab meat replaces the lumped crab meat in the Andrew Zimmern crab cake recipe, but feel free to use the good stuff, although large lumps may be more difficult to get into the jalapenos

The larger the jalapeno peppers, the better. It is much easier to put stuff in them!

I like Kunzler bacon, with the Hormel Black Label being a close second

## SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Food Saver (or similar vacuum sealer) [xi]
- Vacuum seal bags or bag rolls [xi]
- Traeger Pellet Grill with Mesquite Pellets[i]
- Copper Crispers [x]

## PREPARATION

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- 1) Pull the Traeger out on your deck, fill with your pellets of choice, and set to smoke
- 2) Once you see smoke, close the lid and set to max temperature
- 3) Let it heat for at least 30 minutes, then set it to shutdown cycle
- 4) Rinse the jalapenos and pat dry

- 5) Remove the stems, but be careful not to remove the stem root; if we do this, the filling will leak out!
- 6) Slice the jalapenos in half length-wise
- 7) Scope out the ribs and seeds with the 1/8 TSP metal measuring spoon and set aside. Make sure to NOT remove the stem base so that the filling will not drain out
- 8) Put jalapenos in fridge, uncovered, until needed later
- 9) Put the ribs and seeds in a separate container and put in the fridge. These will not be used for this recipe, but can be used for something else
- 10) Drain the 3 cans of crab meat through metal strainers into 1 quart measuring cups. Cover with saucers
- 11) Prepare crab cake mix as per Baltimore Style Crab Cakes Andrew Zimmern's "Baltimore-Style Crab Cakes" recipe from [www.foodandwine.com](http://www.foodandwine.com) (June 2012) with the following exceptions
  - a. Canned crab meat in place of the lump crab meat
  - b. Up the Tabasco up to 2 TSP
  - c. You can skip the chill for 1 hour in the fridge step if time is running short
- 12) Set the Traeger to smoke with the lid open
- 13) Once you see smoke, close the lid and set to 250 deg. F
- 14) For each pepper half
  - a. Fill with the crab cake mix so that it is mounded a little bit above the top of the pepper half
  - b. Wrap in bacon such that the entire pepper is wrapped with a single layer with overlapping edges. You don't want to be able to see the filling. This may take only a 1/2 piece of bacon for small peppers, but up to 1 entire piece of bacon for large peppers. Start with an entire piece and trim as required. The scraps can either be used to fill gaps in bacon coverage or saved for another project
  - c. Place on Copper Crisper. DON'T CROWD THE PEPPERS!
- 15) If you are not going to make all the poppers, vacuum seal the left overs and put in freezer. Tupperware and wax paper is fine if you are going to make the rest in the next day or so
- 16) Place the poppers in the Traeger
- 17) Cook until the bacon is nice and crispy, about 2 1/2 hours. Start checking around the 2 hour mark to see how they are doing, but remember, "If you're looking, you ain't cooking"
  - a. Also at the 2 hour mark, put the heat back on sauce at VERY low
- 18) Pull the poppers inside and let rest for at least 5 minutes
- 19) Vacuum seal leftover bacon and stick in the fridge
- 20) ENJOY!!!

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### NOTES

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- i. The vacuum sealer is GREAT for storing leftover bacon. Keeps it much fresher with no gray development like you might get in a regular old zip top bag
- ii. If you don't have a Traeger or the like, you can use the oven. You will, however, miss out on that great smoke flavor.
- iii. Are these really necessary? Well, no, but I bought a couple a while back and found them very useful for this type of stuff. A half sheet cooling rack in a half sheet pan should work just as well

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### PICTURES

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No pictures yet!

## STEAK AND CHEESE POPPERS (WIP)

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Well, that tears it. This is my fourth poppers recipe (not to mention that I have a few more on deck), so I guess I have to make a section dedicated to poppers. This one is good, very good, but not quite where I want it to be, so I am classifying it as a WIP. I also need to work on quantities. I am writing this as I made it, but here are some ideas for next time

- After dice the steak, give the steak cubes a final quick sear to get a bit more of that tasty maillard reaction goodness
- Bump up the steak cubes from 1 cup to 2 cups
- Change jalapenos from by weight to number of poppers (e.g. 16 good size jalapeno peppers)
- Microplane the garlic. No particular reason, I just want to give it a try

### INGREDIENTS

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<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
1 1/2	Lbs	Jalapeno Peppers
2	16 oz. Pack	Regular Cut Bacon
1	4 oz. Container	Crumbled Blue Cheese
1	8 oz. Pack	Cream Cheese
1	-----	Sweet Onion
2	Cloves	Garlic
2	TSP	Black Pepper
1/2	TSP	Kosher Salt
1	-----	London Broil Steak
AR	-----	Grapeseed Oil (or any neutral oil with a high smoke point)

I used "Salemville Smokehaus Blue - Blue Cheese Crumbles" again. I have not done a comparison across brands, but I really like this one. Quite tasty!

I like Kunzler bacon, with the Hormel Black Label being a close second

Why London broil for the steak? I wanted something with not too high of a fat content because I already have plenty from the cheese and such

2 cloves makes it pretty garlicy. If that is not your thing, bump it down to 1

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## SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Food Saver (or similar vacuum sealer) [xi]
- Vacuum seal bags or bag rolls [xi]
- Traeger Pellet Grill with Mesquite Pellets[i]
- Copper Crispers [x]

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## PREPARATION

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- 1) Rinse the jalapenos and pat dry
- 2) Remove the stems, but be careful not to remove the stem root; if we do this, the filling will leak out!
- 3) Slice the jalapenos in half length-wise
- 4) Scope out the ribs and seeds with the 1/8 TSP metal measuring spoon and set aside. Make sure to NOT remove the stem base so that the filling will not drain out
- 5) Put jalapenos in fridge, uncovered, until needed later
- 6) Put the ribs and seeds in a separate container and put in the fridge. These will not be used for this recipe, but can be used for something else
- 7) Heat your trusty cast iron pan on VERY HI until rippin' hot (about 5 – 10 minutes) [iv]
- 8) Pat the london broil dry with paper towels
- 9) Slice the london broil in half with the grain
- 10) Apply oil all over both pieces of steak and set one aside
- 11) Sear the steak 15 seconds
- 12) Flip and sear for 15 seconds
- 13) Repeat steps 11 and 12 until you have a nice crust
- 14) Sear the edge of the steak 15 seconds
- 15) Flip to the next edge and sear for 15 seconds
- 16) Repeat steps 14 and 15 for all edges, except for the cut side, until you have a nice crust
- 17) Repeat steps 11 – 16 for the second half of the London broil
- 18) Slice the steak into ~1/4 slices parallel to the first cut
- 19) Sear the slices in batches (DON'T CROWD) flipping every 15 seconds until you have a nice crust. De-gunk the pan and add oil as necessary
- 20) Dice the steak slices into ¼ cubes
- 21) Measure out 1 cup of the diced steak and set aside. Put the rest in a Tupperware container in the fridge
- 22) Rinse, pat dry, then finely dice the onion [v]
- 23) Measure out ½ cup of the onion and set aside. Put the rest in a Tupperware container in the fridge
- 24) Mince the garlic and set aside
- 25) Slice the cream cheese into thin strips
- 26) Pull the slices apart into bits and spread evenly along the bottom of a large glass bowl in a single layer
- 27) Spread the steak cubes over the cream cheese
- 28) Spread the diced onion over the steak

- 29) Spread the blue cheese crumbles over the onion
- 30) Sprinkle over the minced garlic
- 31) Sprinkle over the salt and pepper
- 32) Gently mix everything with a wood spoon until well incorporated
- 33) Pull the Traeger out on your deck and fill with your pellets of choice [vi]
- 34) Set the Traeger to smoke with the lid open
- 35) Once you see smoke, close the lid and set to 250 deg. F
- 36) For each pepper half
  - a. Fill with the steak and cheese mix so that it is mounded a little bit above the top of the pepper half
  - b. Wrap in bacon such that the entire pepper is wrapped with a single layer with overlapping edges. You don't want to be able to see the filling. If the bacon is too long for the pepper, fold the remaining length of bacon so that it lays on top of the popper
  - c. Place on Copper Crisper. DON'T CROWD THE PEPPERS!
- 37) If you are not going to make all the poppers, vacuum seal the left overs and put in freezer. Tupperware and wax paper is fine if you are going to make the rest in the next day or so
- 38) Place the poppers in the Traeger
- 39) Cook until the bacon is nice and crispy, about 2 ½ hours. Start checking around the 2 hour mark to see how they are doing, but remember, "If you're looking, you ain't cooking"
- 40) Pull the poppers inside and let rest for at least 5 minutes
- 41) Plate and...
- 42) ENJOY!!!

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### NOTES

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- i. The vacuum sealer is GREAT for storing leftover bacon. Keeps it much fresher with no gray development like you might get in a regular old zip top bag
- ii. If you don't have a Traeger or the like, you can use the oven. You will, however, miss out on that great smoke flavor.
- iii. Are these really necessary? Well, no, but I bought a couple a while back and found them very useful for this type of stuff. A half sheet cooling rack in a half sheet pan will work just as well
- iv. Make sure your exhaust fans are on and windows are open (if possible)
- v. I tried the dicing technique that you see all over the internet these days. I need to work on this a bit, but it seemed to work well
- vi. I started with Mesquite, but the hopper was running low, so I topped it off with Hickory

PICTURES

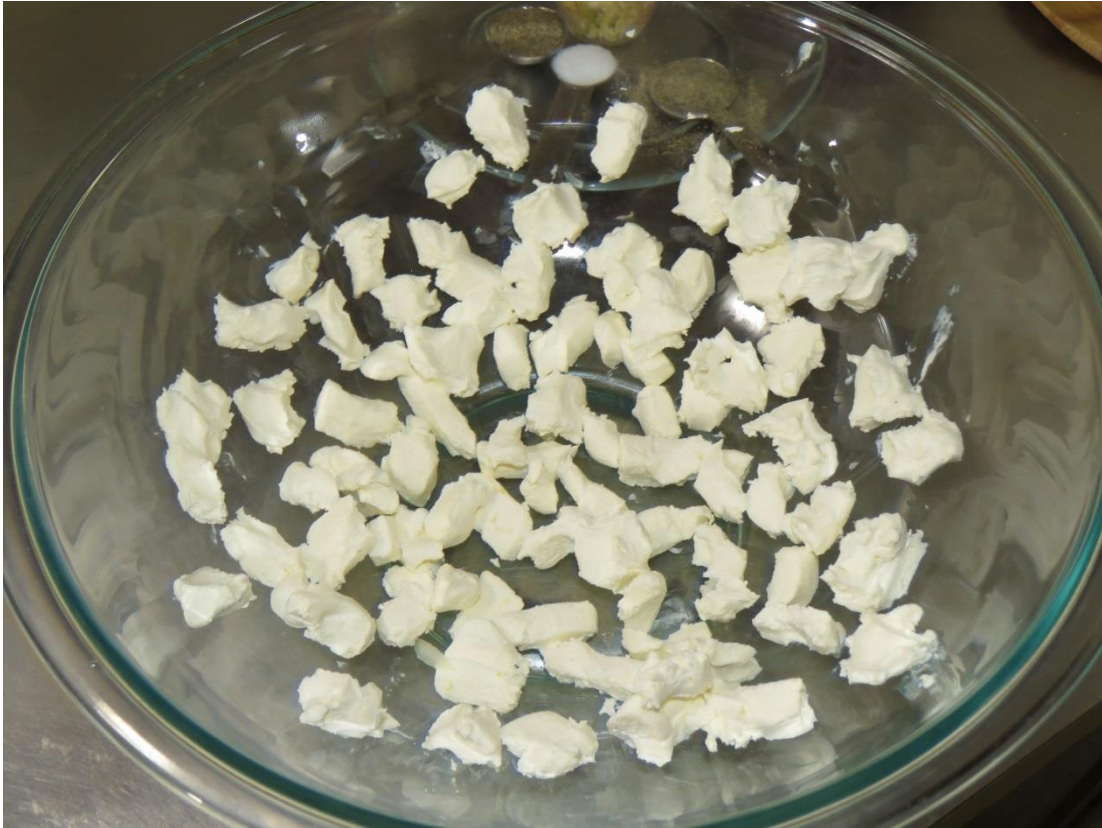
















## VEGAN POPPERS (WIP)

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This has got to be one of the weirdest things I have ever made. Born of my work with poppers (obviously), I saw this as a challenge. After all, all of my other poppers rely heavily on bacon and going fully vegan means that I can't use cheese either. I am definitely going to have to resurrect my "Stoopedest Thing I Ever Made" series

Anyways, as with the Vegan "Bacon", there are still some kinks to work out, so I am keeping this as a Work In Progress for now. The recipe is my current best guess and may not 100% sync up with the pictures

Full disclosure with this one: All in all, it is pretty time intensive, probably the better part of a day. Is it worth it? Yes. Are they tasty even if you aren't vegan? Absolutely!

### INGREDIENTS

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<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
1	Batch	Black Bean Salsa
1	Batch	Vegan "Bacon"
4	Batch	Dehydrated Portabella Mushrooms
1	TSP	Accent
16	-----	Good Sized Jalapenos

Recipes for everything can be found in this book.

Side note about jalapenos: Just when you think they will be in they are not. Plan ahead!!!

What is Accent? Check the label (it only has one ingredient)

### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Coffee / Spice Grinder [i]
- Food Saver (or similar vacuum sealer) [ii]
- Vacuum seal bags or bag rolls [ii]
- Traeger Pellet Grill with Mesquite Pellets[iii]
- Copper Crispers [iv]
- See recipes for any other special equipment

### PREPARATION

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#### A FEW HOURS OR THE DAY BEFORE

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- 1) Make black bean salsa
- 2) Make vegan "bacon" up through Part I

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POPPER TIME!!!

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- 1) Rinse the jalapenos and pat dry
- 2) Remove the stems, but be careful not to remove the stem root; if we do this, the filling will leak out!
- 3) Slice the jalapenos in half length-wise
- 4) Scope out the ribs and seeds with the 1/8 TSP metal measuring spoon and set aside. Make sure to NOT remove the stem base so that the filling will not drain out
- 5) Put jalapenos in fridge, uncovered, until needed later
- 6) Rough cut the dehydrated mushrooms into smallish bits
- 7) Grind the dehydrated mushrooms in the spice grinder into a fine powder and set aside
- 8) Pull the Traeger out on your deck and fill with your pellets of choice [v]
- 9) Set the Traeger to smoke with the lid open
- 10) Once you see smoke, close the lid and set to 250 deg. F
- 11) Pull the salsa from the fridge and give a quick mix with a wood spoon
- 12) Put the salsa into the food processor and sprinkle over some of the dehydrated mushrooms and the Accent
- 13) Pulse the food processor for about 1 second
- 14) Sprinkle in more dehydrated mushroom and re-arrange with a wood spoon
- 15) Repeat steps 13 and 14 until you achieve a coarse mixture
- 16) Put the mixture into a glass bowl and give it a stir with a wood spoon
- 17) If there is any leftover dehydrated mushroom, mix it in with a wood spoon until evenly incorporated
- 18) Cover loosely with plastic wrap until needed
- 19) Pull the "bacon" out and give it a gentle stir with a wood spoon
- 20) Pull a strip of "bacon" from the marinade and gently shake to let excess marinade drip back off into bowl [vi]
- 21) Unfold and spread the "bacon" on cooling racks in sheet pans to drain
- 22) Cover the bottom of a 9x13 glass pan with corn starch
- 23) For each pepper half
  - a. Fill with the coarse ground salsa mix so that it is mounded a little bit above the top of the pepper half
  - b. Coat on both sides with corn starch [vii]
  - c. Wrap in "bacon" such that the entire pepper is wrapped with a single layer with overlapping edges. You don't want to be able to see the filling. If the "bacon" is too short, wrap in another piece. If the "bacon" is too long for the pepper, fold the remaining length of "bacon" so that it lays on top of the popper
  - d. Place on Copper Crisper. DON'T CROWD THE PEPPERS!
- 24) If you are not going to make all the poppers, vacuum seal the left overs and put in freezer. Tupperware and wax paper is fine if you are going to make the rest in the next day or so
- 25) Place the poppers in the Traeger for 2 ½ hours
- 26) About ½ hour out, heat oven to 450 deg. F
- 27) At the end of 2 ½ hours, pull the poppers inside and place in the oven



- 28) Cook until the “bacon” is nice and crispy. Check in intervals of 5 minutes. Don’t let them burn!!!
- 29) Pull from the oven and let sit for 5 minutes
- 30) Plate and...
- 31) ENJOY!!!

### NOTES

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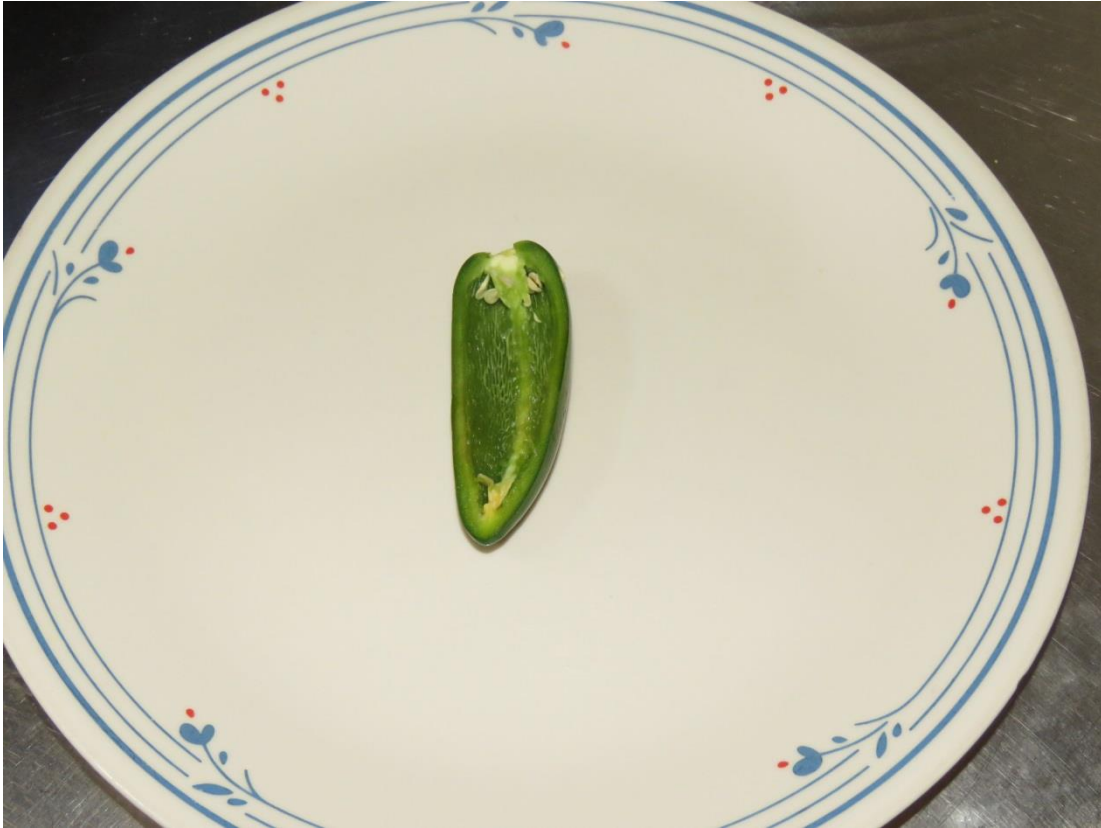
- i. These things are great and pretty cheap. A LOT easier than a mortar and pestle.
- ii. The vacuum sealer is GREAT for storing leftovers
- iii. If you don’t have a Traeger or the like, you can use the oven. You will, however, miss out on that great smoke flavor.
- iv. Are these really necessary? Well, no, but I bought a couple a while back and found them very useful for this type of stuff. A half sheet cooling rack in a half sheet pan will work just as well
- v. Either Mesquite or Hickory works well here
- vi. If you pull one of the leftover “thick” pieces, set it aside; we only want the thin pieces here
- vii. Add additional cornstarch as required

PICTURES

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STUFF I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO  
PUT YET

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## SPAMSHI

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If you read enough of the stuff I make, you'll soon realize that a rather large proportion of them involve SPAM. This is one of those items that I make way too infrequently. The original inspiration is lost in the mists of time, but it probably had something to do with my SPAM fascination.

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### INGREDIENTS

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### WHAT I BOUGHT

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<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
1	12 oz. can	Original SPAM
1	8 oz. block	Sharp Cheddar
1	N.U.	Large Vidalia Onion
1	Pack	Sushi Nori (Seaweed)
1	2 lb. Bag	Sushi Rice
1	N.U.	English Cucumber
2	1.5 oz. Tube	Japanese Style Wasabi (Well, it was actually "Wasabi Style Paste")
1	10 oz. Bottle	Rice Vinegar
1	16.9 oz. Bottle	Soy Sauce
1	22.2 oz. Bottle	Pure Sesame Oil
1	330 ml Bottle	Saki
1	4 lb. Bag	Sugar
1	Gallon	Distilled Water



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### WHAT I USED

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<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
A Few	Strips	Original SPAM
A Few	Strips	Sharp Cheddar
A Few	Strips	Vidalia Onion
3	Sheets	Sheets of the Sushi Nori (Seaweed)
3	Rice Cooker Cups	Sushi Rice
A Few	Strips	English Cucumber
A Few	Dollops	Japanese Style Wasabi
1/4	Cup	Rice Vinegar
1 ½	Cup	Soy Sauce
1 ½	Cup	Pure Sesame Oil
2	TBSP	Saki
2	TBSP	Sugar
A Few	Cups	Distilled Water

You'll notice that I split the ingredients into "What I Bought" and "What I Used" tables. I really need to figure out the right amount of SPAMshi to make to maximize the use of ingredients. I think making more sushi rice would allow me to use more of the other ingredients, but on the third hand, anything that is left over can be used in other dishes.

One rice cooker cup is about 180 ml.

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### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- SPAM Brand SPAM Slicer
- Immersion blender [ii]
- Rice Cooker
- Bamboo Sushi Rolling Mat

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### PREPARATION

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#### THE NIGHT BEFORE

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- 1) Slice the SPAM in 3/8 inch strips. I used my SPAM Slicer for this! [i]
- 2) Arrange the SPAM strips in the bottom of a Tupperware container with about 3/8 inches between each strip. Start a second layer with the strips placed orthogonally to the first layer. Repeat for the rest of the SPAM strips.
- 3) Mix the sesame oil, soy sauce, and sugar with an immersion blender and pour over the SPAM.
- 4) Close the Tupperware container and put in the fridge overnight. For whatever reason, I picked one of my Tupperware containers for which I did not have a lid. I

used a couple layers of plastic wrap secured with string and a smaller Tupperware container filled with water to weigh it down.

---

THE DAY OF, ABOUT 3 HOURS BEFORE SERVING

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- 1) Prepare the sushi rice as per Hensberger, Beth, **The Ultimate Rice Cooker Cookbook**, ISBN 1-55832-202-7.
- 2) Spread out a bamboo rolling mat on your work surface and place a sheet of nori on it, shiny side down.
- 3) Using two forks, spread a layer rice on the bottom two-thirds of the nori.
- 4) Create a shallow (not all the way down to the nori) divit in the rice about 1 inch up from the bottom of the nori.
- 5) Place a single row of strips of SPAM, end-to-end, in the divit.
- 6) Place a single row of strips of cheese [v], end-to-end, next to the SPAM.
- 7) Place a strip of english cucumber (one will probably reach across the entire sheet of nori) next to the cheese.
- 8) Place a single row of strips of onion, end-to-end, next to the english cucumber. You may have to score the onion strips to allow them to lay flat.
- 9) Form the roll by rolling up the bamboo mat. Squeeze lightly as you roll [iii].
- 10) Slice the SPAMshi to your desired thickness. I think I was doing a little over an inch. [vi]
- 11) Serve with Wasabi [iv] and a small dish of soy sauce for dipping.
- 12) ENJOY!

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NOTES

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- i. You can get these at the store.spam.com
- ii. If you don't have one of these, no big deal. Just use a whisk until the one you order online comes in.
- iii. Roll it somewhat tight, but not too tight.
- iv. The Wasabi was HOT! I definitely overdid it the first time or two. At least my sinuses are clear!
- v. I wasn't quite sure about the cheese. I went back and forth between that and avocado, but I am really glad I settled on the cheese.
- vi. Keep you knife somewhat wet (and sharp, of course!) to make slicing the SPAMshi easier.

PICTURES

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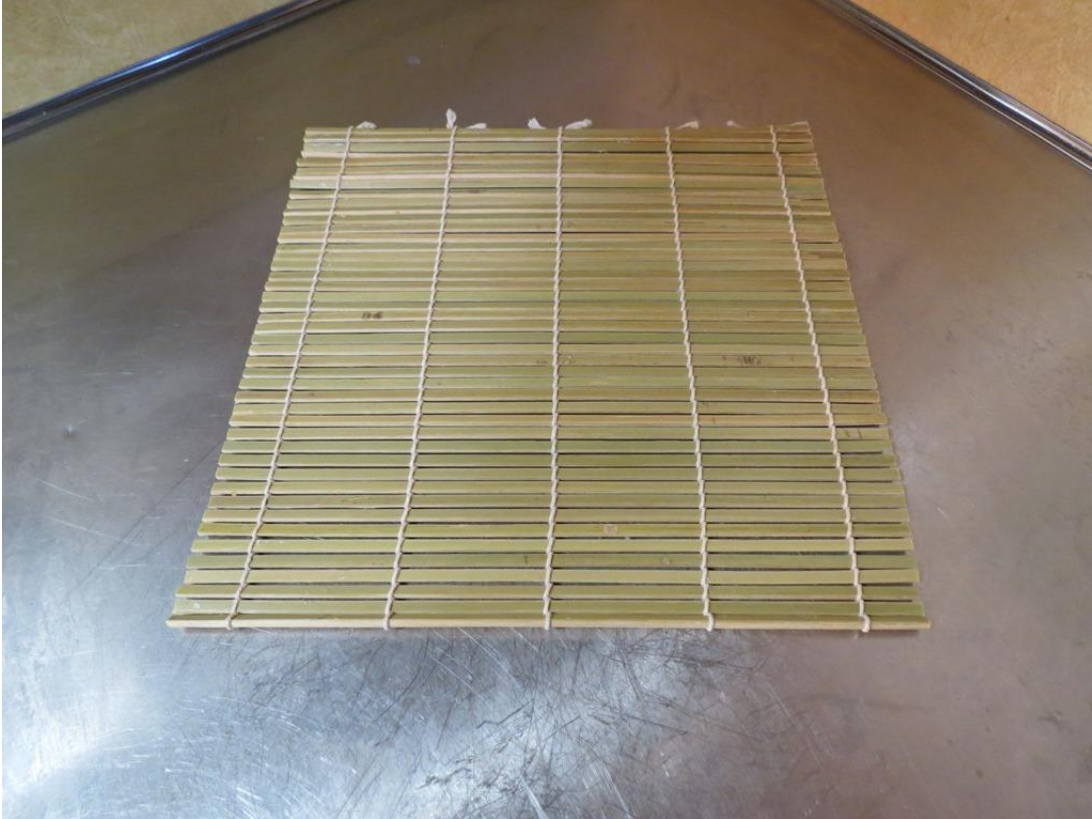




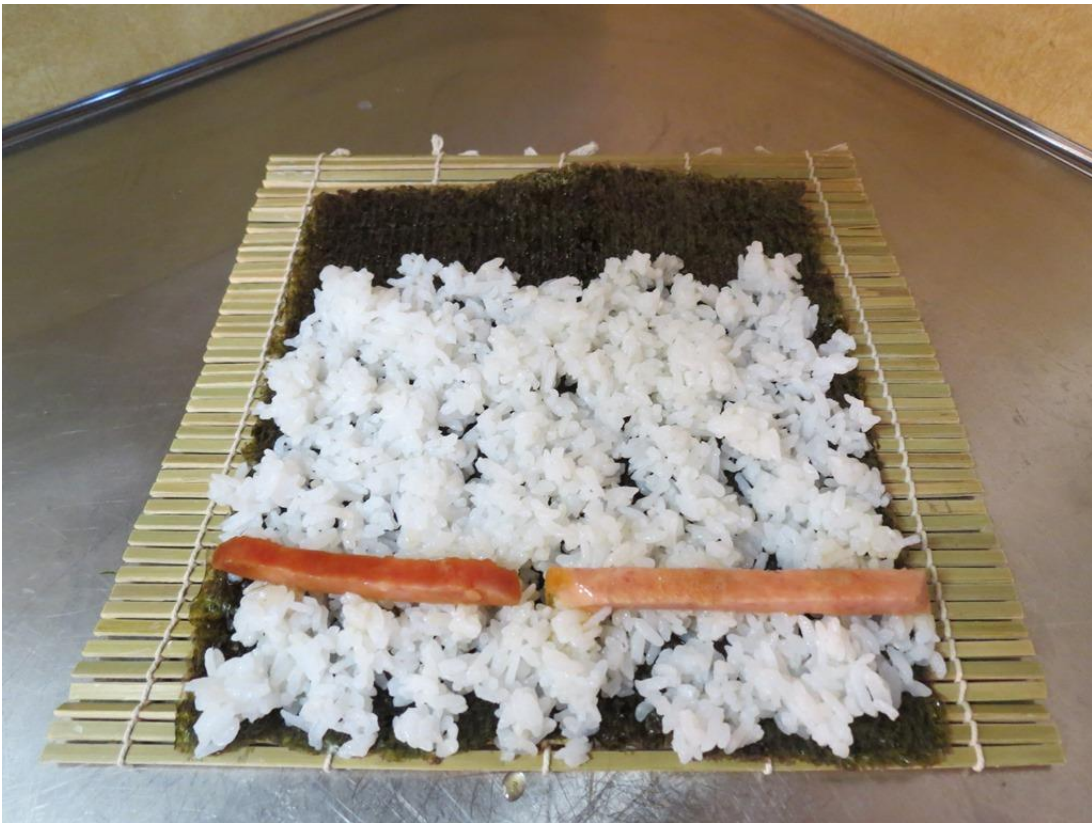


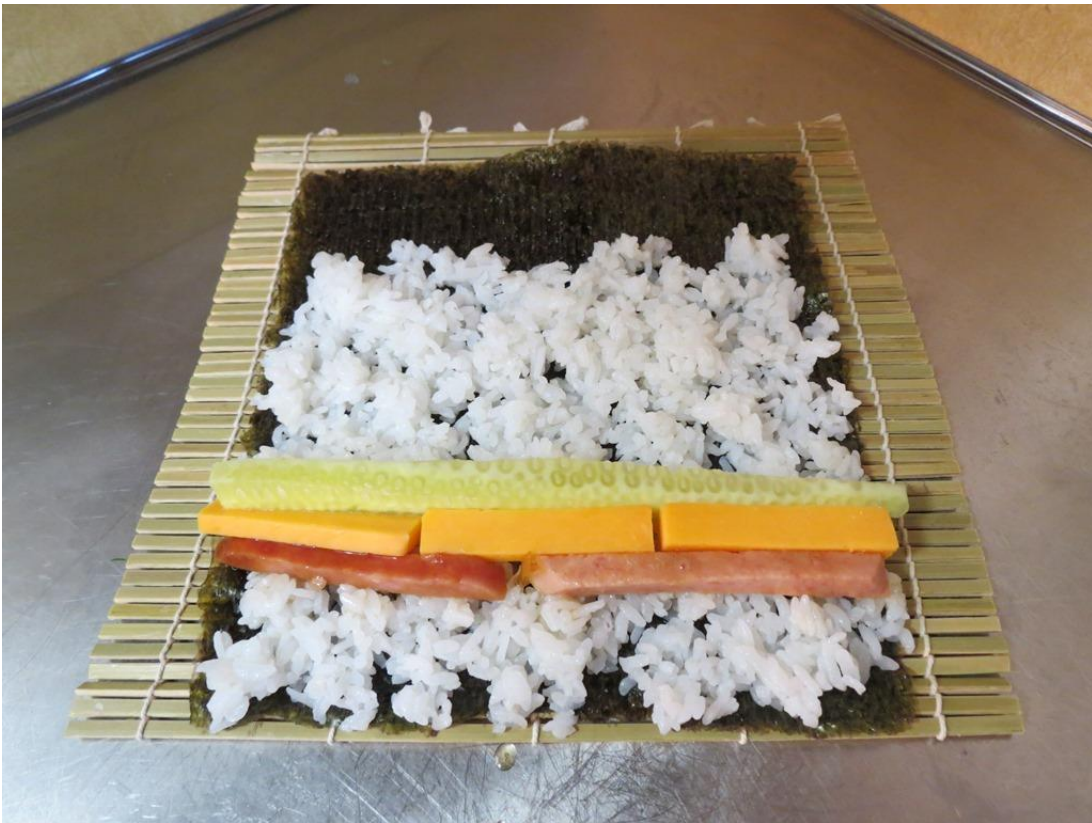


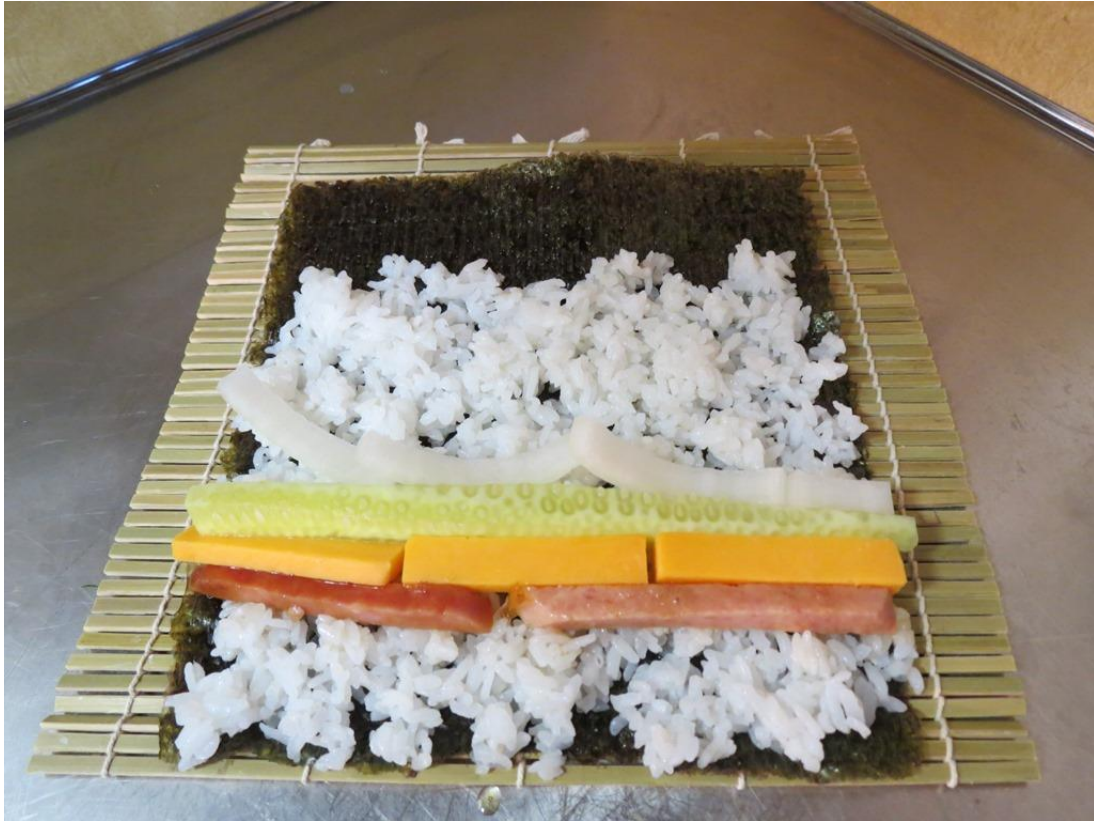
















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## OLD MAN'S CHILI

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One of my early, early favourites, this one comes from sometime around 2003 - 2005. I MIGHT have my original recipe somewhere in a box. This was actually quite well received the last time I served it to gen pop, although it was noted as being "hot". The last version of the recipe I found, but not the ORIGINAL original version, called for mixing 1/2 package of cooked spaghetti into the chili. I don't remember why... I did not do it this time, partly because I was too lazy and partly because it did not feel right now. That version also called for mixing the shredded cheddar into the chili. I did not do that this time either; I just sprinkled it on top when I served the chili. I REALLY need to make this again soon.

Side Note: At one point, I tried fermenting the kidney beans first, but, at best, I don't think it really added anything. I might revisit that at some point.

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### INGREDIENTS

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<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
16	oz.	Dried Kidney Beans
3	-----	Medium Onions
1	-----	Large Green Pepper
1	-----	Large Red Pepper
1	-----	Large Yellow Pepper
1	-----	Large Orange Pepper
~ 2.5	lb	Chuck Roast
8	cloves	Garlic
1	16 oz. can	Tomato Sauce
1	6 oz. can	Tomato Paste
4	TBSP	Honey
2	TBSP	White Vinegar
1	oz.	Unsweetened Chocolate
1	TBSP	Tabasco Original
2	cups	Shredded Cheddar Cheese
2	TSP	Cayenne Pepper
2	TSP	Black Pepper
1	TSP	Cummin
3	TBSP	Chili Power
1	lb.	Hormel Black Label Original

Typically I use sweet or Vidalia onions, but if you want a bit more bite, feel free to substitute yellow or even red onions.

In regards to the chuck roast, I really like how it works in this chili. I would not mind experimenting with another cut of meat at some point. Short ribs come to mind...

Tomato sauce... this was written WAY before I started poking around with red sauce.  
Hmmm...

Bacon... BACON!!! So many brands and types to choose from these days. My current fav is  
Kunzler.

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### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Crock Pot [i]

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### PREPARATION

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#### 2 NIGHTS BEFORE

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- 1) Sort the kidney beans. Remove rocks, debris, weird beans, etc.
- 2) Rinse with cold water [ii]
- 3) Place in glass bowl and cover with water [ii]
- 4) Cover with cheese cloth or loosely with plastic wrap and let sit overnight (at least 12 hours)

---

#### NIGHT BEFORE

---

- 1) Chop up the veggies (except for one onion) and mix in a glass bowl with a wood spoon
- 2) Grate the unsweetened chocolate
- 3) Add the tomato sauce, tomato paste, honey, vinegar, grated chocolate, Tabasco sauce, cayenne pepper, black pepper, cumin, chili pepper to the veggies and mix with a wood spoon
- 4) Cover the veggie mix with cheese cloth and set aside
- 5) Rinse the kidney beans and put in a pot with 6 cups of water [ii]. Cover and bring to a boil
- 6) Reduce heat to simmer and cook to your desired tenderness; for me this was 2 to 2 1/2 hours
- 7) Drain the kidney beans and mix into the veggies with a wood spoon
- 8) Slice the chuck roast into bits; somewhere between a rough cut and grind
- 9) Mix the chuck roast into the veggie mix with a wood spoon
- 10) Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and let sit in the fridge overnight

---

#### MORNING OF

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- 1) Put the chili in the crock pot. Set the crock pot to LOW for 10 hours

---

### ABOUT 3 HOURS BEFORE

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- 1) Preheat oven to 200 deg. F
- 2) Place bacon on a half sheet cooling rack in a half sheet pan and put in oven
- 3) Cook until the bacon reaches your desired level of crispiness. It could be anywhere from 2 to 3 hours
- 4) Let it cool until it can be comfortably handled with bare hands
- 5) Harvest the bacon grease left over and store in a pint ball jar in the fridge [iii]

---

### NOT TOO LONG BEFORE SERVING

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- 1) Just before the bacon is done, chop up the third onion
- 2) When the bacon is done, let it cool for a tad then chop it up
- 3) Mix the chopped onion and bacon into the chili with a wood spoon
- 4) Spoon the chili into a bowl and sprinkle with shredded cheddar cheese. Serve with some sort of cracker type thing or a nice hardy bread
- 5) ENJOY!!!

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### NOTES

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- i. I was not really sure whether to not to call this a “Special Tool” or not, but I have no idea how many people have Crock Pots (slow cookers)
- ii. If your tap water is funky, use distilled water
- iii. I am not sure how long this lasts, but I have had some in my fridge for a while and it still looks OK



PICTURES





















## OLD MAN'S PIZZA SAUCE

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This is a natural extension of my work with pizza. I don't know if I am EVER going to get this one just PERFECT, but that is the fun of food experimentation. I think I started messing around with sauce about 2 ¼ years ago (Has it been that long?). This recipe reflects some of the stuff I have learned since then.

By the way, canned versus fresh tomatoes? For some reason, I really wanted to go with fresh for this one. I know, I know, good tomatoes are not always in season and canned tomatoes, much like frozen veggies, supposedly get them at peak ripeness, but whaddya gonna do? I am, however, becoming increasingly interested canning veggies so one of these I may start canning my own.

2020-08-08 (Saturday): Bumped the salt down to 1 ½ TSP from 2 TSP

### INGREDIENTS

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<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
2	lbs	Roma Tomatoes
1 1/2	TSP	Morton's Kosher Salt
1	TSP	Black Pepper
2	Cloves	Garlic
2	TBSP	Extra Virgin Olive Oil
1 1/4	TSP	Dried Basil
3	-----	Canned Anchovy Filets
AR	-----	Ice

Salt is probably my biggest variable here. I should really specify it by weight since salt weight by volumes can vary widely among different types and even brands of the same type. That is why I specifically called out both brand and type here

Basil... yes I would prefer it fresh, but I generally don't have access to it. I really need to get my garden going (Yet another item on my list o' stuff to do). I bumped the amount up by ¼ teaspoon for this version of the recipe

The anchovies are new. They should not be overtly noticeable in the flavor, but give it that nice, subtle WOW factor [i]

### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Big dutch oven
- Sous Vide Machine [ii, i]
- Food Saver (or similar vacuum sealer) [ii]
- Vacuum seal bags or bag rolls [ii]
- Crock Pot [v]

---

## PREPARATION

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### PEELING THE TOMATOES

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- 1) Bring 2 gallons of water to boil in the large dutch oven
- 2) Fill two large glass bowls with ice and water
- 3) Rinse tomatoes
- 4) Cut a small "X" in the skin of the tomato at the bottom
- 5) Drop 2 tomatoes into the water at a time [iii]. Boil for 30 – 60 seconds or until the skin cracks
- 6) Place the tomatoes in the first bowl of ice water for at least 5 minutes
- 7) Drop the next 2 tomatoes into the water at a time [iii]. Boil for 30 – 60 seconds or until the skin cracks
- 8) Place the tomatoes in the second bowl of ice water for at least 5 minutes
- 9) Peel the tomatoes from the first bowl of ice water and set aside
- 10) Peel the tomatoes from the second bowl of ice water and set aside
- 11) Repeat steps 5) - 10) for the remaining tomatoes
- 12) If you are freezing these for later use:
  - a. Prepare a 4 line vacuum seal bag for each 2 lbs of tomatoes
  - b. Vacuum seal tomatoes
  - c. Place in the freezer until needed

---

### MAKING THE SAUCE

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- 1) If you are starting with frozen tomatoes:
  - a. Set Sous Vide machine to 120 deg. F and let come to temperature; maybe about 30 minutes depending on your machine
  - b. When Sous Vide reaches temperature, throw in a bag of tomatoes
  - c. Let tomatoes thaw for 1 hour after the Sous Vide machine temperature recovers
- 2) Heat a sauté pan on low for about 5 or so minutes [vi]
- 3) Pull out the Crock Pot and wipe down if it has not been used in a while
- 4) Mince 2 cloves of garlic
- 5) Mince 3 canned anchovy filets
- 6) Add EVO to the pan
- 7) Add the garlic, anchovies, basil, and pepper to pan
- 8) Cook until fragrant and garlic slightly browned. **DO NOT LET THE GARLIC BURN!!!**
- 9) Put tomatoes into the crock pot and break apart with a wood spoon
- 10) Set Crock Pot to HI for 4 hours
- 11) Add oil, garlic, etc from pan to the crock pot and stir well
- 12) Break down any large chunks with the wood spoon
- 13) Stir in the salt a little bit at a time
- 14) Put on the cover and let cook
- 15) When the timer goes off, check the sauce for desired thickness. A good guideline is to draw a wood spoon across the bottom of the pot. If the sauce does not immediately close in behind the wood spoon, chances are it is ready, but use your own judgement for what you like

- 16) If the sauce needs to thicken, reset the crockpot to HI and cover the top with cheese cloth. Cook until the sauce reaches your desired level of thickness
- 17) Place the sauce in a quart Ball jar and let sit in the fridge at least over night
- 18) ENJOY!!!

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### NOTES

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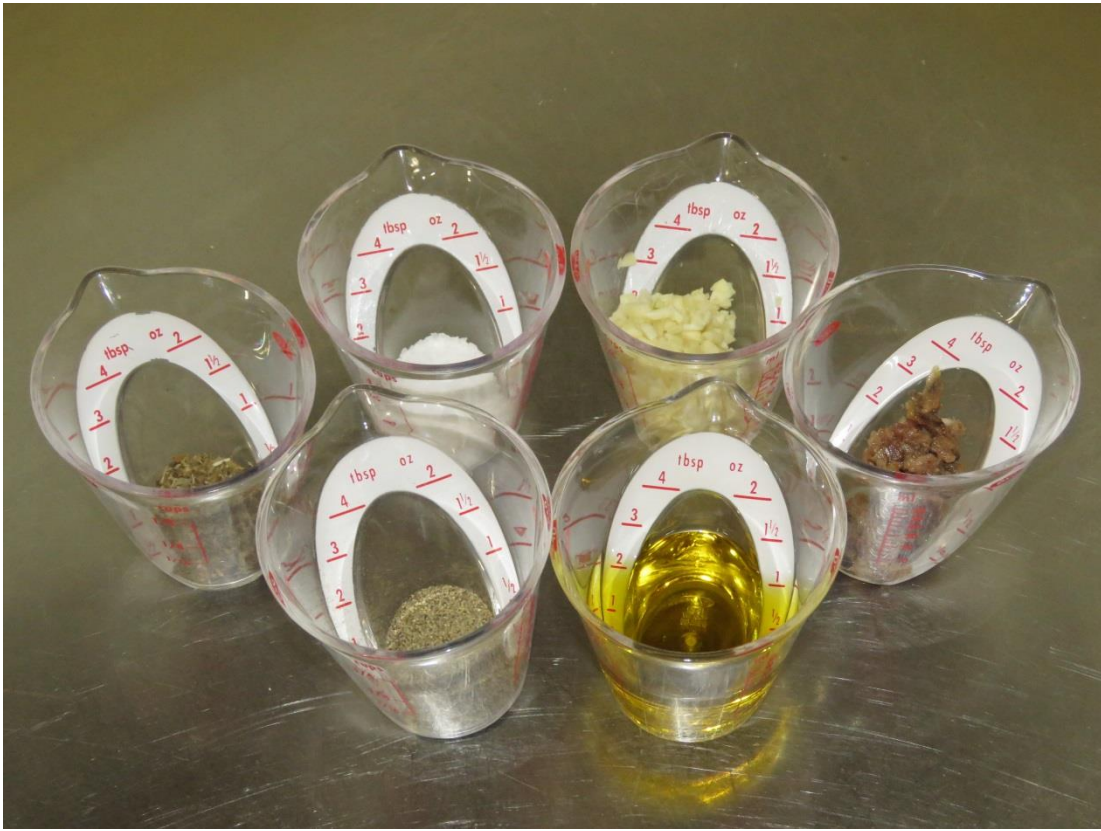
- i. Yes, I know what the word is for this, but refuse to use it
- ii. Not required unless you are going to do this recipe in parts
- iii. You might be able to stretch it to 3, but any more than this, the water temperature will drop too much when you drop them
- iv. You may ask yourself, "How Did I Get Here?" And the answer is no, a Sous Vide machine is not totally necessary. I am just using it to thaw the frozen tomatoes. You can just as easily do it with hot tap water OR thaw it in the refridgideezer overnight.
- v. I was not really sure whether to not to call this a "Special Tool" or not, but I have no idea how many people have Crock Pots (slow cookers)
- vi. If you are thawing frozen tomatoes, start this about 20 minutes before the tomatoes are ready

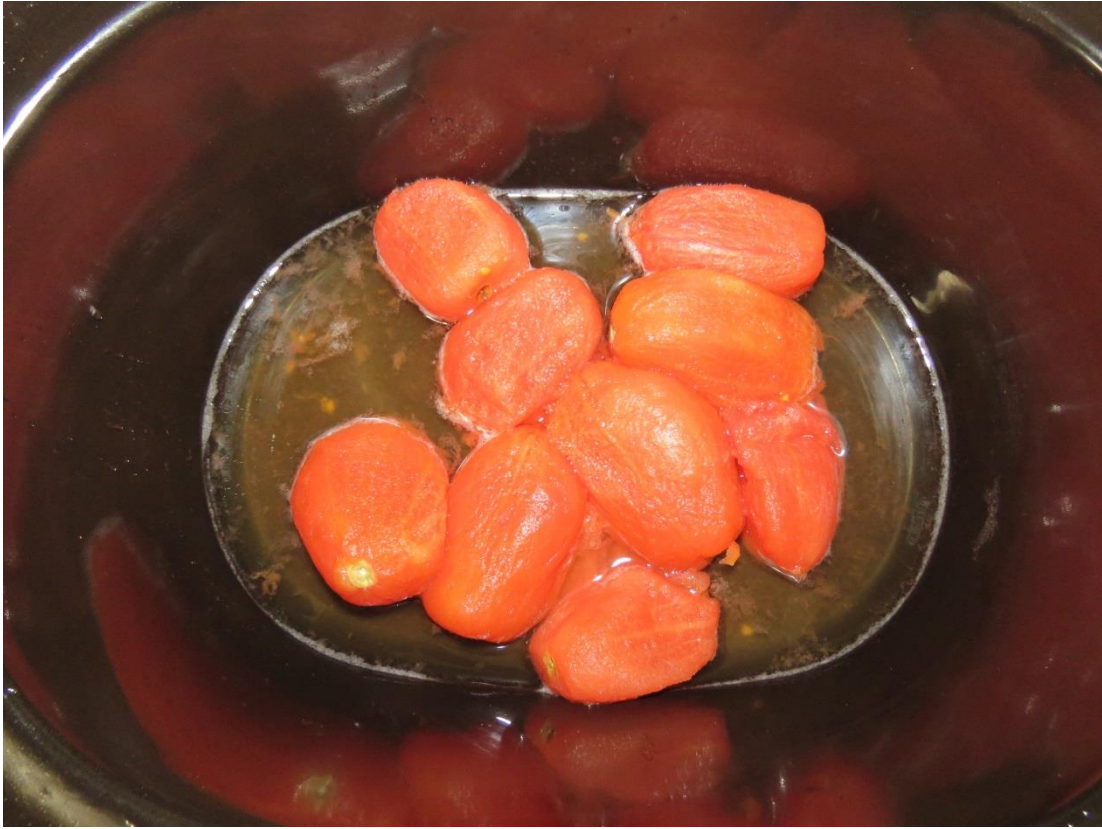
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### PICTURES

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## PIZZA DOUGH #000

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A local fire company started selling pizza at one point and by all reports, it was pretty good. One week, I had psyched myself up to get some on the way home, but when I passed by the trailer was gone and I decided to make my own (crust and everything). I was never really 100% satisfied with any of the store bought crusts or doughs, so I did a little bit of poking around on the ol' interwebs (back in my day, if we wanted to do some research we had to go to a place called a "library"). I found several recipes, but finally decided on the Betty Crocker Recipe here as a starting point:

<https://www.bettycrocker.com/recipes/pizza-crust/dfd30165-0b22-47aa-b192-268be25e138d>

One of the members of a local community forum turned me on to pizza stones and such and since then there has been no looking back.

### INGREDIENTS

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<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
2 1/2	Cups	Bread Flour
2	TBSP	Brown Sugar
1	TSP	Morton's Kosher Salt
1	7g Packet	Active Dry Yeast
2	TBSP	MASA
1	Cup	Water
3	TBSP	Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Bread flour is typically easy enough to get, but AP flour will do in a pinch. The texture may be a bit different, but should still be quite tasty

Why Morton's? Well, because that is what I use. Weights of salts per TSP will vary between types and brands, so if you need or want to use something else, make sure you compensate

The yeast... Honestly? I am not really sure about the differences between active dry and instant yeast. I have a done a little research, but not enough to explain.

### SPECIAL TOOLS

---

- Food Processor
- Pizza mat [iii]



## PREPARATION

---

- 1) Mix all the dry ingredients in a food processor for 2 minutes
- 2) Heat water to 100 deg. F - 110 deg. F
- 3) Add 3 TBSP of olive oil to the dry mix in the food processor
- 4) Mix the ingredients and slowly add the water
- 5) Continue to mix the dough for 30 seconds after the last of the water has been added
- 6) Perform the window test [i]. If it does not pass, take the temperature of the dough with an instant read thermometer. If it is below 105 deg. F, mix for another 15 seconds. If not, let it cool to below 105 deg. F, then mix for 15 seconds
- 7) Repeat the window test, temperature check, and mixing until the dough passes the window test
- 8) Coat a bowl with olive oil and add the dough
- 9) Loosely cover the dough with plastic wrap and let rise for at least 1 hour or until it doubles in size
- 10) After the dough has risen, spread to somewhere around 14 inches give or take depending on how thick or thin you like your crust [ii]
- 11) Sprinkle both sides of the dough with Kosher salt
- 12) Cook as per your pizza recipe
- 13) ENJOY!

## NOTES

---

- i. Basically take a small amount of dough and stretch it out with your fingers until you can see light through it. If the dough does not tear, the window test has passed!
- ii. If you like a thinner crust, split the dough into two portions. The second portion can be stored in the fridge or freezer. I have used frozen dough and it was spectacular!
- iii. Not 100% necessary, but makes things much easier

PICTURES











## PIZZA DOUGH #001

---

OK... I have had decent luck with pizza dough. My standard dough recipe (See Pizza Dough #000) tastes pretty good, but forming it has always been a chore. I never seem to get that type of dough that can be spread by either the knuckle or tossing techniques. Pizza Dough #000 passes the window test, but I never seem to get that flexibility. Recently I came to the realization that maybe it is due to my dough hydration levels. My dough was based off a lower cook temperature recipe which I believe has a lower water content. So lets figure this out

Update 20200530 (Saturday):

Well, after doing a little poking around, it turns out that my recipe hydration is actually on the high end. Most of the hydration levels were at 60% to 70% while my #000 recipe is at 75%. There were a couple at 75% and one more that reached as high as 85%, but for the most part, 65% looked like the average. Forkish's **Flour Water Salt Yeast** has a section on hydration and he actually recommends 70% - 75%, so what to do? I guess we'll find out

### INGREDIENTS

---

<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
2 1/2	Cups	Bread Flour (300g)
7	g	White Sugar
2	TBSP	Brown Sugar (Packed)
1	TSP	Morton's Kosher Salt (5g)
1	7g Packet	Active Dry Yeast
2	TBSP	MASA (15g)
1	Cup	Distilled Water (237g)
3 +	TBSP	Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Bread flour is typically easy enough to get, but AP flour will do in a pinch. The texture may be a bit different, but should still be quite tasty

Why Morton's? Well, because that is what I use. Weights of salts per TSP will vary between types and brands, so if you need or want to use something else, make sure you compensate

The yeast... Honestly? I am not really sure about the differences between active dry and instant yeast. I have a done a little research, but not enough to explain

Distilled water? Yes, I want to remove water variables for now

---

## SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Food Processor
- Stand mixer with dough hook
- Pizza mat [iii]

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## PREPARATION

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### PROOF THE YEAST

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- 1) Heat 1 cup of the distilled water to 100 – 110 deg. F [i]
- 2) Weigh out 130g of water into a second measuring cup
- 3) Add 7g of white sugar to the water and whisk until dissolved
- 4) Add the packet of yeast and whisk until mixed
- 5) Cover the measuring cup with a small saucer and let stand long enough for yeast to activate

---

### DRY (MOSTLY) INGREDIENTS

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- 1) Mix all the dry ingredients in a food processor for 2 minutes
- 2) Rearrange dry ingredients in the food processor bowl with a wood spoon
- 3) Mix the dry ingredients again for 2 minutes
- 4) Add the olive oil to the dry ingredients
- 5) Mix the dry ingredients and olive oil for 1 minute
- 6) Rearrange the ingredients in the food processor bowl with a wood spoon
- 7) Mix the ingredients again for 1 minute
- 8) Install the dough hook into the stand mixer
- 9) Move the ingredients in the food processor bowl to the stand mixer bowl
- 10) Set stand mixer to “knead” and slowly pour in the yeast proof
- 11) Use the remaining water to rinse out the yeast proof into the stand mixer bowl
- 12) Mix until dough is incorporated and clears the bowl
- 13) Perform the window test [ii]. If it does not pass, take the temperature of the dough with an instant read thermometer. If it is below 105 deg. F, knead for another 5 minutes. If not, let it cool to below 105 deg. F, then mix for 5 minutes
- 14) Repeat the window test, temperature check, and mixing until the dough passes the window test
- 15) Coat a glass bowl with olive oil and add the dough
- 16) Loosely cover the bowl with plastic wrap and let rise for at least 1 hour or until it doubles in size
- 17) Want a bit more flavor? Let the dough “cold ferment” in the fridge over night
- 18) After the dough has risen, spread to somewhere around 14 inches give or take depending on how thick or thin you like your crust [ii]
- 19) Sprinkle both sides of the dough with Kosher salt
- 20) Cook as per your pizza recipe
- 21) ENJOY!



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### NOTES

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- i. Microwave works pretty well for this. About 30 seconds, give or take, on HIGH should do it. Let the water cool if it gets too hot
- ii. Basically take a small amount of dough and stretch it out with your fingers until you can see light through it. If the dough does not tear, the window test has passed!
- iii. If you like a thinner crust, split the dough into two portions. The second portion can be stored in the fridge or freezer. I have used frozen dough and it was spectacular!
- iv. Not 100% necessary, but makes things much easier

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### PICTURES

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## THE CHICKEN DERIVATIVE

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This was yet another case of lookin' to do a quick dinner which turned into a "Holy @\$#@ this is good!" Some leftover "3 Ingredient Chicken", some pantry staples, and voila! I think I am going to do a variation of this for my "Dinner in a Can (For the Most Part)" series. It is experiences like this that make cooking really enjoyable and give me continued hope that I can make tasty new things. Still not quite a "quick" meal though.

Oh, by the way... This is another example of where reserving some pasta water for the sauce was a really, REALLY good idea

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### INGREDIENTS

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<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
2	-----	Mediumish Size Left Over "3 Ingredient Chicken" Thighs
2	14.5 oz Can	Unsalted Diced Tomatoes
4	Oz.	Dry Spaghetti
3	TBSP	EVO
3	Cloves	Garlic
1/8	TSP	Morton's Kosher Salt
1/4	TSP	Dried basil
1/4	TSP	Cayenne Pepper
AR	-----	Fresh Ground Black Pepper

I tend to like the thinner spaghetti (Capellini or Angel Hair), but use what you like!

See standard disclaimer about differences between salts. If you can't find unsalted diced tomatoes, don't add the salt.

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### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- None!

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### PREPARATION

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- 1) Heat a 3 qt. stainless steel pot on very low [i]
- 2) Drain the 2 cans of diced tomatoes through wire mesh strainers on top of 1 qt. measuring cups [ii]
- 3) Mince the 3 cloves of garlic
- 4) Add EVO to the pot
- 5) Add garlic to pot
- 6) Add cayenne pepper and basil to pot
- 7) Add black pepper to pot to taste [iii]

- 8) Set timer for 10 minutes
- 9) Remove skin from the chicken thighs and mince [iv]
- 10) Add minced skin to the pot
- 11) Set timer for 10 minutes
- 12) Start hand pulling the chicken meat from the thighs into smallish (but not too small!) bits
- 13) When the 10 minute timer expires, add the drained diced tomatoes to the pot and stir well with wood spoon
- 14) Increase heat to medium lowish. Stir occasionally with wood spoon
- 15) Finish hand pulling the chicken meat
- 16) When sauce starts to bubble, reduce heat back to very low
- 17) Add the pulled chicken to the sauce
- 18) Set timer for at least 10 minutes and stir sauce occasionally
- 19) Add enough water to the drained diced tomato juice to reach a total of 2 qts [v, vi]
- 20) Add the tomato water to a pasta pot and heat to boil
- 21) Add pasta to water and boil for 2 minutes or until al dente [vii]
- 22) Drain pasta
- 23) Add sauce to pasta pot and reduce heat to very low
- 24) Add pasta back to pasta pot
- 25) Add reserved pasta water to pasta pot
- 26) Gently fold pasta, sauce, and pasta water together until everything is evenly incorporated
- 27) Continue to heat on low (folding occasionally) until the pasta and sauce reduces to your desire consistency
- 28) Plate and...
- 29) ENJOY!!!

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### NOTES

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- i. The 3 qt. size worked out well for all phases of the recipe; not too large for the initial sauce build, yet not too small when adding in the rest of the sauce ingredients
- ii. You'll need the juice later!
- iii. Well, not quite "to taste" since you most likely won't be tasting it right now. Just kinda gauge what you think you will like. I did 6 "twists" of the pepper mill
- iv. I think using the herb technique (I think it has a name, but I can't recall off the top of my head) where you roll up the herbs into tight rolls and then slice will work here
- v. If your tap water is funky, use bottled water
- vi. This is what was recommended for the pasta I used. Adjust accordingly for the directions of the pasta that you use
- vii. Cooking for the minimum recommended time or even a bit less is a good idea since the pasta will continue to cook when it is in the sauce

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### PICTURES

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No pictures for this one yet! Too tasty!

## PULLED PORK BACON BALLS

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This is another one from the archives. I had my first go a low-and-slow pork shoulder (I need to dig this recipe out one of these days) and it was TASTY!!! It somehow got it into my head to use the leftovers to make Bacon Balls.

When I first got the idea for this, I started to think about some sort of binding agent ala crab cakes. Turns out the consistency of the leftover pulled pork was PERFECT for Bacon Balls! I also discovered that I need just the right bacon for Bacon Balls. Right now it is Kunzler Regular Cut Bacon closely followed by Hormel's Black Label Bacon.

### INGREDIENTS

---

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
20	TBSP	Left Over Pulled Pork
1	1 lb pack	Bacon
AR	-----	Peanut Oil

Don't like or are allergic to peanut oil? No problem! Use whatever oil you like that is appropriate for deep frying.

### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Counter top deep fryer

### PREPARATION

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- 1) Heat deep fryer oil to 356 deg. F
- 2) Cut a slice of bacon in half
- 3) Scoop out just a tad over a tablespoon of pulled pork
- 4) Form the pulled pork into a ball
- 5) Spread out one of the half bacon slices and place the pulled pork ball on top of it in the center
- 6) Wrap the bacon up on either side of the ball
- 7) Turn the ball over and 90 deg. and place on top of the second bacon half slice in the center. The side of the bacon ball with the ends of the bacon should be face down and the open sides of the ball should be pointing along the direction of the second half slice of bacon
- 8) Wrap the bacon up on either side of the ball a secure with a wood toothpick
- 9) Repeat for the rest of the bacon and / or pulled pork.
- 10) Deep fry bacon balls 4 - 5 at a time for 5 minutes and let drain in basket for 1 minute.
- 11) Set aside on ½ sheet cooling rack in ½ sheet pan. Cover with a second half sheet pan

12) ENJOY!!!

NOTES

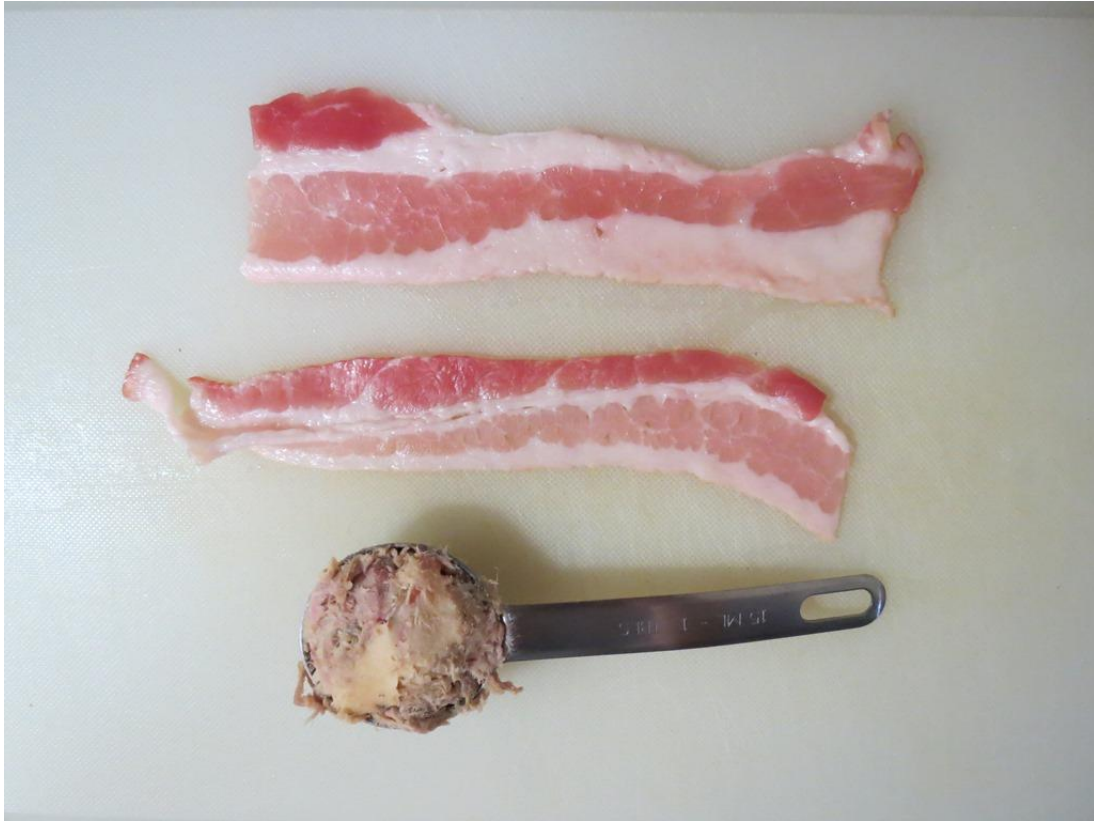
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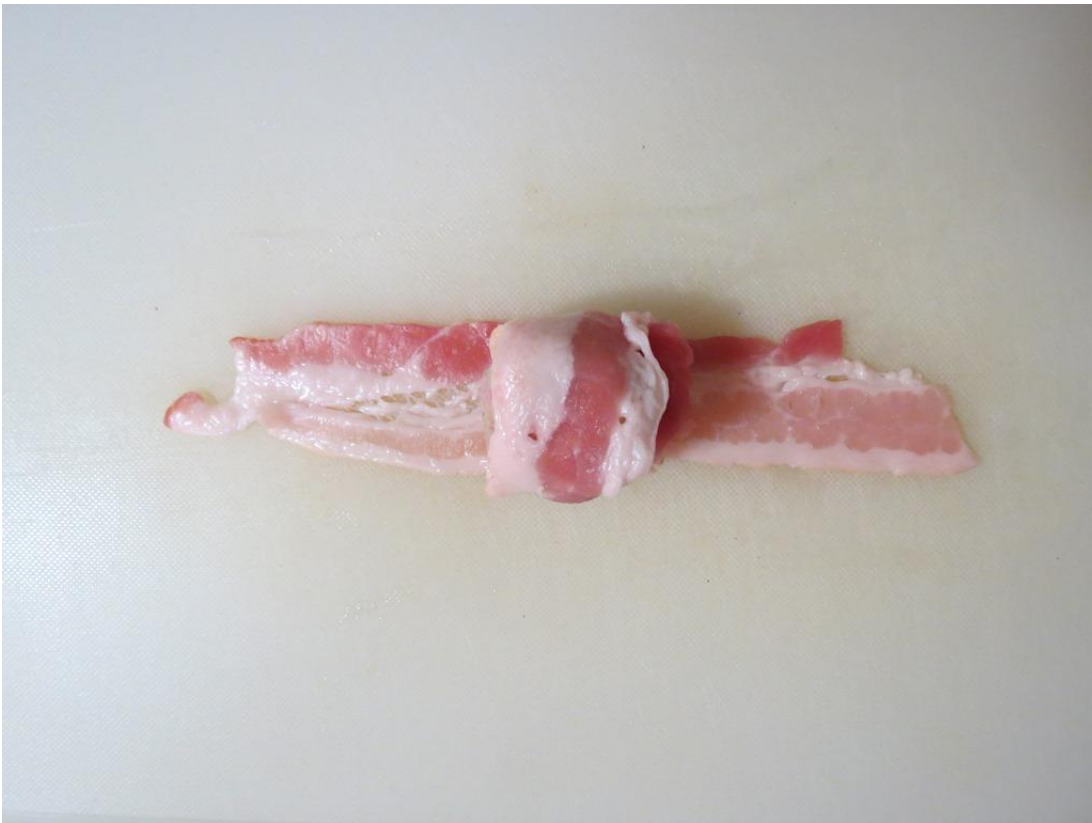
i. NONE!!!

PICTURES

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## OLD MAN’S POTATO SALAD

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This one... probably one of my all-time favourites, hence the “OLD MAN’s” moniker. This was born out of “Oh crud! I forgot to pickup potato salad! Let’s see what I can do with what I have.” and WOW did it turn out FANTASTIC! Great taste and a little bit o’ zing, but nothing overwhelming. And did I mention it has bacon?

By the way, you need a jar of Devil’s Trinity for this, so plan ahead.

### INGREDIENTS

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<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
4	-----	Medium-Largish Potatoes (~ 2 ½ lbs)
3	-----	Largish Farm Fresh Eggs
1	Qt. Jar	Devil’s Trinity
1	TBSP	Yellow Mustard
1	TBSP	Worcestershire Sauce
1	Cup	Mayonnaise
1	TBSP	Celery Seed
1	1 lb Pack	Regular Cut Bacon

Yellow mustard... I like French’s... sue me.

Mayonnaise... I am on a Duke’s tip recently, but one of these days I am going to give a go at making my own

Make sure you get celery seed, not celery salt

Once again, I’ll say Kunzler for the bacon, with Hormel Black Label as a second

### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Copper Crispers [x]

### PREPARATION – PART I [I]

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- 1) Heat oven to 200 deg. F
- 2) Set timer to 30 minutes
- 3) Spread the bacon on the Copper Crispers and put into the oven
- 4) Cook until nice and crispy; about 2 – 3 hours
- 5) Pull from the oven and let cool until handleable
- 6) Place bacon between paper towels and press gently to get out excess fat
- 7) If you are doing this the day (or so) before, place the bacon between paper towels in zip top bags in the fridge [iii]

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## PREPARATION – PART II

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- 43) Fill a large pot with water and heat to boil
- 44) Rinse the potatoes, but do not peel
- 45) Once the water reaches a rolling boil, gently add the potatoes
- 46) Boil for 20 minutes
- 47) Drain the potatoes then let cool for at least 5 minutes
- 48) Drain the jar of Devil's Trinity through mesh strainer into 1 quart measuring cup
- 49) Wash the eggs with soap and water. Rinse thoroughly
- 50) Place the eggs in a sauce pan and cover with water
- 51) Heat the egg water to a boil
- 52) Once the egg water reaches a rolling boil, remove the heat and let stand for 10 – 12 minutes
- 53) Remove eggs from the hot water and put in an ice water bath
- 54) Peel the eggs and chop into smallish, but not too small, pieces
- 55) Chop potatoes in to small bite size pieces
- 56) Mix all ingredients in a glass bowl with a wood spoon
- 57) Cover with plastic wrap with plastic wrap pressed down on to potato salad
- 58) Chill in fridge overnight
- 59) Jar the Devil's Trinity brine and put in fridge for future use
- 60) The next day plate the potato salad
- 61) ENJOY!!!

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## NOTES

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- i. You can do this on the same day, but it would probably easier for you if you do this on the day before
- ii. Are these really necessary? Well, no, but I bought a couple a while back and found them very useful for this type of stuff. A half sheet cooling rack in a half sheet pan should work just as well
- iii. Doing this more than a day or so before? Vacuum seal the bacon. It will last considerably longer

PICTURES















## VEGAN “BACON” [WIP]

So... if bacon is made without pork belly, is it still bacon??? Well, I don't know, but if there is such thing as turkey bacon, duck bacon, beef bacon, etc.. why not? This is part of one of my recent forays into insanity, but I thought we could break this one out on its own as well, so here it is!!!

By the way, just because this is “vegan”, does not mean it is healthy. There is probably enough sodium in this to drop a rhino

20201113 (Friday): There are still some kinks to work out, so I am keeping this as a Work In Progress for now. The recipe is my current best guess and may not 100% sync up with the pictures

20201115 (Sunday): A slight revamp based on my last attempt. Still a work in progress

### INGREDIENTS

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
1	Average Size	Regular Ol' Egg Plant
2/3	Cup	Tamari
2	TSP	Liquid Smoke
4	TSP	Paprika
½	TSP	Garlic Powder
1	TSP	Black Pepper
1	TSP	Cayenne Pepper
2	TSP	Accent
8	TBSP	Light Olive Oil of Choice
4	TBSP	Maple Syrup
AR	-----	Corn Starch

I'd like to try Italian eggplant one of these days, but I have yet to find in in my local grocery stores. I think it is supposed to have less seeds, but is also a bit smaller. I also want to try daikon radish, but I have not been able to find it lately (but it I have bought it before)

You should be able to get tamari in most main stream grocery stores these days. You'll probably have to venture into the “international” aisle, however. Can't find it? Soy Sauce will work, but then you can't call it “gluten free”

Liquid smoke.... It might be hard to find, but it is there. Check around the barbecue sauce, but look carefully! There is probably only one or two brands / flavors

What is Accent? Hint: There is only one ingredient and it has gotten a bad rap

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## SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Mandolin [i]

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## PREPARATION – PART I

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- 1) Whisk all dry ingredients, except the corn starch and, well the eggplant, in a 1 quart measuring cup
- 2) Add wet ingredients and thoroughly mix with an immersion blender
- 3) Cover the 1 quart measuring cup with a saucer
- 4) Rinse the eggplant and thoroughly dry
- 5) Remove the stem / flowery part at the top
- 6) Peel the eggplant [ii]
- 7) Cut the eggplant in quarters lengthwise
- 8) Slice the eggplant in the mandolin as thin as possible while maintaining enough integrity to be able to wrap around “something” [vi]
- 9) Loosely place the eggplant in a glass bowl as you slice it
- 10) Give the marinade another go with the immersion blender
- 11) Pour ½ of the marinade over the eggplant and gently mix so that the eggplant is thoroughly coated on all sides
- 12) Pour the second ½ of the marinade over the eggplant and gently mix so that the eggplant is thoroughly coated on all sides
- 13) Loosely cover the bowl with plastic wrap and put in the fridge
- 14) Let the eggplant marinade for at least an hour, mixing the eggplant and marinade every 15 minutes to ensure even coating [iii]

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## PREPARATION – PART II

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- 1) Pull the eggplant from the fridge and give one last mix
- 2) Gently pull the bacon strips from the marinade and unfold onto ½ sheet cooling racks in ½ sheet pans (it should take about 3 pans for even spacing)
- 3) Cover the bottom of a 9x13 glass pan with corn starch
- 4) Coat “bacon” slices on both sides with corn starch replacing each slice on the cooling racks after they are coated
- 5) Repeat steps 2 – 4 until all “bacon” is coated, adding cornstarch for coating as required

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## PREPARATION – PART III

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### IF YOU ARE COOKING THIS AS STRIPS [IV]

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- 1) Heat oven to 250 deg. F
- 2) Cook “bacon” for 45 minutes
- 3) Pull and let cool for a few minutes [v]
- 4) ENJOY!!!

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IF YOU ARE USING THIS FOR SOMETHING ELSE

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1) GET ON WITH IT!!!

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NOTES

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- i. Unless you have a very sharp knife (and are really good with it), you really do need a mandolin to get the consistent, thin slices of eggplant
- ii. I have found that the skin is rather bitter
- iii. I think you can leave it overnight after the first hour. Just make sure to thoroughly mix eggplant and marinade then let sit for 15 minutes before doing whatever it is you are going to do with it
- iv. Remember how I said this was a work in progress? This part is one of the reasons for it
- v. It will “crisp” up as it sits
- vi. Set the “thick” end slices aside if you can use it or discard with the skin

PICTURES











## BLACK BEAN SALSA

So yet another foray into that which is my insanity. Well, not this particularly, but what I made it to go in (more on that later). Anyways, I realized that this was pretty tasty on its own, so here it is!

### INGREDIENTS

<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
1	15 oz. Can	Goya Black Beans
1	15 oz. Can	Goya Yellow Corn
1/4	Average Size	Red Onion
4	Average Size	Roma Tomatoes
1/4	Cup	Fresh, Chopped Cilantro
1	Average Size	Lime
1	TSP	Cumin
2	TBSP	EVO
1/2	TSP	Morton's Kosher Salt
1/2	TSP	Black Pepper
1	Clove	Garlic
1/2	Cup	Diced green onions
1	TBSP	Tabasco Sauce
1/2	TSP	Cayenne Pepper
1	Medium to Large	Jalapeno

4 average size Roma tomatoes should yield about 2 cups seeded and diced tomatoes

1/4 of an average size red onion should yield 1/2 cup diced onions

Fresh cilantro has always kinda bugged me. I don't have that gene that makes it taste like soap, but it seems like anytime I need fresh cilantro, it always such a small amount relative to the bunch that you buy in the store. I suppose drying the leftovers is alternative, but then if I did that, why would I buy fresh in the first place??? I need to think about this one a bit

An average size lime should yield about 2 oz. (1/4 cup) of juice

Use whatever EVO you happen to like

Insert standard disclaimer about kosher salt here

I kinda have the same beef with green onions that I do with fresh cilantro. However, chopped green onions keep OK in the fridge and add a nice “something” to fried dishes and a great garnish raw

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### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- None! (I think)

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### PREPARATION

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- 1) Drain corn and black beans through strainers into 1 quart measuring cups [i, ii, iii]
- 2) Rinse, pat dry, and fine dice the ¼ red onion. You should get about ½ cup of diced end product
- 3) Rinse, pat dry, and chop fresh cilantro. You need ¼ cup, not loosely packed, but not densely packed, end product
- 4) Rinse, pat dry, and chop green onions. You need ½ cup end product
- 5) Mince 1 clove garlic
- 6) Rinse, pat dry, and juice the lime
- 7) Rinse, pat dry, deseed / degunk, and dice tomatoes
- 8) Rinse, pat dry, remove the stem, and finely dice, the jalapeno
- 9) Put the beans, corn, and diced tomatoes into a glass bowl and gently fold together with a wood spoon
- 10) Add the dice onion, diced jalapeno, minced garlic, and chopped cilantro next and gently fold together with a wood spoon
- 11) Gently fold in the rest of the ingredients a little bit at a time with a wood spoon
- 12) Cover with plastic wrap, pressing plastic wrap down so that it makes contact with the salsa and the bowl sides, and let sit in fridge for at least one hour [iv]
- 13) ENJOY!!!

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### NOTES

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- i. Cover the strainers with saucers to prevent stuff from falling in
- ii. Some recipes will have you rinse the black beans after draining. I did not do this for a couple of reasons and it turned out fine!
- iii. Make sure you save the black bean juice. You may be able to use it for something. Lookup aquafaba (or something along those lines)
- iv. I think overnight is OK too, but make sure you stir it up before serving

PICTURES





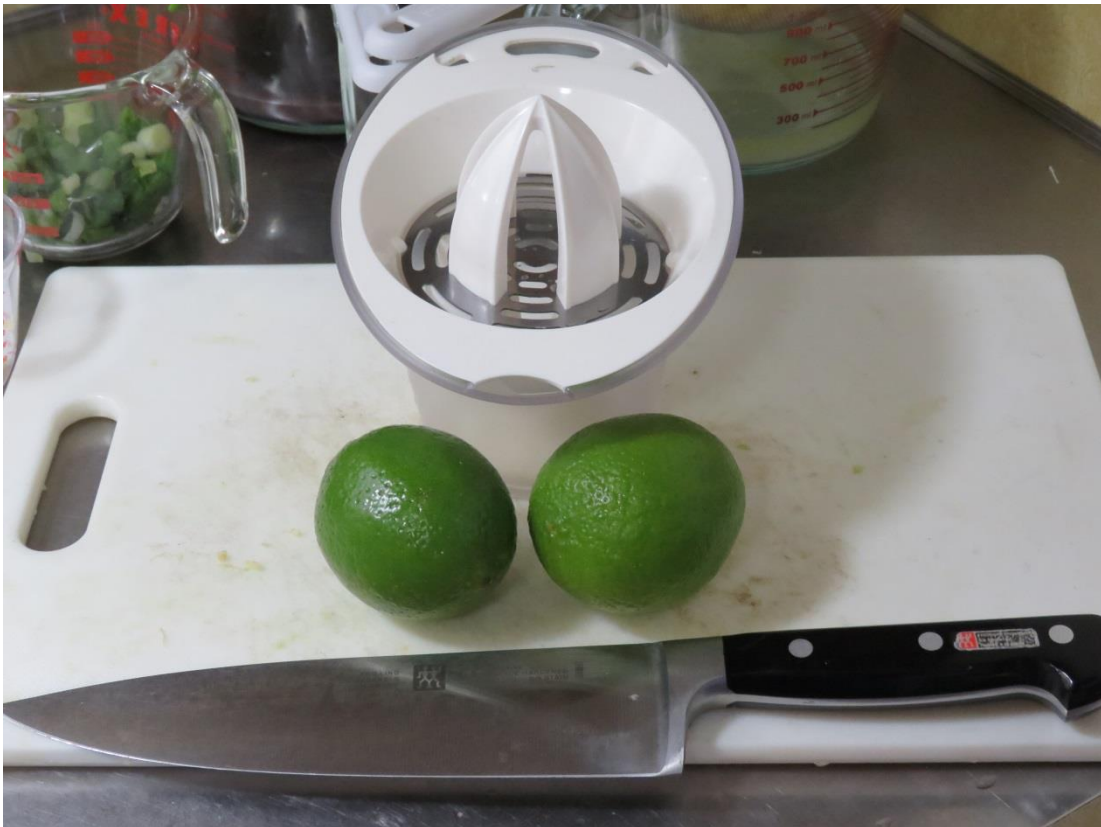




















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## FUN WITH FERMENTATION

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## OLD MAN'S SALSA - LEVEL 01 (JALAPENOS)

This one is an amalgamation of MANY things. I think I did this one fairly early in my foray into fermentation. It is one of the handful of things I have made that I am actually really proud of. It takes a little bit o' time, but it is worth it!

### INGREDIENTS

#### FERMENTATION STAGE

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
1	N.U.	Green Pepper
1	N.U.	Yellow Pepper
1	N.U.	Red Pepper
8	N.U.	Decent Sized Jalapeno Peppers
4	N.U.	Shallots
2	TBSP	Minced Fresh Garlic
3 1/4	TBSP	Brining Salt

The general goal is to get about 8 oz. each of the above ingredients, except the garlic and salt. I really should get a weight for the garlic; maybe next time I make it. The brining salt should be a good quality salt with no additives. I use Morton's Canning and Pickling Salt, but I have seen other people use a variety of brands and types. By the way, the amount of salt listed is approximate. The actual amount is at least 1.5% by weight of the veggies.

#### FINISHING STAGE

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
~1 ¾	lb	Roma Tomatoes
8	TBSP	Fresh Chopped Cilantro

You need enough tomatoes for 3 cups diced. Yes, the pictures show Beefsteaks, but at a later point I realized I like the Romas a bit better.

#### SPECIAL TOOLS

- Wine Cooler [i]
- (Qty. 2) quart sized, wide-mouthed Ball jars [ii]
- (Qty. 2) Easy Fermenter Fermentation Lids [iii]
- (Qty. 4) Easy Fermenter Fermentation Weights [iii]
- Good Quality Wood tamper
- (Qty. 2) Quart ZipLoc Freezer Bags

- Digital Kitchen Scale [iv]
- 9" x 13 " Pyrex Baking Dish
- Cheese cloth
- Medium Binders Clips [vi]

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## PREPARATION

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### FERMENTATION STAGE

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1. Rinse veggies and pat dry
2. Weigh a largish glass bowl and record the weight [v]
3. Chop all the veggies and mix together in the glass bowl with a wood spoon
4. Weigh the largish glass bowl plus the veggies and subtract the weight of the bowl from step 2 to get the weight of the veggies
5. Calculate the amount of brining salt you need by
  - a.  $\text{Weight of Salt} = 1.5\% \text{ of Weight of Veggies}$
6. Weigh out the brining salt
7. Mix in the brining salt into the veggie a little bit at a time, stirring with a wood spoon.
8. Mix the salt / veggie mixture for about 2 minutes after the last of the salt has been mixed in
9. Spread the veggie mix in a glass baking dish
10. Cover with cheese cloth and secure with the binder clips
11. Let sit overnight [vii]
12. Cut the ZipLoc's off the ZipLoc bags
13. Cut the ZipLoc bags in half at the seam at the bottom. These will be your followers [viii]
14. Divide the salsa evenly, including the brine, between the 1-quart wide mouth jars [ix]
15. Tamp down the salsa (with the wood tamper) until it is compacted and under the brine
16. Place the first followers in each jar so that it evenly covers the veggies across the entire surface area and comes up the sides of the jar
17. Place the first weights on top of the followers
18. Place the second followers in each jar on top of the first weight so that it evenly covers the entire area and comes up the sides of the jar
19. Place the second weights on top of the second followers
20. Press down gently so that all the veggies are submerged below the brine
21. Put the lids on the jars and the jars in the wine coolers set for 65 deg. F.
22. Allow the salsa to ferment for 28 days at about 65 deg. F.

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### FINISHING STAGE

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1. Dice the tomatoes and let drain for about 15 minutes
2. Chop the cilantro
3. Remove the fermenting veggies from the wine cooler and put in a largish glass bowl
4. Stir in the tomatoes and cilantro with a wood spoon
5. Cover the bowl with cheese cloth and let sit for 15 minutes
6. Stir everything again with a wood spoon



7. Divide the salsa evenly, including the brine, between the 1-quart wide mouth jars [ix] and tamp it down
8. Put the Easy Fermenter lids on the jars (no weights and followers this time) and put the jars in the fridge for about 1 week
9. After about a week, you can put the regular lids on the jars if you need the Easy Fermenter Lids for something else
10. ENJOY!

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### NOTES

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- i. Not 100% necessary as long as you have a cool, dark place to put the salsa while it ferments. The wine coolers make it pretty easy to maintain the temperature and not have to worry about fluctuations.
- ii. Wouldn't hurt to have an extra one on hand in case you have just a little too much veggies to allow for headroom in the jars, but (Qty. 2) should do the job for this amount of salsa. Same goes for the fermentation lids and weights.
- iii. There are a variety of options out there, but I like the Easy Fermenter Brand. The lids have a special little waterless airlock valve that lets CO2 out and prevents air from getting in while keeping a profile no higher than the lid itself. These fit into my wine coolers perfectly.
- iv. If you don't have a digital kitchen scale, GET ONE!
- v. Most digital scales have a tare function, but most digital scales also have an auto off function. Recording the weight of the bowl hedges our bets in the event that the scale shuts off before you get all of the veggies in (which will happen).
- vi. Yes, I said binder clips. I LOVE these things. They are perfect for securing the cheese cloth over the glass baking dish
- vii. The house smelled FANTASTIC while this was sitting out overnight
- viii. Non-plastic alternatives are grape leaves, outer cabbage leaves, etc. Fresh grape leaves might be hard to find in most grocery stores, but you should be able to find cabbage
- ix. If you want to be REALLY precise, strain the solids then weigh the solids and the liquid and divide by 2 to determine how much of each to put in each jar

PICTURES

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## LACTO-FERMENTED PICKLED HABANEROS

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Yet another foray into fermentation! I typically prefer to do a mash ferment for peppers, but I found such a great use for these that, well, I just had to write it up. Takes a little bit o’ time, but, once again, worth it!

Update 2020-05-17 (Sunday):

It always kinda bugged me that I either did have enough brine or had too much. Then I saw a tip, I think it might have been on a ProHomeCooks YouTube video, that recommended pouring in the water over the vegetables first, then drain and weigh the water. From there you can calculate the exact amount of salt you need. Easy-peasy, no waste! I updated this recipe accordingly.

### INGREDIENTS

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<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
1	Lb	Habanero Peppers
2 – 4	TBSP	Brining Salt
1 – 2	Qt	Distilled Water

Distilled water? Yes, I think so. Municipal water is typically “treated” to some degree and well water may be funky. Distilled water gives you a nice blank slate.

### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Wine cooler [i]
- (Qty. 3) quart sized, wide-mouthed Ball jars [ii]
- (Qty. 2) Easy Fermenter fermentation lids [iii]
- (Qty. 4) Easy Fermenter fermentation weights [iii]
- Easy Fermenter pump
- Good quality wood tamper
- (Qty. 2) Quart Ziploc freezer bags [iv]
- Food prep gloves [v]
- Immersion blender [vi]
- Chopstick

### PREPARATION

---

- 1) Rinse the peppers and remove the stems
- 2) Slice peppers into of 0.5cm to 1 cm slices. REMEMBER TO WEAR FOOD PREP GLOVES!!!
- 3) Divvy up the peppers into the 2 quart BALL jars without tamping the peppers. Make sure to leave some headroom. If you don’t have enough headroom, split the peppers between 3 jars [vii]

- 4) Add distilled water to one of the jars until the peppers are covered or they start to float
- 5) Alternately agitate the peppers with a chop stick and LIGHTLY tamp with the tamper [viii] to get any sneaky air bubble outs. Repeat until you don't see any more air bubbles escaping
- 6) Weigh a 1 qt. measuring cup
- 7) Pour out the water into a mesh strainer over the 1 qt. measuring cup
- 8) Weigh the 1 qt. measuring cup plus water and calculate the weight of the water by subtracting the weight of the measuring cup from Step 6)
- 9) Add 4% brining salt by weight to the water and mix until thoroughly dissolved. Do yourself a favor and use an immersion blender
- 10) Pour the brine back into the jar of peppers
- 11) Alternately agitate the peppers with a chop stick and LIGHTLY tamp with the tamper [viii] to get any sneaky air bubble outs. Repeat until you don't see any more air bubbles escaping.
- 12) Cut off the Ziploc portions of the Ziploc bag. Cut down the side seams then cut in half. This will leave you with 4 plastic followers [iv]
- 13) Place one follower, followed by one weight, followed by one follower, followed by one weight on top of the peppers in the jar [ix, x]
- 14) Screw the Easy Fermenter lids on the jars and pump out the air with the Easy Ferment pump
- 15) Repeat steps 4) - 14) for the remaining jars
- 16) Label the jars and place in the wine cooler at 65 deg. F.
- 17) Ferment for at least 14 days [xi]s
- 18) When formation is done, replace the Easy Fermenter lids with the Ball lids and stick in the fridge. They should be good for quite a while.
- 19) These can be eaten as a snack, used as a burger topping, WHATEVER!!! I like to use them in my "Other Wings"
- 20) ENJOY!!!

## NOTES

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- i. Not 100% necessary as long as you have a cool, dark place to put the peppers while they ferment. The wine coolers make it pretty easy to maintain temperature and not have to worry about fluctuations
- ii. It would not hurt to have an extra one on hand in case you have just a little too many peppers to allow for headroom in the jars, but (Qty. 2) should do the job for 1 lb of peppers. Same goes for the fermentation lids and weights
- iii. There are a variety of options here, but I like the Easy Fermenter brand. The lids have a special little waterless airlock valve that lets CO2 out and prevents air from getting in while keeping a profile no higher than the lid itself. These fit into my wine coolers perfectly
- iv. Non-plastic alternatives are grape leaves, outer cabbage leaves, etc. Fresh grape leaves might be hard to find in most grocery stores, but you should be able to find cabbage
- v. These are a must. If you don't believe me, you will learn. There are various things you DO NOT want to touch after handling and slicing habaneros

- vi. Also not 100% necessary, but it does make mixing the brine easier
- vii. As you may notice from the pictures, I had almost no headroom, so I really violated my own directions here. I decided to go ahead anyways. It remains to be seen whether or not I will be ruining my decision
- viii. Another good reason to leave enough headroom
- ix. This helps keep the peppers under the brine which is one of the, if not the, cardinal rules of lacto-fermentation
- x. Once again, you will notice from the pictures that I did not leave enough head room, so I wound using only one weight and no followers
- xi. The time may be one that you have to experiment with, because it will depend on any number of environmental variables. Since I use the wind coolers, my variables are minimized. I usually see 7 – 10 days recommended with shorter times if your room temperature is on the high side and longer times if your room temperature is on the low side. I have found at least 14 days works for me with the 65 deg. F wine coolers
- xii. There was a little bit of Kahm yeast on the 174144 jar which is harmless by most accounts. The brine smelled OK, so I skimmed the Kahm yeast off and wiped down the upper part of the inside of the jar. A quick taste test was good too!

PICTURES

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INITIAL JARRING

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AFTER ONE WEEK

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AFTER TWO WEEKS [XII]

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## LACTO-FERMENTED PICKLED JALAPENOS

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Hooray! More pickled peppers! I think the first time I did these was when a coworker had a WAY too bountiful harvest and was giving them away. The cool thing about those was that some of them were fully ripened (red) so I was able to do “Christmas” peppers. Like pickled habaneros, it takes a little bit o’ time, but, once again, worth it!

Update 2020-05-17 (Sunday):

It always kinda bugged me that I either did not have enough brine or had too much. Then I saw a tip, I think it might have been on a ProHomeCooks YouTube video, that recommended pouring in the water over the vegetables first, then drain and weigh the water. From there you can calculate the exact amount of salt you need. Easy-peasy, no waste! I updated this recipe accordingly.

### INGREDIENTS

---

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
1	Lb	Jalapeno Peppers
2 - 4	TBSP	Brining Salt
1 - 2	Qt	Distilled Water

Distilled water? Yes, I think so. Municipal water is typically “treated” to some degree and well water may be funky. Distilled water gives you a nice blank slate.

### SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Wine cooler [i]
- (Qty. 3) quart sized, wide-mouthed Ball jars [ii]
- (Qty. 2) Easy Fermenter fermentation lids [iii]
- (Qty. 4) Easy Fermenter fermentation weights [iii]
- Easy Fermenter pump
- Good quality wood tamper
- (Qty. 2) Quart Ziploc freezer bags [iv]
- Food prep gloves [v]
- Immersion blender [vi]
- Chopstick

### PREPARATION

---

- 1) Rinse the peppers and remove the stems
- 2) Slice peppers into 0.5cm to 1 cm slices. REMEMBER TO WEAR FOOD PREP GLOVES!!!

- 3) Divvy up the peppers into the 2 quart BALL jars without tamping the peppers. Make sure to leave some headroom. If you don't have enough headroom, split the peppers between 3 jars
- 4) Add distilled water to one of the jars until the peppers are covered or they start to float
- 5) Alternately agitate the peppers with a chop stick and LIGHTLY tamp with the tamper [viii] to get any sneaky air bubble outs. Repeat until you don't see any more air bubbles escaping
- 6) Weigh a 1 qt. measuring cup
- 7) Pour out the water into a mesh strainer over the 1 qt. measuring cup
- 8) Weigh the 1 qt. measuring cup plus water and calculate the weight of the water by subtracting the weight of the measuring cup from Step 6)
- 9) Add 4% brining salt by weight to the water and mix until thoroughly dissolved. Do yourself a favor and use an immersion blender
- 10) Pour the brine back into the jar of peppers
- 11) Alternately agitate the peppers with a chop stick and LIGHTLY tamp with the tamper [viii] to get any sneaky air bubble outs. Repeat until you don't see any more air bubbles escaping.
- 12) Cut off the Ziploc portions of the Ziploc bag. Cut down the side seams then cut in half. This will leave you with 4 plastic followers [iv]
- 13) Place one follower, followed by one weight, followed by one follower, followed by one weight on top of the peppers in the jars [ix]
- 14) Screw the Easy Fermenter lids on the jars and pump out the air with the Easy Ferment pump
- 15) Repeat steps 4) - 14) for the remaining jars
- 16) Label the jars and place in the wine cooler at 65 deg. F.
- 17) Ferment for at least 14 days [xi]
- 18) When formation is done, replace the Easy Fermenter lids with the Ball lids and stick in the fridge. They should be good for quite a while.
- 19) These can be eaten as a snack, used as a burger topping, WHATEVER!!! I think my favorite is probably on burgers or pizza.
- 20) ENJOY!!!

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## NOTES

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- i. Not 100% necessary as long as you have a cool, dark place to put the peppers while they ferment. The wine coolers make it pretty easy to maintain temperature and not have to worry about fluctuations
- ii. It would not hurt to have an extra one on hand in case you have just a little too many peppers to allow for headroom in the jars, but (Qty. 2) should do the job for 1 lb of peppers. Same goes for the fermentation lids and weights
- iii. There are a variety of options here, but I like the Easy Fermenter brand. The lids have a special little waterless airlock valve that lets CO2 out and prevents air from getting in while keeping a profile no higher than the lid itself. These fit into my wine coolers perfectly

- iv. Non-plastic alternatives are grape leaves, outer cabbage leaves, etc. Fresh grape leaves might be hard to find in most grocery stores, but you should be able to find cabbage
- v. These are a must. If you don't believe me, you will learn. There are various things you DO NOT want to touch after handling and slicing hot pepper. Jalapenos are not quite as bad as the habaneros (or Carolina Reapers!), but still can result in "discomfort" if you let your guard down
- vi. Also not 100% necessary, but it does make mixing the brine easier
- vii. Another good reason to leave enough headroom
- viii. This helps keep the peppers under the brine which is one of the, if not the, cardinal rules of lacto-fermentation
- ix. The time may be one that you have to experiment with, because it will depend on any number of environmental variables. Since I use the wind coolers, my variables are minimized. I usually see 7 – 10 days recommended with shorter times if your room temperature is on the high side and longer times if your room temperature is on the low side. I have found at least 14 days works for me with the 65 deg. F wine coolers
- x. There was a little bit of Kahm yeast on the 190556 jar which is harmless by most accounts. The brine smelled OK, so I skimmed the Kahm yeast off and wiped down the upper part of the inside of the jar. I also removed the followers and weights and put in two fresh weights

PICTURES

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INITIAL JARRING

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AFTER ONE WEEK

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AFTER TWO WEEKS

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## DEVIL’S TRINITY

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Even if you have only seen one food show, you have probably heard “mirepoix” (onions, celery, carrots) or the “holy trinity” (onions, celery, carrots). I never really thought much about it. That is, until a couple years ago when I decided to sauté some left over julienne carrots and onions. TASTY! Right then and there I decided I need to mess around with this stuff. I bought carrots, celery, onions, and stop light peppers the next time I was at the store. I did not have time to screw around with it at the time, so I chopped, mixed, and vacuum sealed. A night or two later, I had a tad leftover in the fridge, so I decided to sauté the veggies and mix in some canned chicken. Holy smokes, Batman! IT WAS DELICIOUS! So many ideas, so little time!

About 3 ½ months passed (time tends to do that) and I came up with “Devil’s Trinity”. Basically, it replaced the green bell peppers with jalapenos, add some garlic, and did some lacto fermentation. WOW! Definitely one of my favourite recipes. And it gives rise to some of my other favourites; OLD MAN’s Potato Salad and OLD MAN’s Pot Pie Wings are two that come immediately to mind. It takes a little bit of time (most of which is waiting), but it is most definitely WORTH IT!!!

## INGREDIENTS

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<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
1	lb	Carrots
1	lb	Celery (No Leaves)
1	lb	Shallots
1	lb	Jalapenos
1	-----	Red Pepper (approx. 8 oz.)
1	-----	Yellow Pepper (approx. 8 oz.)
1	oz	Peeled Garlic

Don’t worry about exact weights; just get as close as reasonably possible

## SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Wine Cooler [i]
- (Qty. 4) quart sized, wide-mouthed Ball jars [iii]
- (Qty. 4) Easy Fermenter Fermentation Lids [iii]
- (Qty. 8) Easy Fermenter Fermentation Weights [iii]
- Good Quality Wood tamper
- (Qty. 4) Quart ZipLoc Freezer Bags
- Digital Kitchen Scale [iv]
- (Qty. 2) 9” x 13 “ Pyrex Baking Dishes
- Cheese cloth
- Medium Binders Clips [vi]

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## PREPARATION

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### DAY 00

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- 1) Rinse, peel, and dice carrots
- 2) Rinse and dice celery
- 3) Rinse and dice red pepper
- 4) Rinse and dice yellow pepper
- 5) Rinse, peel, and dice shallots
- 6) Rinse and dice jalapenos [x]
- 7) Rinse, peel, and, and dice garlic
- 8) Weigh a largish glass bowl and record the weight [v]
- 9) Mix all the veggies together in the glass bowl with a wood spoon
- 10) Weigh the largish glass bowl plus the veggies and subtract the weight of the bowl from step 8 to get the weight of the veggies
- 11) Calculate the amount of bringing salt you need by
  - a.  $\text{Weight of Salt} = 1.5\% \text{ of Weight of Veggies}$
- 12) Weigh out the brining salt
- 13) Mix in the brining salt into the veggies a little bit at a time, stirring with a wood spoon
- 14) Mix the salt / veggie mixture for about 2 minutes after the last of the salt has been mixed in
- 15) Spread the veggie mix in evenly across the two glass baking dishes
- 16) Cover with cheese cloth and secure with the binder clips [vi]
- 17) Let sit overnight

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### DAY 01

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- 1) Cut the ZipLoc's off the ZipLoc bags
- 2) Cut the ZipLoc bags in half at the seam at the bottom. These will be your followers [viii]
- 3) Divide the salsa evenly, including the brine, between the 1-quart wide mouth jars [ix]
- 4) Tamp down the salsa (with the wood tamper) until it is compacted and under the brine
- 5) Place the first followers in each jar so that it evenly covers the veggies across the entire surface area and comes up the sides of the jar
- 6) Place the first weights on top of the followers
- 7) Place the second followers in each jar on top of the first weight so that it evenly covers the entire area and comes up the sides of the jar
- 8) Place the second weights on top of the second followers
- 9) Press down gently so that all the veggies are submerged below the brine
- 10) Put the lids on the jars and the jars in the wine coolers set for 65 deg. F.
- 11) Allow the veggies to ferment for at least 28 days at about 65 deg. F. [xi]

## NOTES

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- i. OK... so the last picture is from a different batch
- ii. Not 100% necessary as long as you have a cool, dark place to put the veggies while they ferment. The wine coolers make it pretty easy to maintain the temperature and not have to worry about fluctuations.
- iii. Wouldn't hurt to have an extra one on hand in case you have just a little too much veggies to allow for headroom in the jars, but (Qty. 4) should do the job for this amount of veggies. Same goes for the fermentation lids and weights.
- iv. There are a variety of options out there, but I like the Easy Fermenter Brand. The lids have a special little waterless airlock valve that lets CO2 out and prevents air from getting in while keeping a profile no higher than the lid itself. These fit into my wine coolers perfectly.
- v. If you don't have a digital kitchen scale, GET ONE!
- vi. Most digital scales have a tare function, but most digital scales also have an auto off function. Recording the weight of the bowl hedges our bets in the event that the scale shuts off before you get all of the veggies in (which will happen).
- vii. Yes, I said binder clips. I LOVE these things. They are perfect for securing the cheese cloth over the glass baking dish
- viii. Non-plastic alternatives are grape leaves, outer cabbage leaves, etc. Fresh grape leaves might be hard to find in most grocery stores, but you should be able to find cabbage
- ix. If you want to be REALLY precise, strain the solids then weigh the solids and the liquid and divide by 2 to determine how much of each to put in each jar
- x. If you want it a bit spicier, DO NOT discard the ribs and seeds. If not, DO discard the ribs and seeds
- xi. The longest I have let it go (at least on record) was about ½ year. The veggies were still nice and crisp and had a great texture and taste.

PICTURES [1]

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## FUN WITH DEHYDRATION

---

## DEHYDRATED PORTABELLA MUSHROOMS

---

So, this is obviously not a meal in itself, but a useful ingredient. I am not quite sure when I started dehydrating portabellas, but I vaguely recall it having something to do with trying to recreate Lipton’s Onion Soup mix. The last time I used these was in my “The Accidental Sloppy Joe” (recipe coming [at some point]) and boy was it good!!!

### INGREDIENTS

---

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
AR	6 oz. Pack	Slice Portabella Mushrooms

This is another one of those do as many as you want. I think my minimum is three packs, depending on the recipe I am targeting.

### SPECIAL TOOLS

---

- Dehydrator [i]
- Food Saver (or similar vacuum sealer)
- Vacuum seal bags or bag rolls [ii]

### PREPARATION

---

- 1) Gently rinse mushrooms [iii]
- 2) Pat dry with paper towels. Remove as much moisture a possible
- 3) Put one pack of mushrooms on one dehydrator rack [iv]
- 4) Set the dehydrator temperature to 125 deg. F and the timer to 7 to 9 hours [v]
- 5) Start checking on the mushrooms at 7 hours. Pull the mushrooms when they are dry and just short of being brittle [v]
- 6) Label 1 qt. vac seal bag for each 6 oz pack of mushrooms with the date and “6 oz. pack of Portabella Mushrooms”
- 7) Vac seal the mushrooms and store in a cool, dry place, out of direct sunlight (preferably dark if you can swing it)

### NOTES

---

- i. Well of course you need a dehydrator! That is, unless you live in an area where you can do sun drying or something like that. I have an Excalibur 9 tray and have been pretty happy with it. Wait.... I have two now, but that is another story
- ii. I like the 1 qt. bags for this
- iii. OK, I know this is “controversial”, but given what they grow in...

- iv. This may vary depending on your dehydrator and how much you are dehydrating, but one pack per rack works for me
- v. The Excalibur guide says 3 – 7 hours and they should be “leathery”, but this time range works for me and what is in my head for their intended use

## PICTURES

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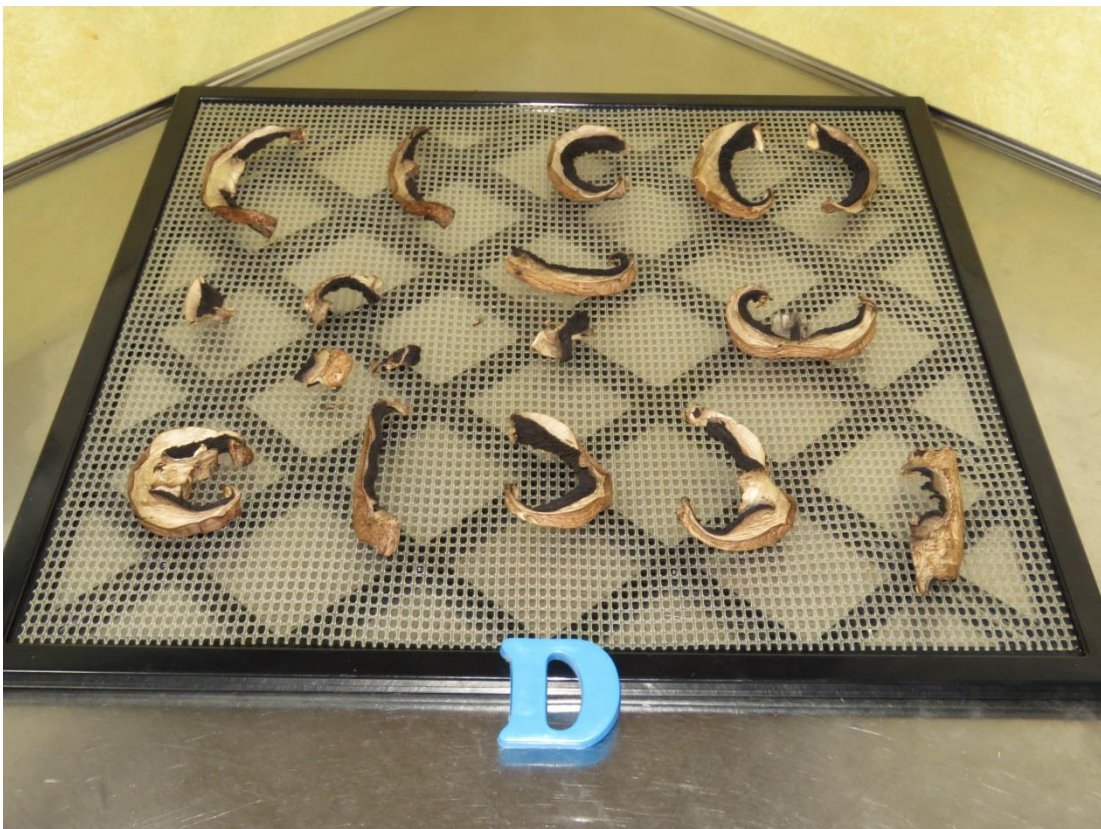














---

## DEHYDRATED ONIONS

---

So, this also is obviously not a meal in itself, but a useful ingredient. I think this one came about with my attempt to recreate Lipton's Onion soup mix along with the dehydrated Portabellas. Also, as with the Portabellas, the last time I used these was in my "The Accidental Sloppy Joe" (recipe coming [at some point]) and boy was it good!!!

---

### INGREDIENTS

---

<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>
AR	Decent Sized	Onion

I typically do Sweet or Vidalia onions. To be honest, I don't know what, if any, difference there is between Sweet and Vidalia onions.

---

### SPECIAL TOOLS

---

- Dehydrator [i]
- Food Saver (or similar vacuum sealer)
- Vacuum seal bags or bag rolls [ii]

---

### PREPARATION

---

- 1) Rinse the onions
- 2) Pat dry with paper towels. Remove as much moisture a possible
- 3) Slice off the root and stem ends
- 4) Remove the outer paper skin and the first thin layer of onion
- 5) Slice the onions perpendicular to the axis into about ¼ inch slices
- 6) Separate the onion rings
- 7) Evenly distribute the rings over enough dehydrator racks to avoid "crowding". Place smaller rings within larger rings as needed [iv]
- 8) Set the dehydrator temperature to 125 deg. F and the timer to 9 to 12 hours [v]
- 9) Start checking on the mushrooms at 9 hours. Pull the onions when they are dry and just short of being brittle [v]
- 10) Label 1 qt. vac seal bag for each onion with the date and type of onion
- 11) Vac seal the onions and store in a cool, dry place, out of direct sunlight (preferably dark if you can swing it)

## NOTES

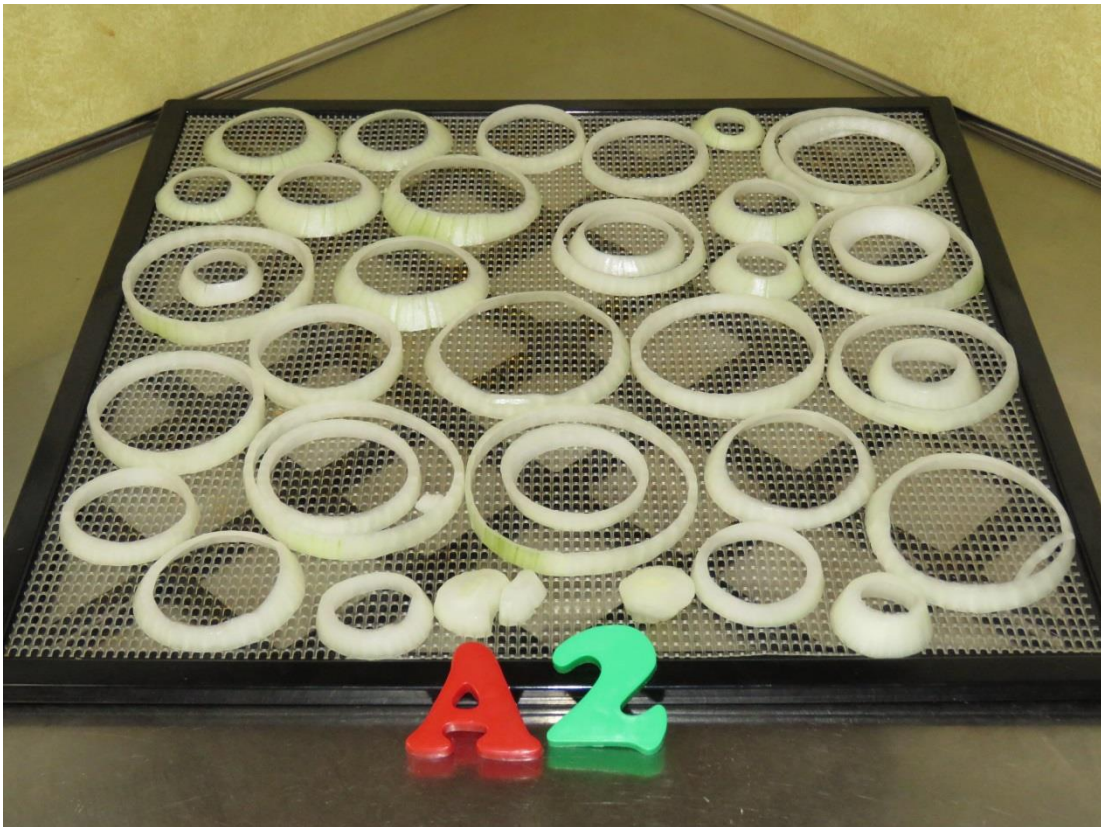
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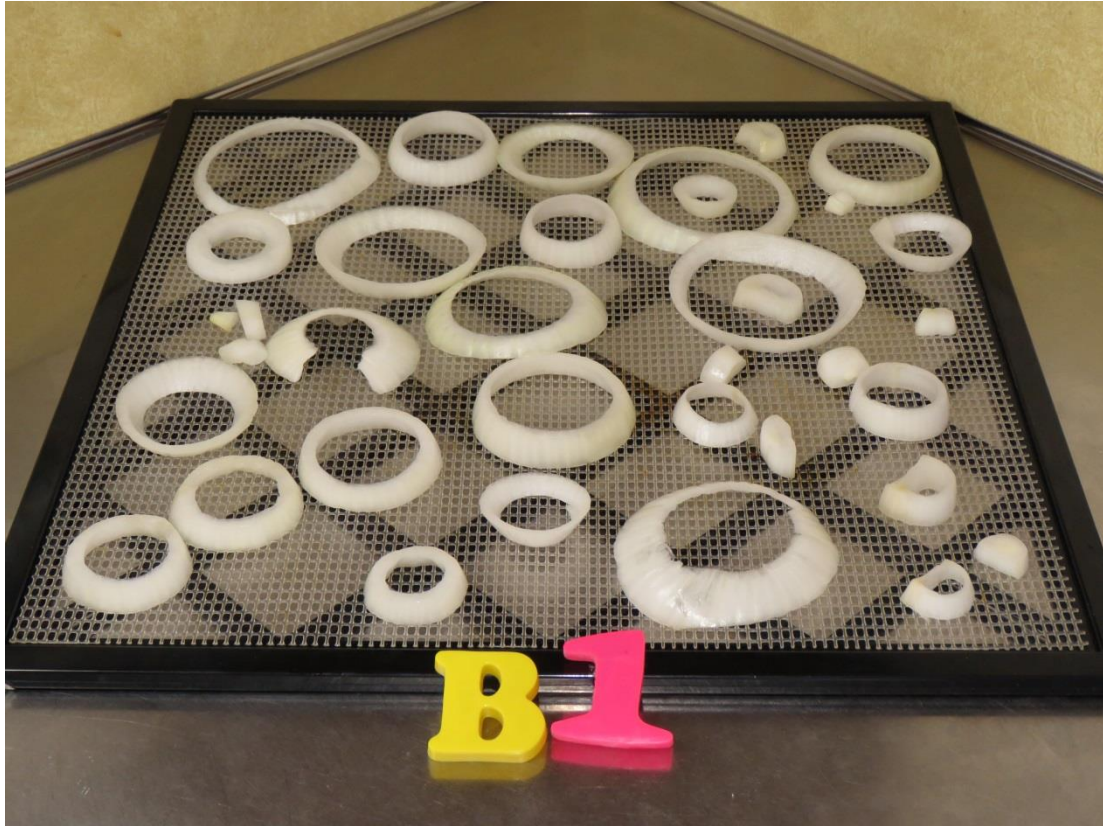
- i. Well of course you need a dehydrator! That is, unless you live in an area where you can do sun drying or something like that. I have an Excalibur 9 tray and have been pretty happy with it. Wait.... I have two now, but that is another story
- ii. I like the 1 qt. bags for this
- iii. This may vary depending on your dehydrator and how much you are dehydrating, but one onion per two racks generally works for me
- iv. The Excalibur guide says 4 - 8 hours and they should be "leathery", but this time range works for me and what is in my head for their intended use

## PICTURES

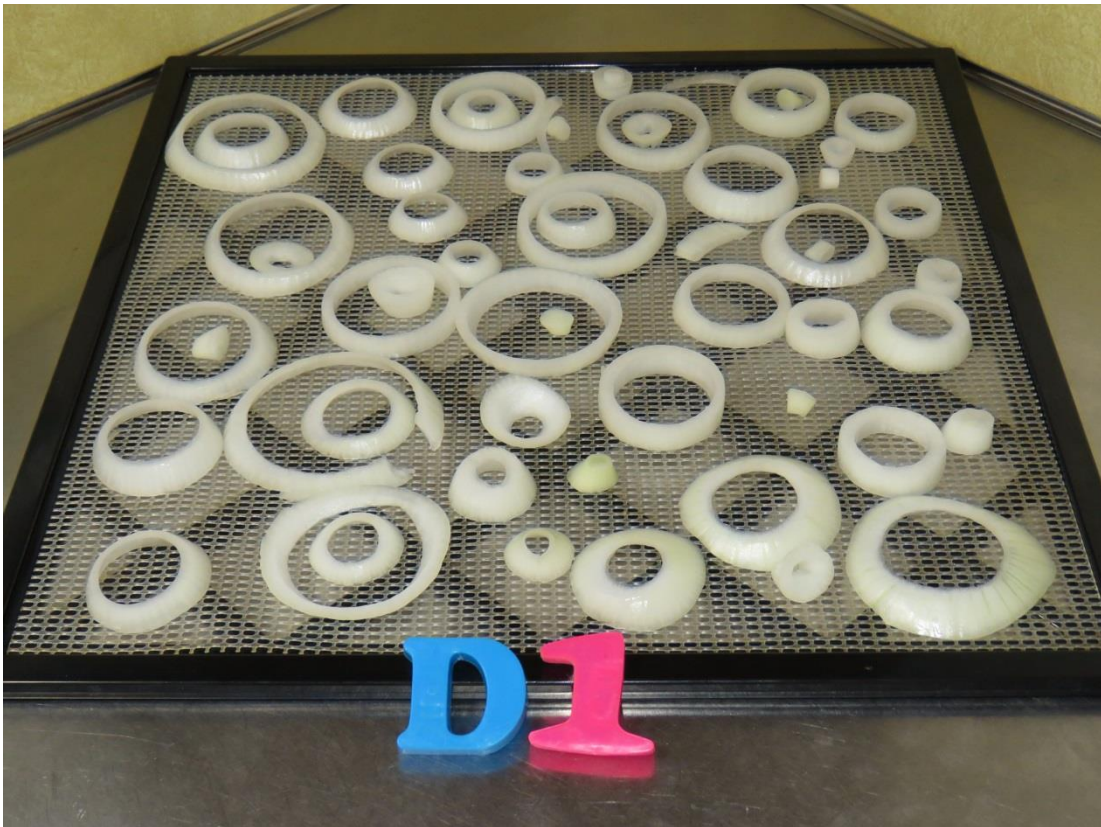
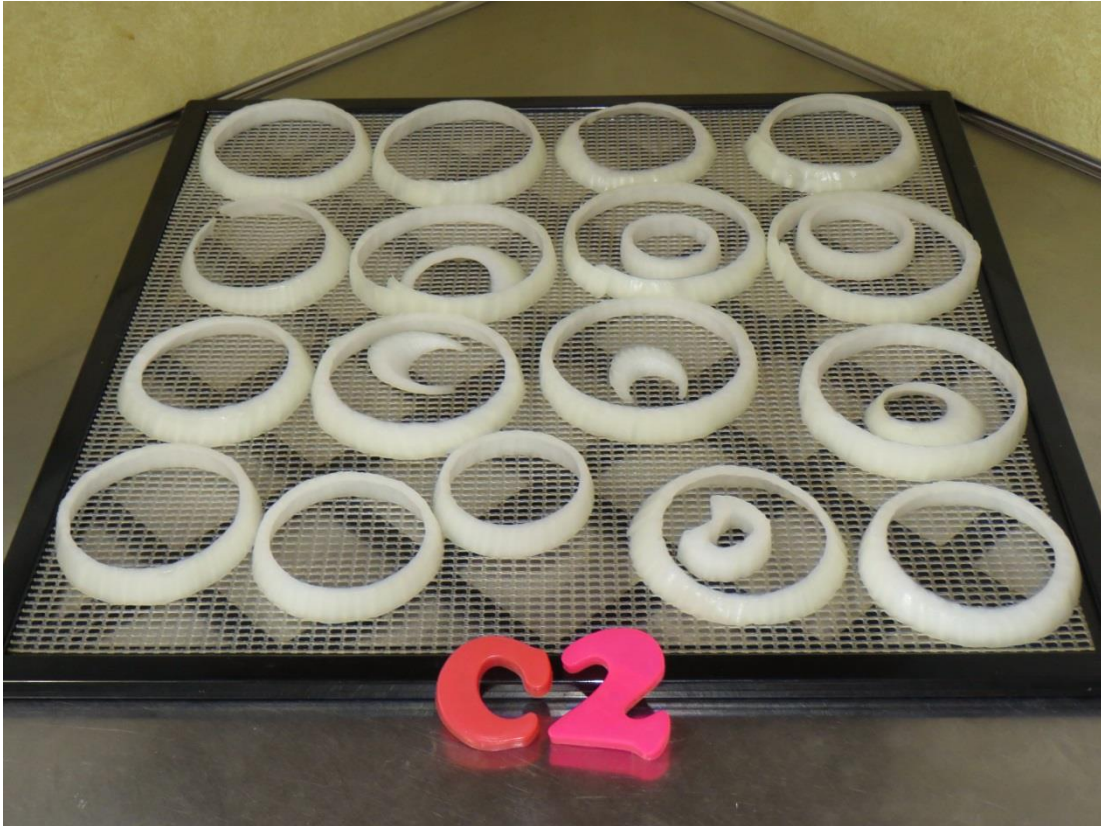
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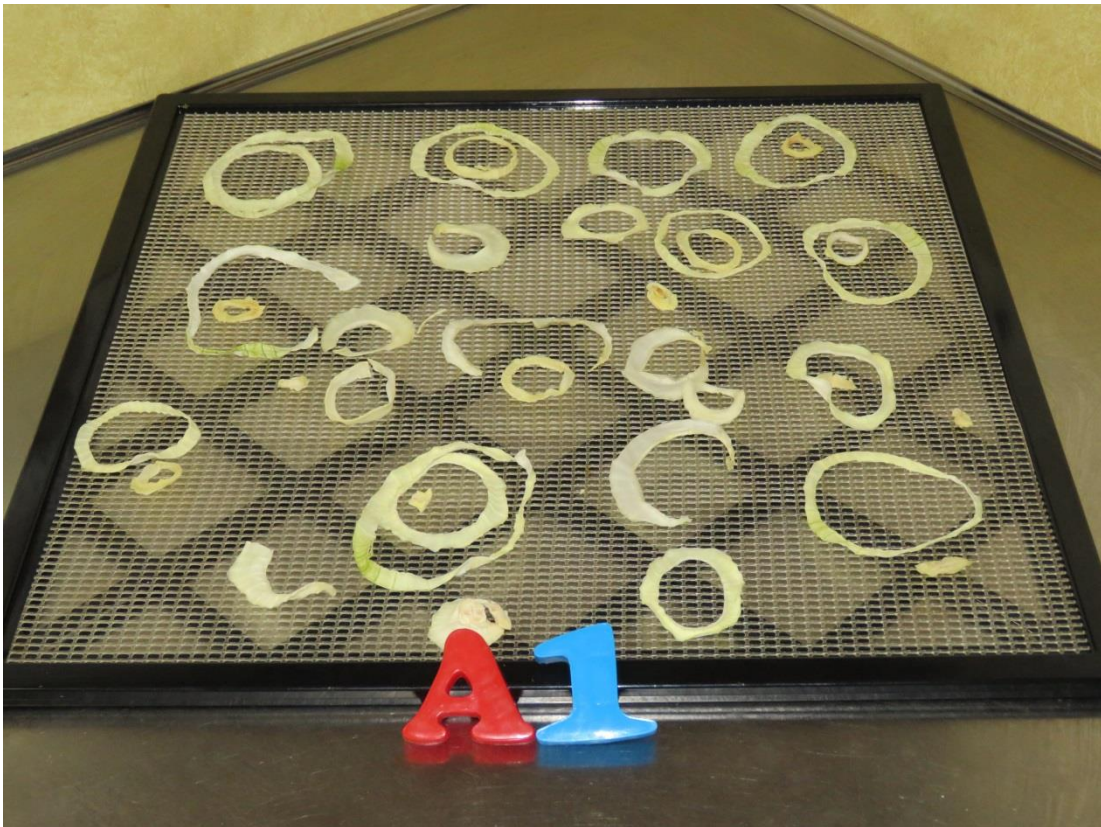
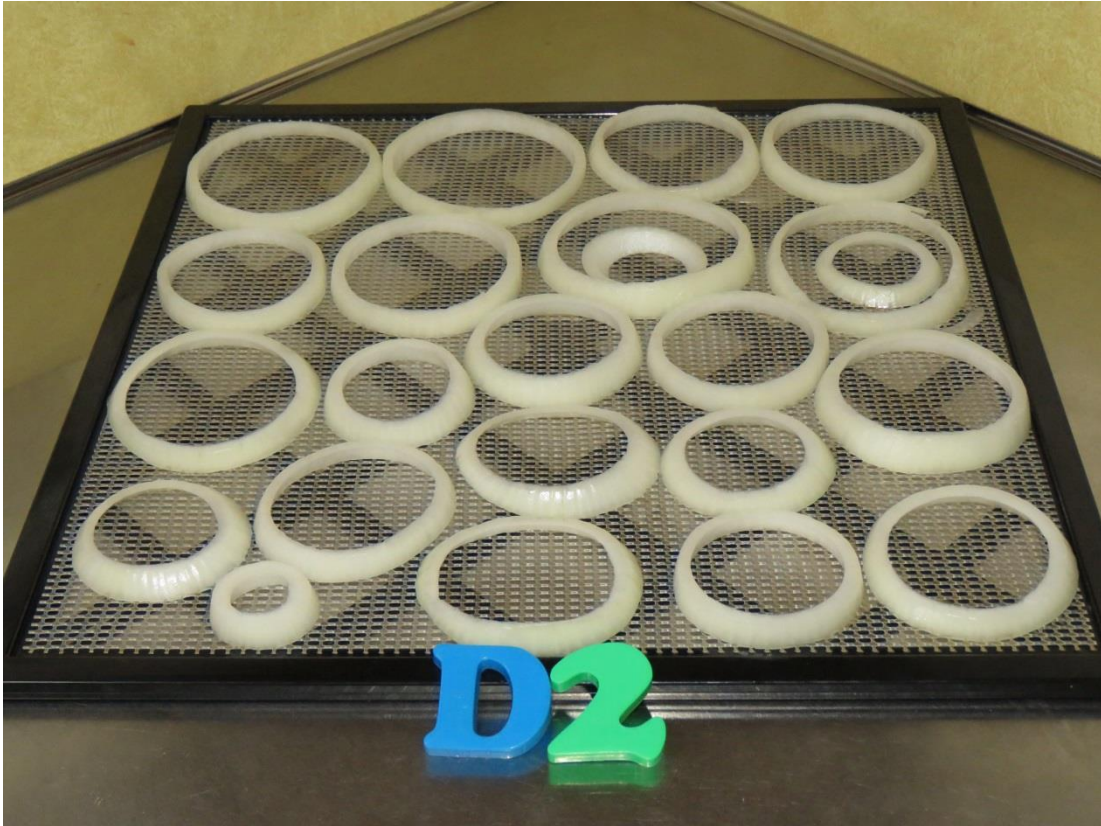


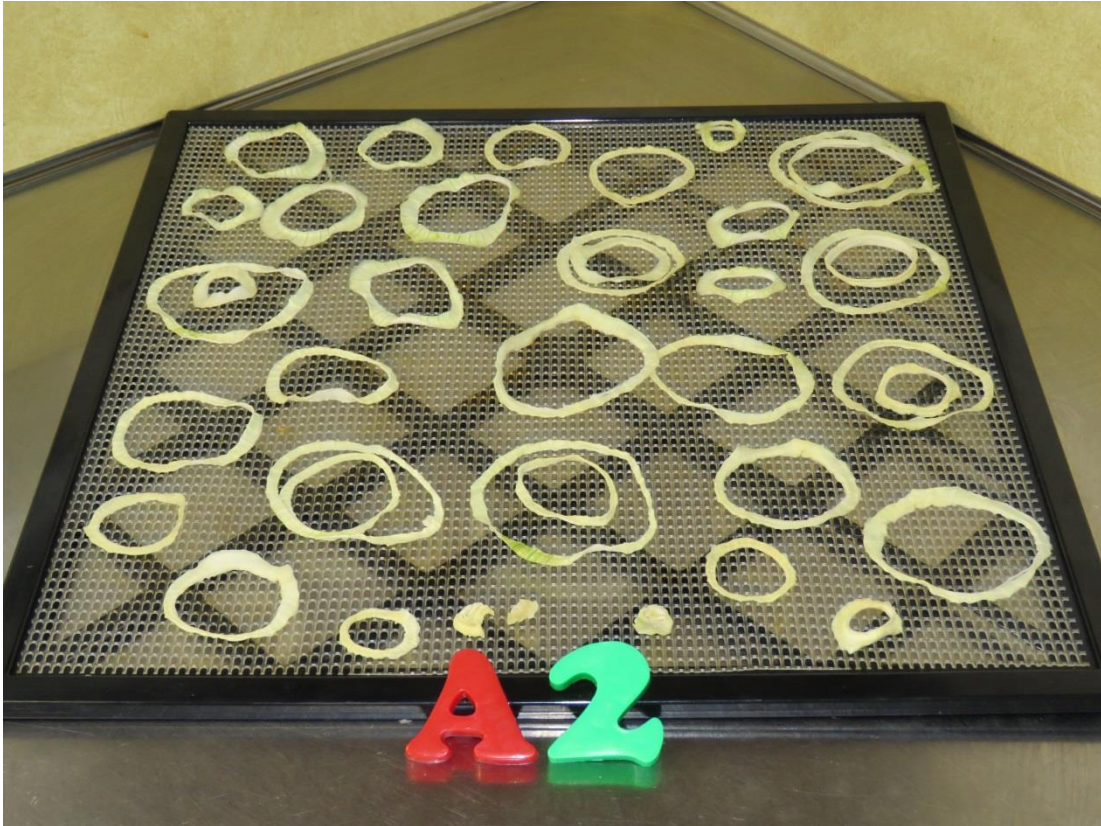


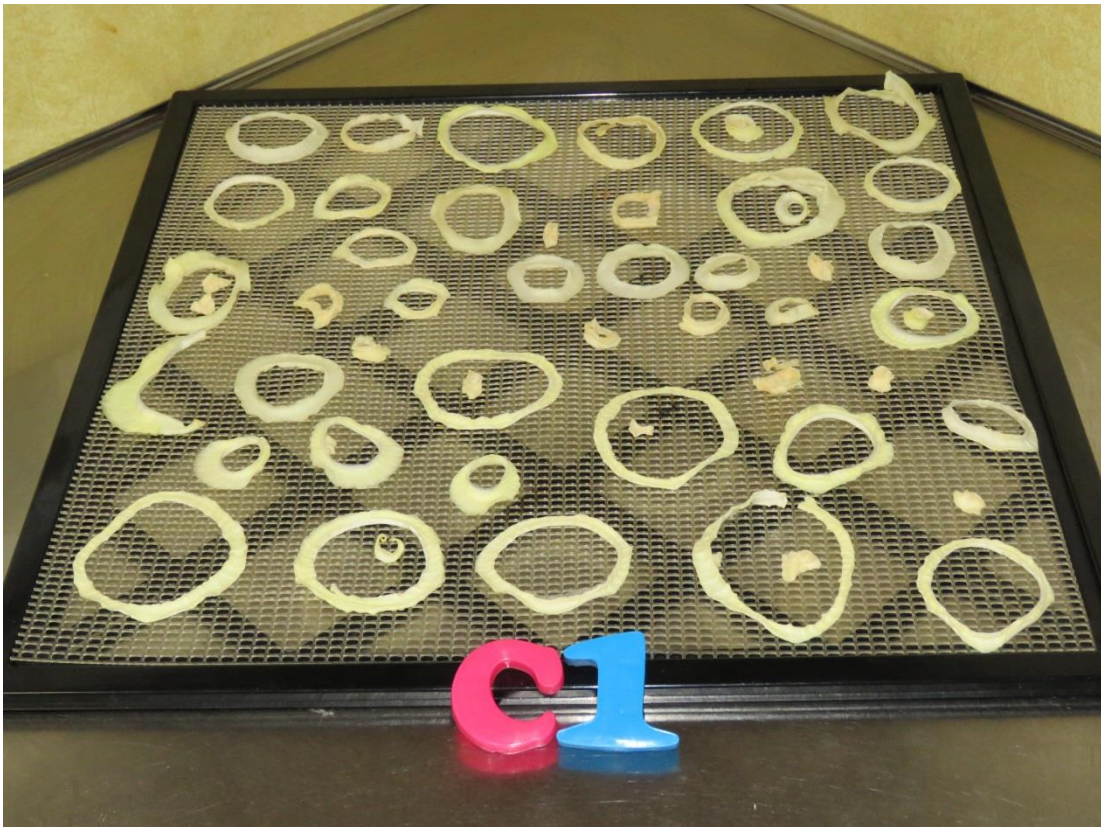


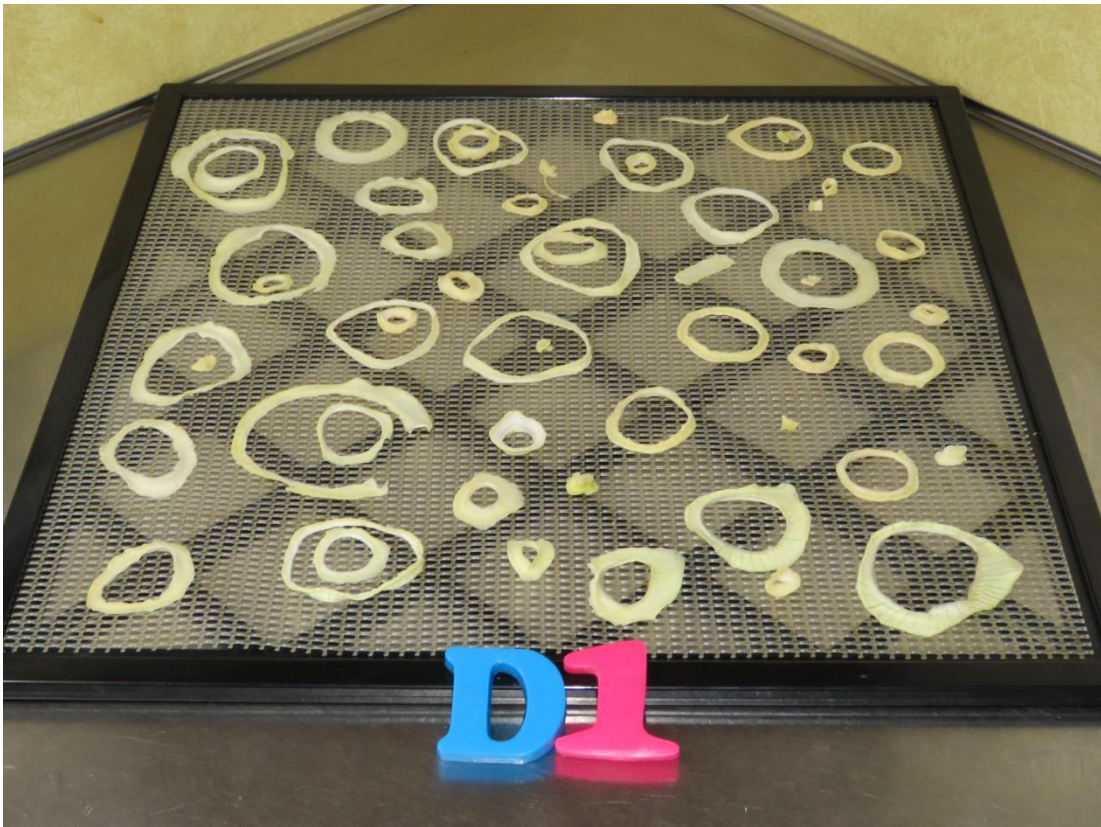


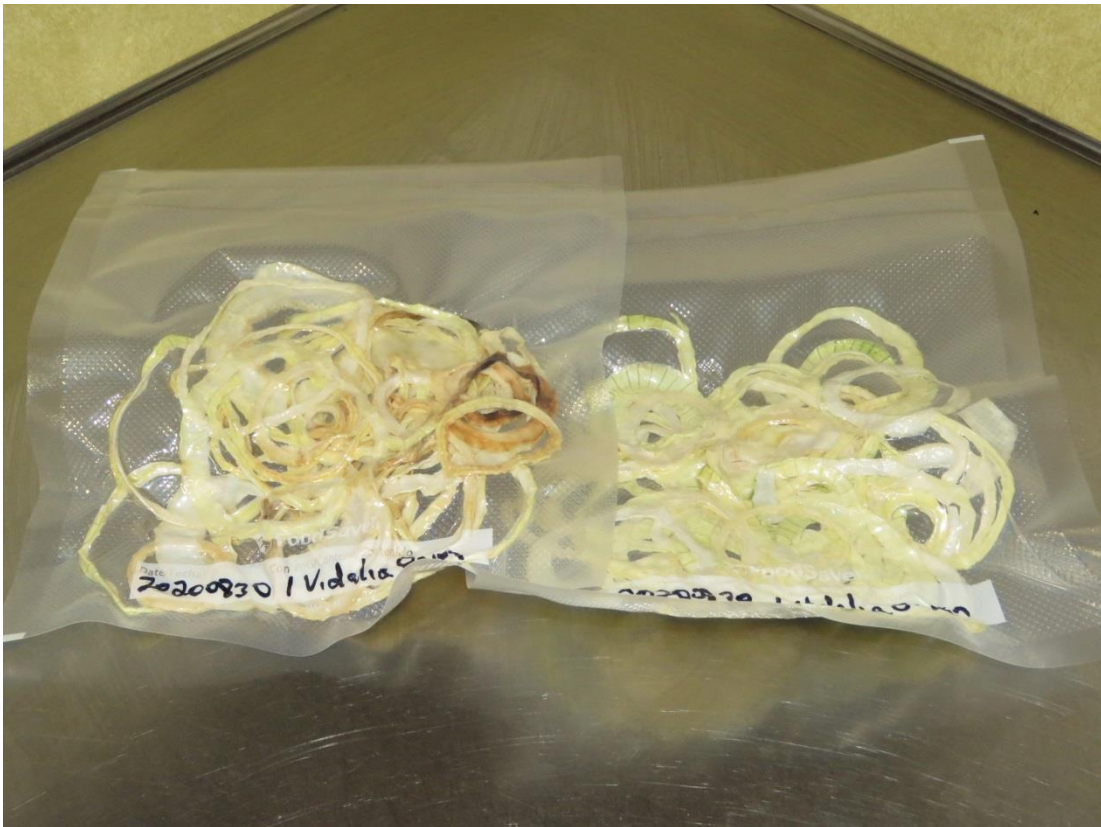
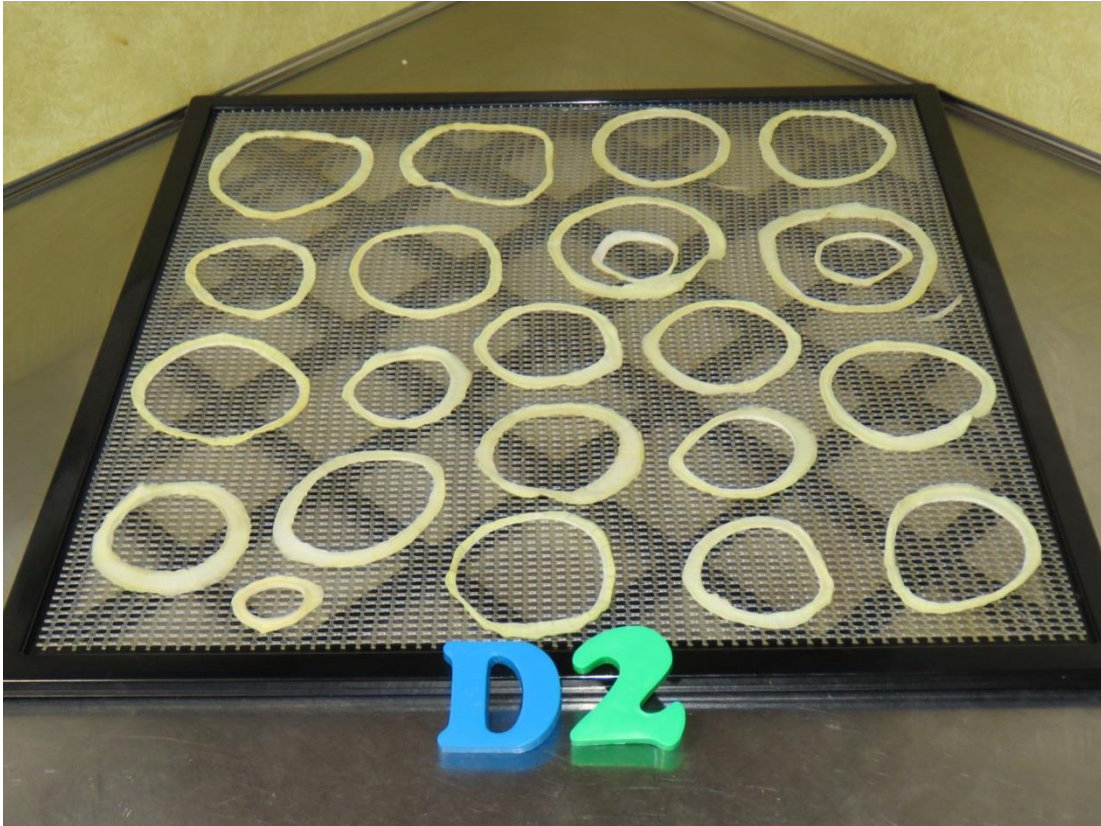


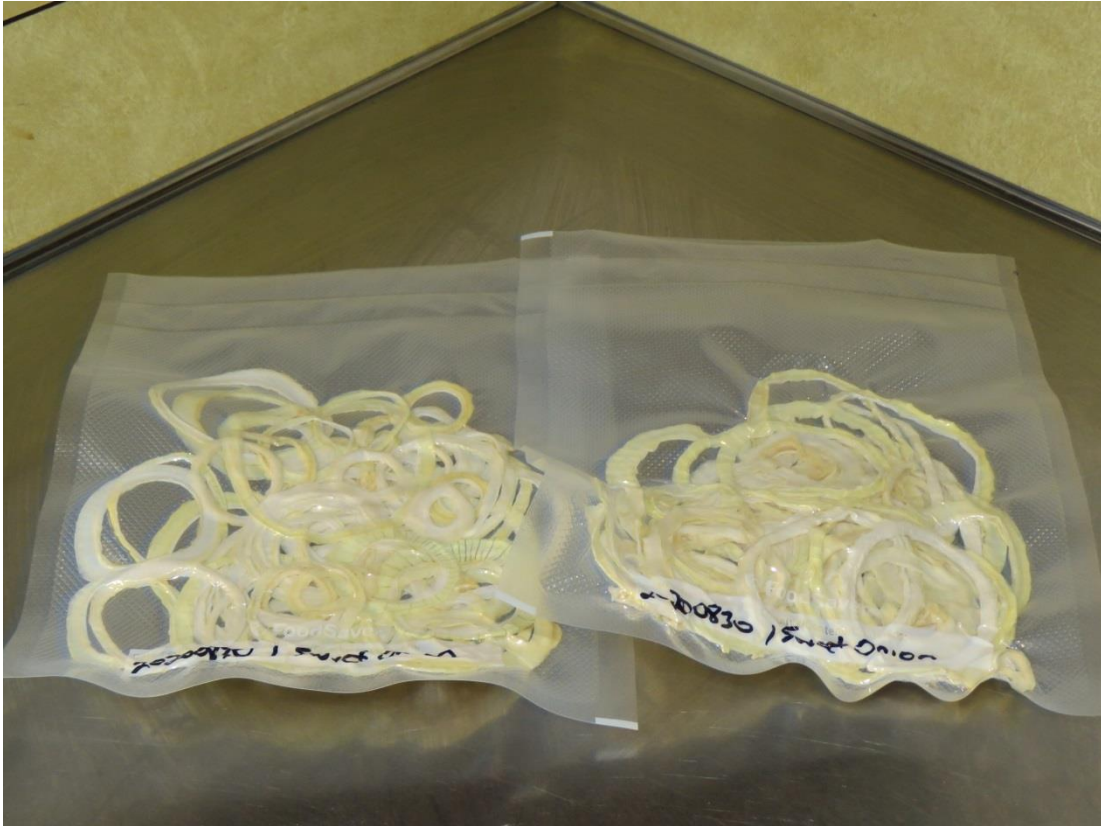












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## BLASTS FROM THE PAST

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## SPAMALOAF

---

This one is back from 2010. That is over 10 years ago. I only have the pictures right now, but I might have notes in a box somewhere in my bat cave (this was one apartment ago)

---

## INGREDIENTS

---

<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>

See pictures for the ingredients

---

## SPECIAL TOOLS

---

- NONE!

---

## PREPARATION

---

13) See pictures for a guess on the preparation

---

## NOTES

---

- ii. NONE!



PICTURES











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## GRILLED CHEESE BURGER

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This one is back from 2012. That is over 8 years ago. I only have the pictures right now, but I might have notes in a box somewhere in my bat cave (this was one apartment ago)

---

### INGREDIENTS

---

<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Item</b>

See pictures for the ingredients

---

### SPECIAL TOOLS

---

- NONE!

---

### PREPARATION

---

14) See pictures for a guess on the preparation

---

### NOTES

---

- iii. NONE!

PICTURES









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## THE FOOD EXPERIMENTS

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## LOCAL FARM FRESH EGGS VS COMMERCIAL EGGS EXPERIMENT

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I picked up some local free range eggs from The River Country Store more or less on a whim. I could not recall if I have ever had non-commercial eggs before, so I decided to give them a try. I was slightly put off at first because they looked a little dirty. I was also a bit puzzled as to why they were not refrigerated. (Is it obvious yet that I am not a country boy?) I did a bit o' research on the ol' interwebs and found that this was normal. Not only normal, but a huge benefit. It turns out that you do not have to refrigerate farm fresh eggs because of the natural protectant on them. If you super clean them, you clean off the protectant too and then have to refrigerate them. This is exactly why you have to refrigerate commercial eggs.

Anyways... I hear tell that farm fresh, free range eggs have a much superior taste as compared to commercial eggs, but can I tell the difference?

### PROBLEM STATEMENT

---

Do local farm fresh eggs taste better than commercial eggs bought in main stream grocery stores?

### HYPOTHESIS

---

I have NO idea... Maybe??? Some people dig them, but I really don't know!

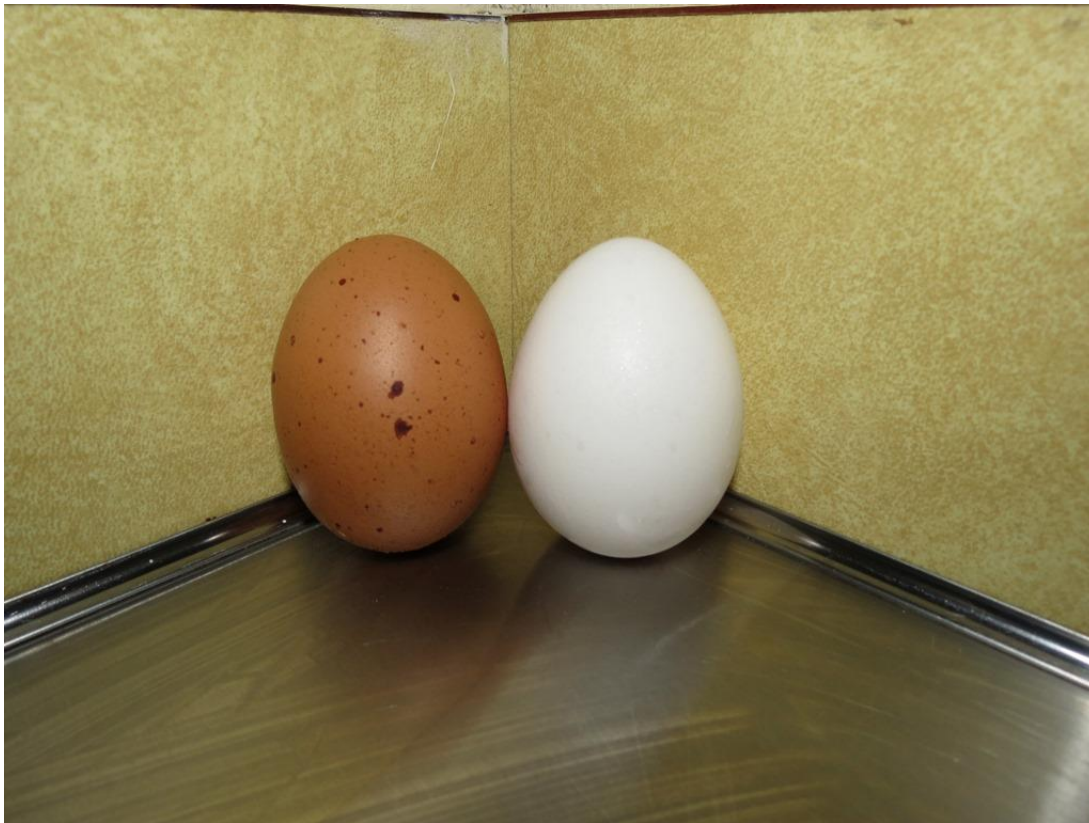
### EXPERIMENT LOG

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20170505 (FRIDAY)

---

I fried them up over easy with some salt, pepper, and garlic powder. Now I am not great with eggs, but I think they turned out decently. Could I taste a difference? I thought maybe at the first bite there was something different about the local free range eggs, but I may have been imagining it. Overall, I could not really discern a difference. I suspect that was mostly due to my generous use of seasoning. I was also not entirely happy with my methodology; the pans were roughly the same size, but slightly different and they were cooked on separate burners so the heat was probably not exactly the same. I bought another one of those little egg pans and was planning on trying that, but now that I think about it, the temperature controlled electric skillet would be a better choice.





---

20170604 (SUNDAY)

---

I tried again today. My goal was to minimize any sort of subconscious bias, so I designed the experiment accordingly.

**Description:**

I was going to do sunny side up, but I broke one of the yokes, so scrambled it was! I cooked them at the same time on a temperature controlled electric griddle using egg rings. I did not use any seasoning. When finished, I put them on plates, with the bottoms labeled, on a lazy susan. I then blindfolded myself and spun the lazy susan in both directions several times. I then sampled each egg a little bit at a time (still blindfolded) making notes as I ate.

**PRELIMINARY Conclusion:**

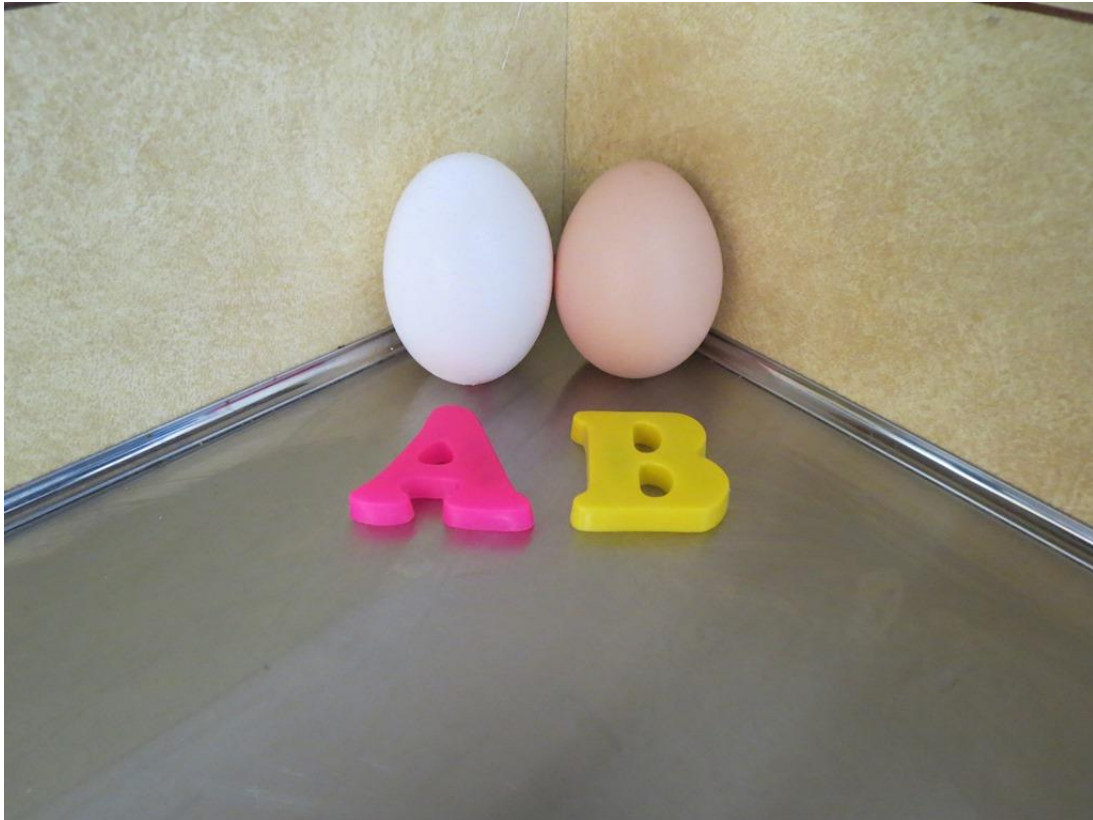
I found that there was maybe the subtlest of difference between the two, but not what I would necessarily call significant. I did, however, wind up choosing the Local Farm Fresh eggs.

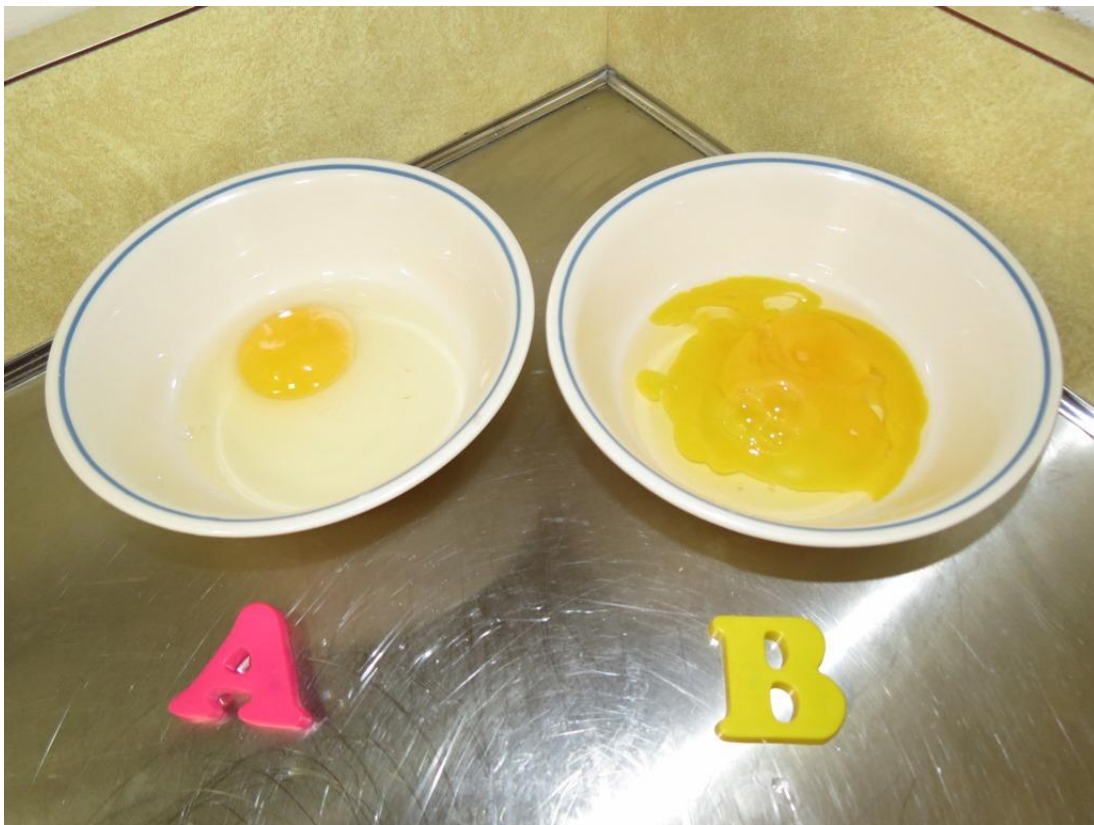
**Discussion:**

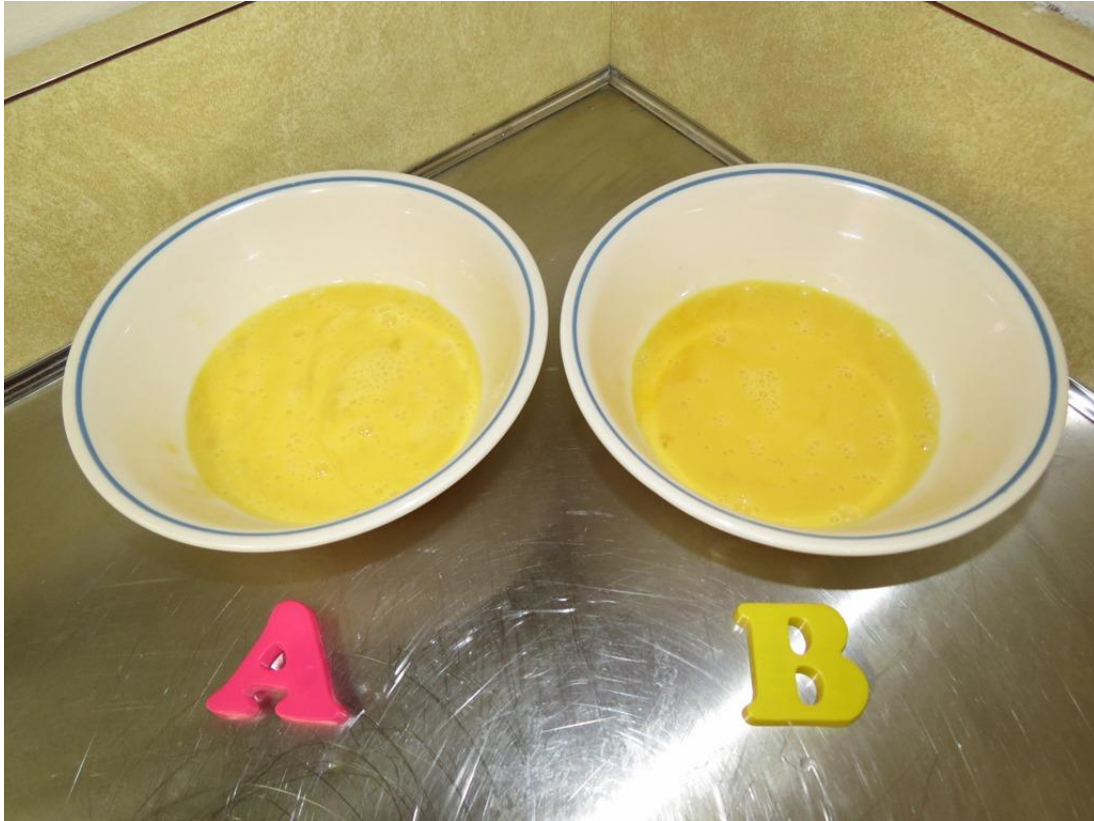
This is obviously not a super strict setup, but I think it is reasonable given the limitations. So far, I have only one data point (I am not counting the first one), so we can't really draw any conclusions. I think I will need to do more tests and see how the results trend. One thing I will do next time is let the commercial egg warm to room temperature before cooking; the commercial eggs are stored in the fridge, while the local farm fresh are not.

A couple of other things to note....

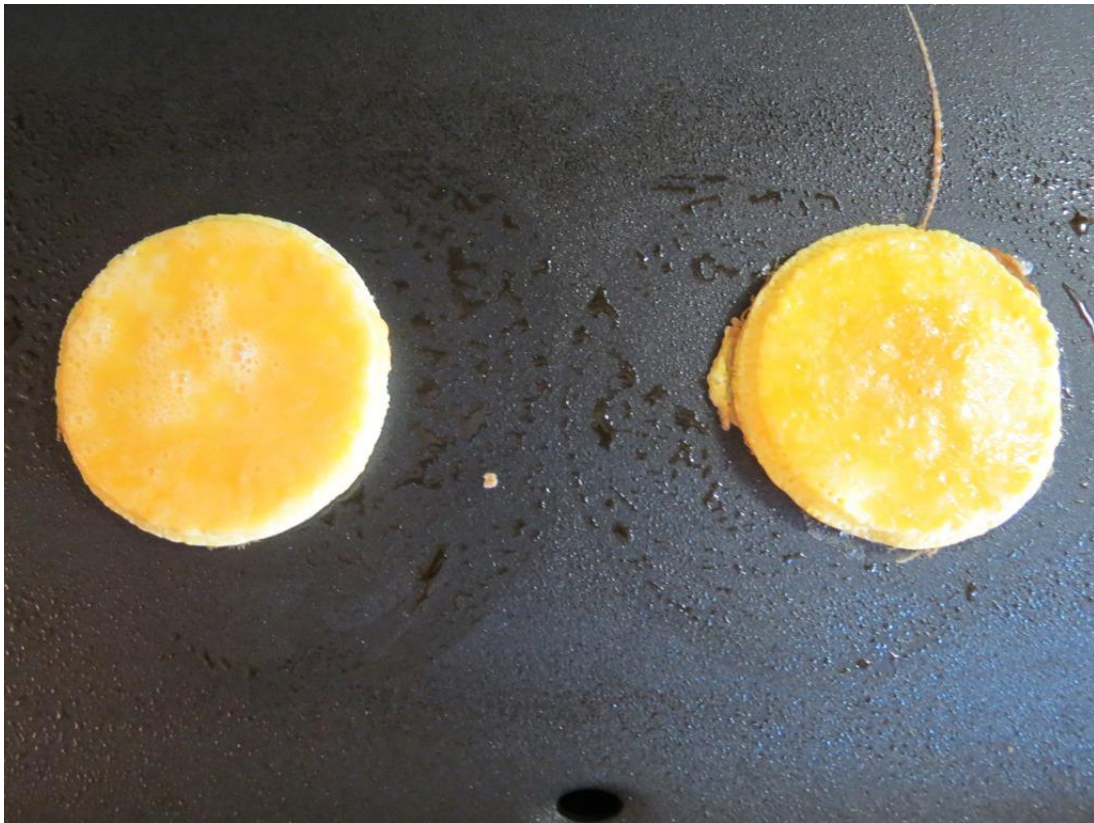
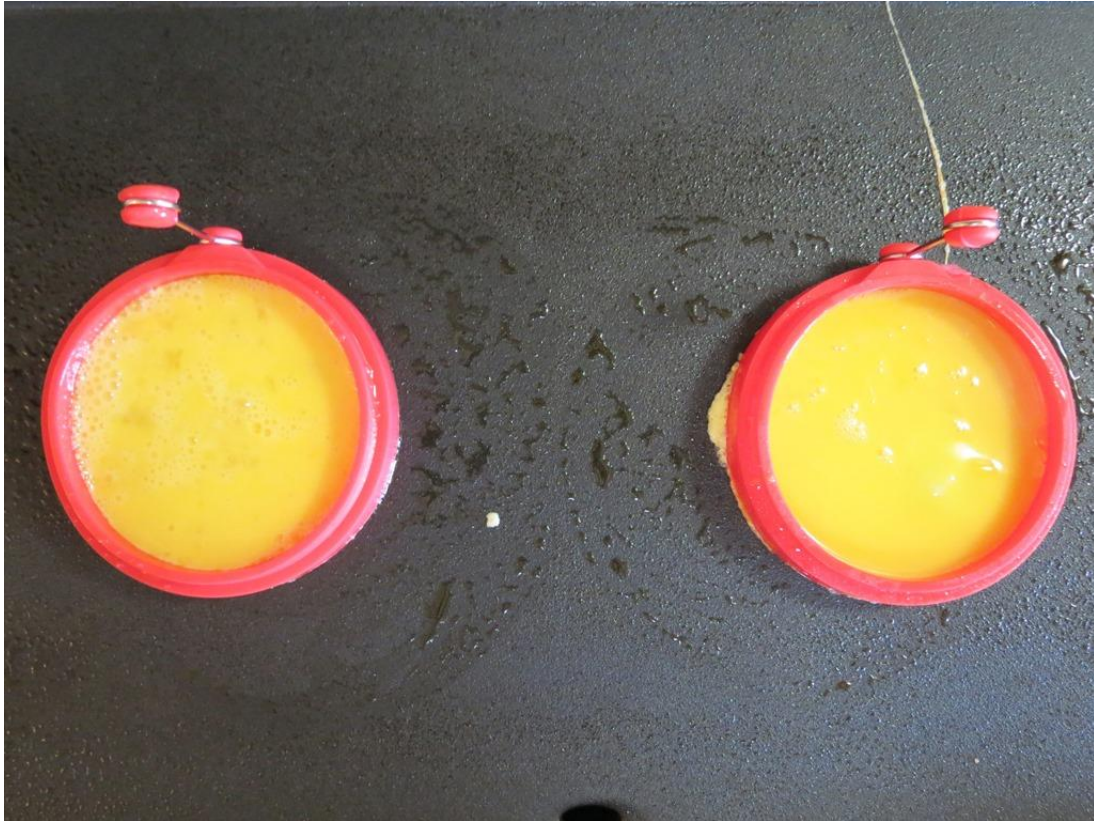
- 1) I am not an expert at cooking eggs
- 2) I probably do not have the most "refined" of palates.













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20170610 (SATURDAY)

---

I tried again today. Same setup as last week, but I left the store bought egg out on the counter for a while to give it a chance to warm to room temperature before cooking. Eggs were cooked at 300 deg. F on an electric skillet in egg rings for about 3 minutes then flipped and cooked for an additional minute.

**Observations:**

I believe the egg yolks for the farm fresh eggs were yellower (if that is a word). It also broke easier which meant I had to go with scrambled again. The farm fresh also cooked faster, but that may have been due to its smaller size.

**PRELIMINARY Conclusion:**

Once again, I found that there was maybe the subtlest of difference between the two, but not what I would necessarily call significant. Once again, I picked the farm fresh egg.

**Things to Try Next Time:**

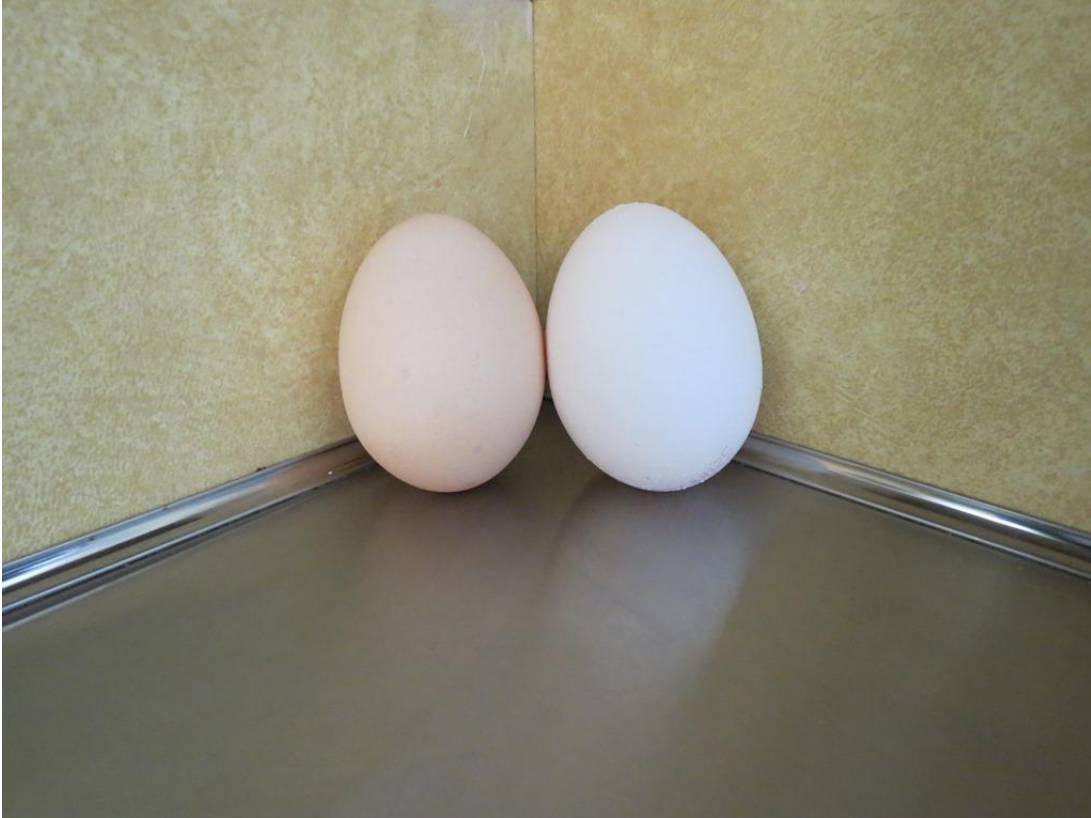
I will either get smaller store bought eggs or start the farm fresh eggs cooking a little later than the commercial eggs.

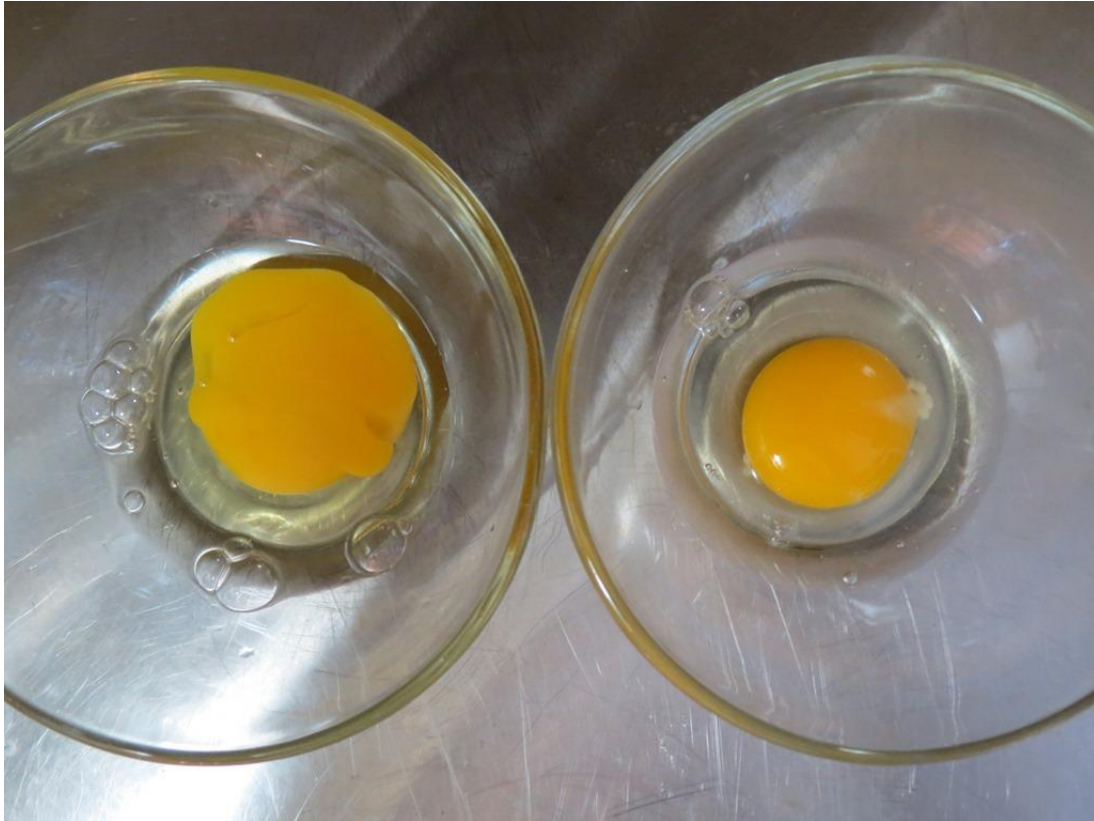
At some point I also want to try eggs from different farms. I am told the farm that the eggs come from can make a world of difference.

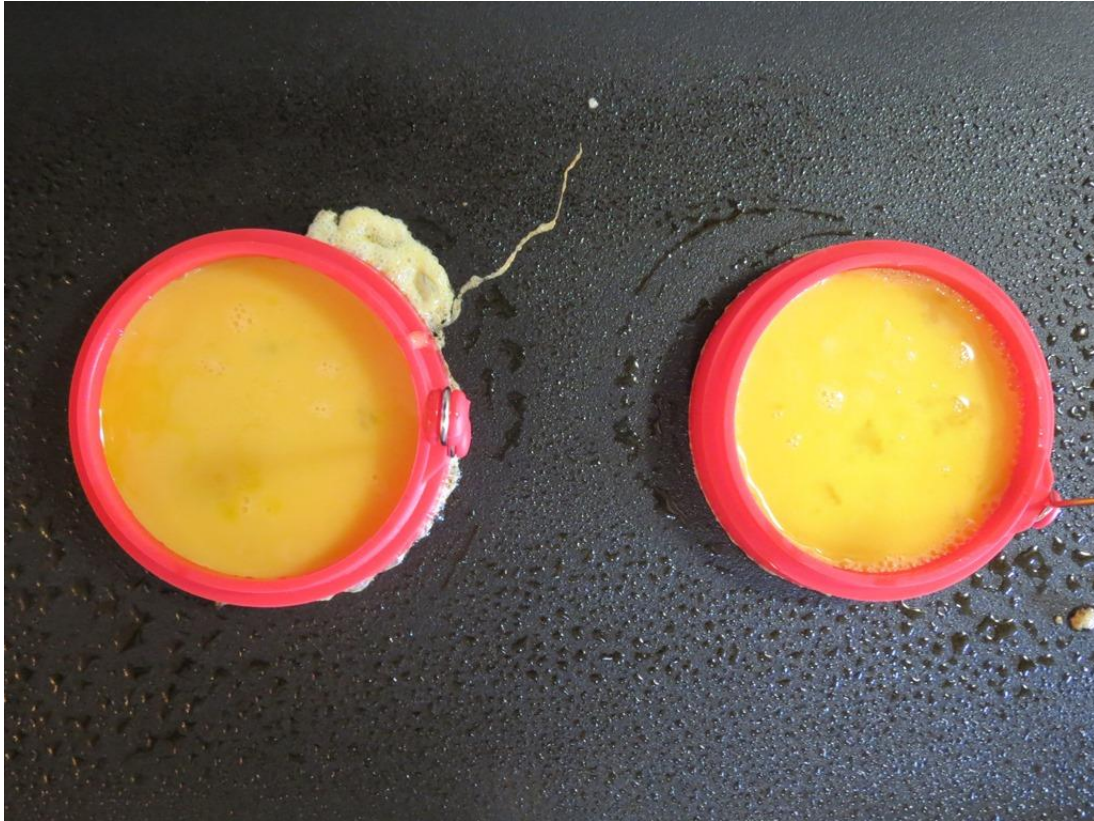
**Discussion:**

Even if I cannot taste significant difference between the local farm fresh and commercial eggs, I will still buy the local farm fresh. Why?...

- 1) Convenience Getting Them - They sell them at The River Country Store which is RIGHT on my way home.
- 2) Convenience Storing Them - They can be stored at room temperature and can last for several weeks (depending on who you talk to).
- 3) I Dig the Colors - Almost a silly thing, but I like all the different colored eggs.
- 4) Support Local Businesses - Not only is the store local, but so is the farm.









---

### CONCLUSION

---

So far.... No, local farm fresh eggs do not taste significantly better than commercial eggs bought in main stream grocery stores.

Maybe I can taste the subtlest of difference, but nothing that knocks my socks off. However, I will still buy the local farm fresh. Why?...

- 1) Convenience Getting Them - They sell them at The River Country Store which is RIGHT on my way home.
- 2) Convenience Storing Them - They can be stored at room temperature and can last for several weeks (depending on who you talk to).
- 3) I Dig the Colors - Almost a silly thing, but I like all the different colored eggs.
- 4) Support Local Businesses - Not only is the store local, but so is the farm.

---

## THE GRAND BACON EXPERIMENT – PART I

---

This one hails from October 2013. That is 6 years ago, wait... 7 years ago. The format is a little bit different than my more recent experiments, but the info is still good. This is also before I got into Kunzler bacon

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### PROBLEM STATEMENT

---

Is high end specialty bacon better than run of the mill store bought bacon?

---

### HYPOTHESIS

---

Not sure, but it will be interesting!

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### EXPERIMENT LOG

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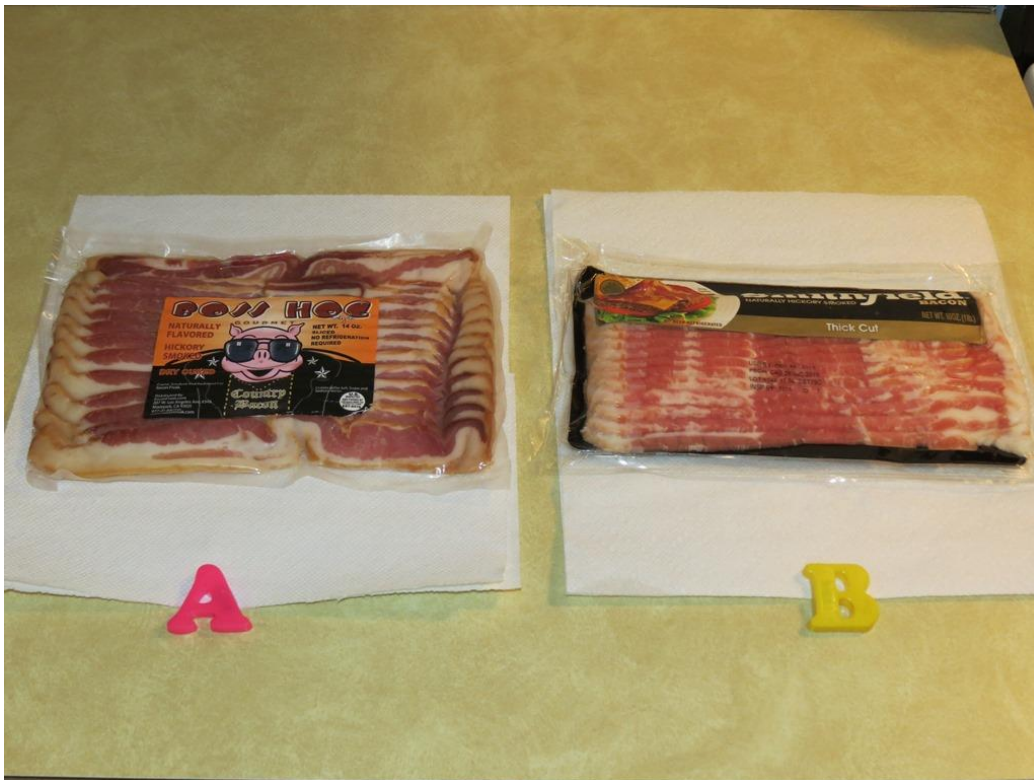
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#### THE BACON

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I evaluated the two brands of bacon:

- A – Boss Hog Hickory Smoked, Dry Cured Country Bacon
- B – Smithfield Hickory Smoked, Thick Cut Bacon



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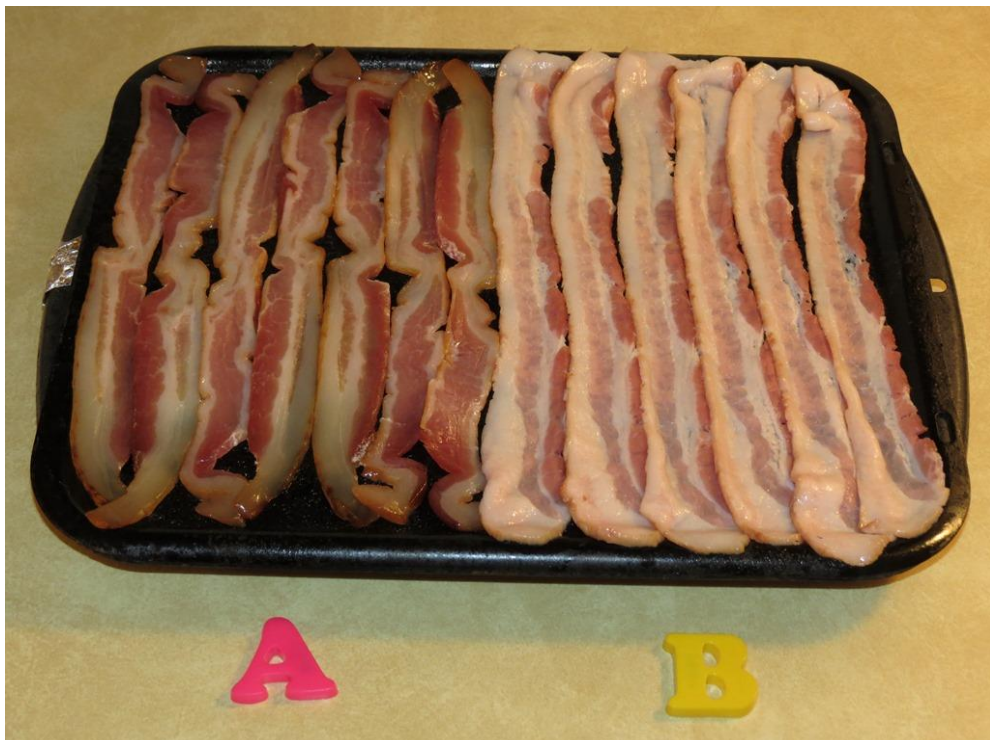
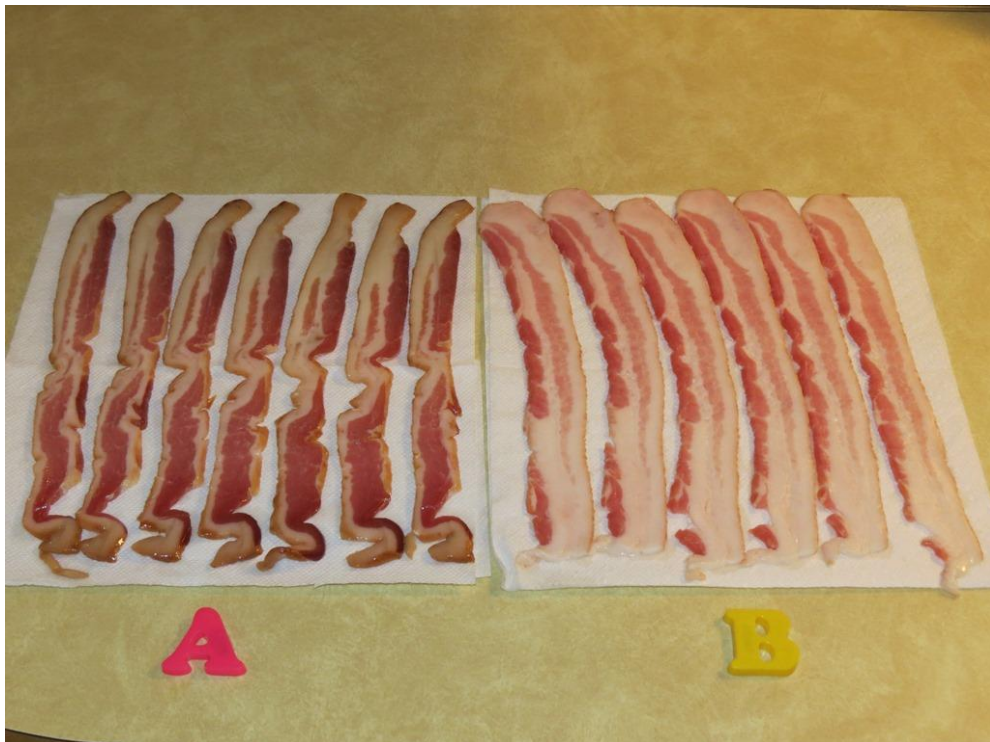
PRECOOK

---

My initial assessment was to cook  $\frac{1}{2}$  package of each. This came out to:

A – Boss Hog: 7 pieces, 202 g

B – Smithfield: 6 pieces, 209 g





---

### COOKING METHOD

---

I decided to try oven cooking. I have not made bacon this way before; I have always fried it. Technically, I should have tried frying first in order to limit the number of variables in the experiment. On the other hand, it is not a double blind experiment so it is tainted anyway. On the third hand... HEY! ITS BACON!

The little card that came with the Boss Hog bacon said to cook it at 400 deg. F for 17-20 minutes and to put the bacon in the over while it is heating. I do not know the heating characteristics of my oven, so I decided to just cook it at 400 deg. F for 20 min. I verified the oven temperature with an oven thermometer.

---

### POST COOK

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Post cook weights

A – Boss Hog: 7 pieces, 91 g

B – Smithfield: 6 pieces, 76 g

So the Boss Hog lost 55% of its precook weight and the Smithfield lost 64% is its precook weight.



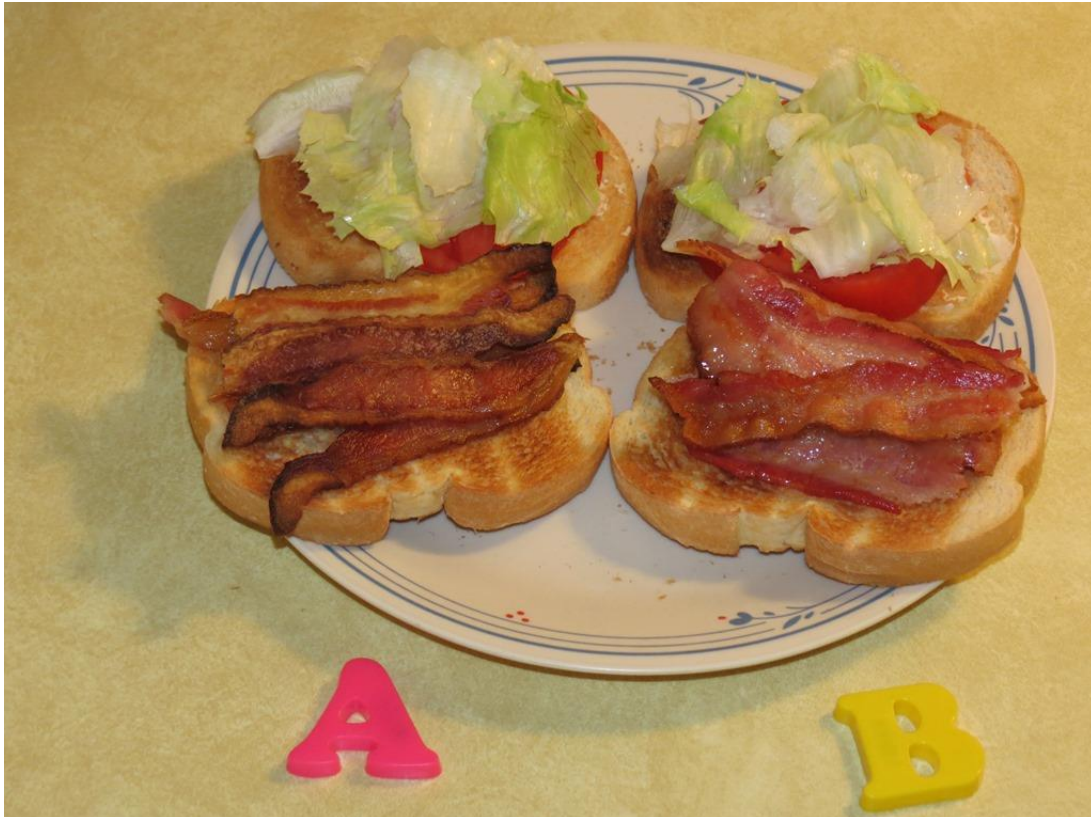
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TASTE TEST

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This was done in two parts. The first was just straight pieces of bacon and the second was in a BLT. The Boss Hog bacon definitely had a nice different flavor. I guess I would say it was smokier than I have had before. The Smithfield bacon was well.... bacon. It tasted good (HEY! ITS BACON!), but nothing that really stood out from previous bacon.

In the interest of full disclosure, this was not a double blind experiment; I knew which was which throughout the entire process. My assessment may therefore be colored by my preconceptions and expectations.



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COST

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- A - Boss Hog: \$43.81 for (Qty. 2) 14 oz packages including shipping.  
Effective single package price was \$21.91
- B - Smithfield: \$5.99 for a 16 oz package

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### PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION

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The Boss Hog bacon was definitely tasty, but at 3.0X the price of the Smithfield (based on post cook weight), is it worth it? So far, yes, I think it is. I am not sure I would get it every day, but in all fairness I do not buy a lot of bacon. At my present level of bacon consumption, I would definitely choose this over the Smithfield. If I ate bacon regularly, I would probably go with a store bought brand most of the time and get the Boss Hog every so often to treat myself.

---

### FUTURE WORK

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- Bacon Wrapped Ribeye
- Bacon Wrapped Spam (Yes, I know, but I gotta try. I think it would make a fantastic appetizer)
- Many other recipes.....many other bacons

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### OTHER BACON SOURCES

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Since I came to learn about BaconFreak.com, I have learned about two more specialty bacon places that I would like to try eventually

- 1) Benton's Country Hams - <http://bentonscountryhams2.com/>
- 2) Nueskes - <http://www.nueskes.com/shop-by-department/smoked-bacon.aspx#.UIAn9LXD-JA>

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## THE GRAND BACON EXPERIMENT – PART III

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This one hails from October 2013, right after “The Grand Bacon Experiment – Part I”. As with that one, the format is a little bit different than my more recent experiments, but the info is still good. This is also before I got into Kunzler bacon

---

### OBJECTIVES

---

- Create some tasty bacon treats
- Further explore the differences between specialty bacon and regular store bought bacon

---

### THE TASTY TREAT

---

I had been thinking about this for the week since the Grand Bacon Experiment Part I. Then one day it hit me.... Bacon Cordon SPAM! I did not have a recipe so I had to make it up as I went along.

---

### THE INGREDIENTS

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Well, the bacon was a given; it was the same bacon used during part I of the experiment

- A – Boss Hog Hickory Smoked, Dry Cured Country Bacon
- B – Smithfield Hickory Smoked, Thick Cut Bacon

The SPAM was an epiphany. What better way to maximize the bacony goodness than to use Bacon SPAM!

The cheese was swiss. I did not have any strong leanings in any direction about the cheese, but I have had decent luck with Sargento in the past, so I decided to go with that.

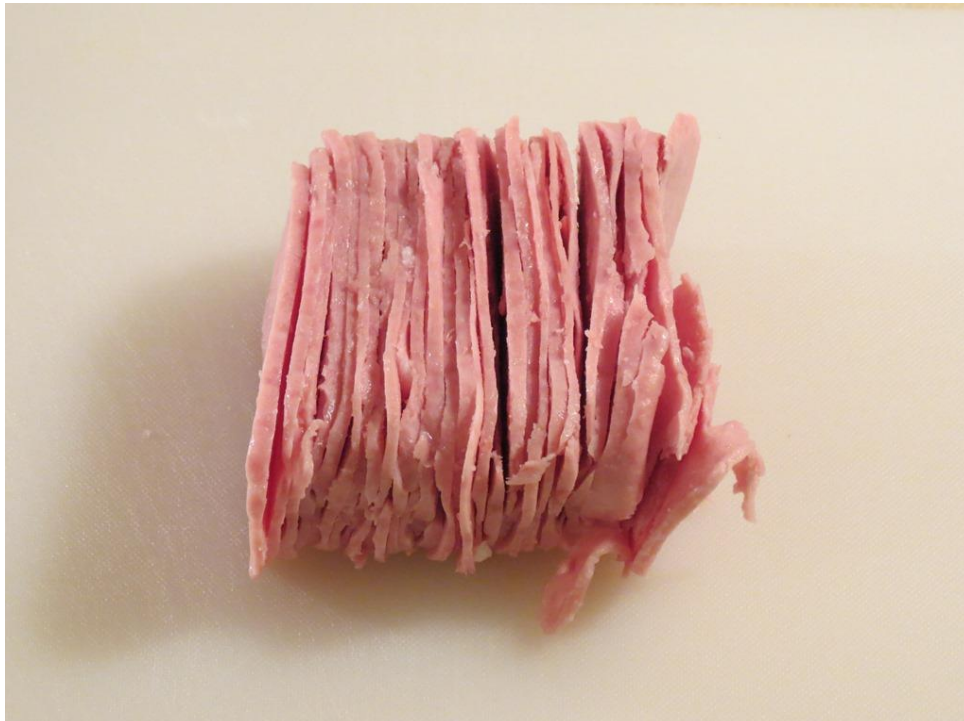


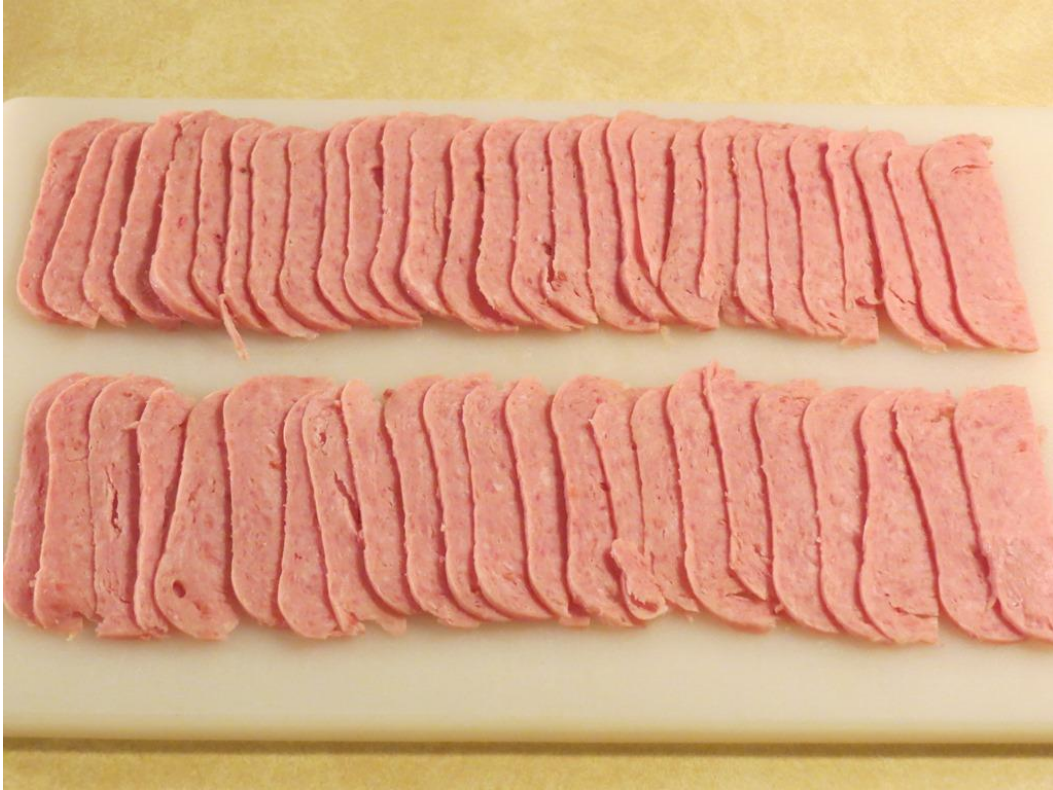
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### PREPARATION

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First step was to slice the SPAM. I do not have a slicer, so I did it by hand. The dimensions of the SPAM work out such that thin slicing the SPAM then cutting the pieces length-wise worked out well.





Next, I laid out the bacon and placed the thinly sliced pieces of SPAM on top.





Then it was time to roll 'em up. I think the SPAM was just the right thickness.



The cooking was kind of a guess. I knew it should be at least 20 minutes at 400 deg. F based on the data from part I of the experiment. 20 minutes did not seem quite long enough, however, so I wound up cooking it for 20 minutes and extending the cook time twice by 5 minutes for a total cook time of 30 minutes. The bacon came out nice and crisp, so I think the cook time worked out well. Perhaps, I could shorten it by 5 minutes... perhaps.



The final cooking step was to put on the cheese. I was not quite sure for how long to put it back in the oven. My goal was to some meltiness with a nice amount of browning. I wound up putting it in for 1 minute, then twice more for a minute a piece. In retrospect, I think I should have put it in the broiler for a little bit.







---

THE PRESENTATION



Hmmmm... perhaps I should add a salad.



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### PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

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Overall, I was pleased with how they tasted. I mean, Hey! It's Bacon! I was, however, a little disappointed that there was not a definite noticeable taste difference between the Boss Hog bacon and the Smithfield. I think the Bacon SPAM overpowered the flavors of the bacon. For this dish, I would go for the cheaper store bought bacon.

As far as cooking goes, I might be able to shave some time off cooking the rolls. Melting the cheese could definitely benefit from reduced melt time and should most likely be done in the broiler for the browning effect.

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### FUTURE WORK

---

The immediate next step is to try this once again, but with Turkey SPAM. I would like to see how the bacon flavors would stand against a different, more subtle flavor.

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# INSPIRATIONS

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Mother

Father

There are those that call him.... Tim?

Guy Fieri

Andrew Rea (Binging with Babbish)

Alex (A French Guy Cooking)

Guga and Crew

Mr (AND MRS) Ninja

Alton Brown

The BA Crew

Chef Tom and the rest of the ATB crew

PitmasterX

Kent Rollins

Kenji Lopez-Alt

How to BBQ Right

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## RECIPE WEB SITES

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OK... weblinks are like dust in the wind. Not all of these may work at any one time, but these are the ones that I have come across in my travels at some point that have yielded useful information

All Recipes

Betty Crocker

Cooks

The Couples Kitchen

Epicurious

Fifteen Spatulas

Food

Food and Wine

Food Network

Martha Stewart

Simple Comfort Food

Taste of Home

Williams-Sonoma

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## YOUTUBE CHANNELS

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Here are some of the YouTube Channels I have been watching recently (off the top of my head)

- Guga Foods
- Sous Vide Everything
- Salty Tales
- PitmasterX
- Bon Appetit
- Asian Cooking at Home
- Maangchi
- David Seymour
- All Things BBQ
- Ethan Chlebowski
- Asian at Home
- Babbish Culinary Universe
- Chinese Cooking Demystified
- Sam the Cooking Guy
- Mythical Kitchen
- Maangchi
- Proto Cooks with Chef Frank
- Epicurious
- Pro Home Cooks
- French Guy Cooking
- Food Wishes
- Aaron and Claire
- Adam Ragusea
- America's Test Kitchen
- Hot to BBQ Right