

Entertain This Year with Appealing Appetizers

Small Plates Make A Delicious Treat For Any Occasion

(NAPSA)—Whether you call them appetizers, hors d'oeuvres, finger foods or canapés, they are the scrumptious small portions showing up at almost every celebration this year. In fact, appetizers are beginning to function as the primary food at most parties because they are simple, quick and add variety for guests.

Appetizers are perfect to make when you get a visit from old friends or need to bring something last-minute to a party.

Here are some tips to keep in mind when deciding what to serve or bring:

- Choose recipes like dips and spreads that are full of flavor, but have a quick prep time—20 minutes or less. This way you can spend more time celebrating with guests and less time in the kitchen.

- Plan ahead in case your guests are hungry. The amount you'll need will depend upon the number of guests, the type of food, and the time of day. For example, around dinnertime—when appetites are greater—you should plan on about 12 bite-size servings per person.

- Make your appetizer the day before so you don't have to run around at the last minute. You'll find that many can be prepared, frozen, and then thawed and reheated on party day. Dips are even more flavorful if allowed to refrigerate before serving.

- Prepare at least some nutritious recipes that allow for healthy alternatives for great taste without unnecessary calories, sodium and fat.



For a fast, festive appetizer, try the following Roasted Red Pepper Dip, found on the Mrs. Dash Web site (www.mrsdash.com). With a prep time of only five minutes, this recipe is incredibly easy—just toss the ingredients into a blender or food processor and it's done.

ROASTED RED PEPPER DIP Serves 8

- 2 Tbsp. Mrs. Dash Garlic & Herb Seasoning Blend
- 8 oz. reduced fat cream cheese, softened, at room temperature
- ½ cup roasted red peppers, from a bottle, well drained
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil

Directions:

Add cream cheese, Mrs. Dash Garlic & Herb, red peppers, and olive oil to a blender or food processor. Blend or process until smooth. Chill for 1-2 hours. Serve with crackers, tortilla chips or vegetables.

Nutritional Information Per Serving:

Calories: 98; Total Fat: 8 g; Saturated Fat: 4 g; Unsaturated Fat: 4 g; Trans Fat: 1 g; Cholesterol: 16 mg; Sodium: 110 mg; Potassium: 47 mg; Carbohydrates: 2 g; Fiber: 0 g; Protein: 3 g.