

From Five-Spice To Paprika, Peanuts Pack A Punch

(NAPSA)—Easy to serve and delicious to snack on, peanuts are prized as the perfect party food by hosts and guests alike. But peanuts have so much more to offer than their simple pleasures. Whether you prefer your peanuts salty, sweet or spicy—or even a combination—all it takes is a dash of your favorite spices and a little culinary ingenuity to turn this versatile legume into an inventive hors d'oeuvre.

Flavor-packed yet fuss-free, peanuts provide the perfect starting point for making enticingly seasoned snack creations with culinary cachet. Use spices and flavors found in cuisines around the globe to impress guests with an exotic new take on this familiar party fare.

To get you started, internationally recognized chefs Mai Pham and Heidi Krahlting have developed two savory spiced versions of the classic party pleasure—try one at your next gathering or even create one of your own!

For celebrated Chef Mai Pham, award-winning cookbook author and owner of the nationally acclaimed Lemon Grass Restaurant in Sacramento, Calif., peanuts are an aromatic, flavor- and texture-building ingredient that can hold their own in a range of recipes—from the simple to the sophisticated. Chef Pham praises peanuts for their flexibility to shine in an array of traditionally prepared snack dishes making them not only delicious, but tremendously versatile as well.



Spicy Roasted Peanuts with Green Onions

- 2 cups roasted peanuts
- ½ cup sugar
- 1½ tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1½ tablespoons kosher salt or to taste
- 1 tablespoon five-spice powder
- 1 tablespoon red chili powder or to taste
- ½ cup chopped green onions

Place the peanuts and sugar in a non-stick pan over moderate heat. Stir until the sugar starts to melt, about 5 to 7 minutes. Drizzle the oil on the peanuts then add the salt, five-spice powder and chili powder. Stir another 3 to 5 minutes. The sugar on the peanuts will start to harden and become crunchy. Remove the peanuts from the heat and immediately add the green onions. Toss several times and transfer to a cookie sheet to cool.

Yield: 2 cups

Per ¼ cup serving: 286 calories, 20g fat (2g sat., 11g mono.), 0mg cholesterol, 1072mg sodium, 21g carb., 4g fiber, 10g protein.

Heidi Krahlting is chef and owner of Insalata's restaurant in San Anselmo, Calif., which builds

on the philosophy that even the simplest of snacks can be a memorable addition to any gathering. Chef Krahlting's recipe shows that, with a little culinary creativity, peanuts can help chefs and at-home cooks create innovative variations on a timeless party snack.

Smoky Paprika Peanuts

- 4 cups blanched unsalted peanuts
- ½ cup confectioners' sugar
- ½ cup superfine sugar
- Peanut oil for deep-frying
- Kosher salt
- Pimenton de la Vera Dulce (Spanish Smoky Paprika)

Blanch peanuts in boiling water for 2 minutes. Drain and toss immediately with both sugars until evenly coated. Shake off excess sugar. Place oil into a deep heavy pot to a depth of 2 inches and heat to 340 degrees.

Add ½ of the peanuts and fry for about 2 minutes until golden brown. Using a skimmer or a slotted spoon, transfer the peanuts to a sheet pan. Make sure the oil comes back to 340 degrees before you fry the next batch. Sprinkle peanuts with salt and the Spanish paprika while they are still hot. Once cool, store in airtight container.

Yield: 8 (½ cup) servings

Per serving: 551 calories, 43g fat (6g sat., 21g mono.), 0mg cholesterol, 484mg sodium, 32g carb., 6g fiber, 19g protein.

For more delicious recipes, visit the National Peanut Board Web site at www.nationalpeanutboard.org.