

Smoked Sausage Fajitas

Servings: 6

- 1-pound jalapeno or chili flavored smoked sausage
- 1 teaspoon canola oil
- 1 medium green bell pepper, seeded and sliced in very thin strips
- 1 medium red bell pepper, seeded and sliced in very thin strips
- 1/2 cup chopped green onion
- 6 (8-inch) whole wheat or multi-grain flour tortillas, warmed
- 3/4 cup chunky salsa
- 3/4 cup shredded crisp lettuce
- 3/4 cup shredded Mexican cheese blend

Extra Toppings

Low-fat sour cream

Guacamole

1. Slice sausage in half and then cut each half to make sausage strips that are 1/2-inch long. Slice strips into 3-inch lengths.
2. Heat oil in a large, heavy nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add peppers and sauté about 2 minutes, stirring frequently. Add onions and sauté for 2 additional minutes.
3. Add sausage strips and sauté for 2 more minutes, stirring frequently. Cook until vegetables are crisp-tender and sausage strips are hot.
4. Spoon equal portions down middle of each heated tortilla. Top sausage mixture with 2 tablespoons each salsa, lettuce and cheese. Add extra toppings, if desired, and roll up tortillas.

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HOT DOG RECIPES

Juggling schoolwork and meal preparation can be challenging, especially when kids are finicky eaters. Experts say that favorite foods like hot dogs and sausages can be “anchors” to encourage kids to eat the protein that is so important for growing bodies along with other foods like fruits, vegetables, dairy and grains. These simple recipes are kid-tested and approved and provide great nutrition for growing bodies. And the best part for moms is their ease of preparation.

Kids will also enjoy helping to prepare these foods. Cooking with you child can be an excellent way to spend time together while teaching about math skills through measuring and good nutrition as you discuss why a balanced and varied diet is so important.

We promise your kids will love these recipes – and you’ll love the fun you have making them.

Sausage and Veggie Quesadillas

Yield: 8

- 1 pound breakfast sausage (reduced fat preferred)
 - 1 (8-ounce) container garden vegetable cream cheese spread
 - 8 (6-inch) whole wheat or multi-grain flour tortillas
 - 1/2 cup finely chopped green onions
 - 1/2 cup finely chopped roasted red peppers
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1. Over medium heat, sauté sausage in a large heavy non-stick skillet. Cook, breaking up sausage, with a wooden spoon, into small pieces. Cook until sausage is brown. Remove sausage from pan with a slotted spoon and drain, if necessary, on a clean paper towel. Wipe or wash skillet clean.
2. Spread 1 tablespoon cream cheese on each tortilla.
3. Spray skillet with non-stick cooking spray and place skillet over medium heat. Place one tortilla in skillet, cheese side up.
4. Sprinkle one half of each tortilla with 1 tablespoon each onions and red peppers and add 1/4 cup crumbled sausage on same half. Cook just until ingredients are warm.
5. Fold tortilla in half. Repeat with remaining ingredients.

Sausage and Whole Wheat Pasta Frittata

Yield: 6

4 ounces OR 3/4-inch diameter bunch whole wheat spaghetti
5 large eggs
6 ounces fully cooked bratwurst sausage, chopped in 1/4-inch pieces (measures 2 cups)
1 cup chopped tomatoes, drained of excess juices
1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese, DIVIDED
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/4 cup shredded Parmesan cheese

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Before adding pasta to boiling water, break strands into three sections. Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain.
3. In a large bowl, beat eggs well. Stir in sausage, tomatoes, 1/2 cup Cheddar, black pepper and cooked and drained pasta.
4. Liberally spray a 10-inch tart or pie pan with non-stick vegetable spray. Pour sausage mixture into prepared pan. Sprinkle with remaining Cheddar and Parmesan. Pat mixture with back of spoon to ensure all noodles are covered with moisture.
5. Bake on rack in the middle of the oven for 26-30 minutes or until a knife, inserted in the center, comes out clean.

NOTE: If serving for lunch or light supper, add 1 teaspoon Italian herb seasonings to the mixture in step 3 above.

Italian Sausage Pizza

Yield: 6 to 8

1 (1.25-pound package) Italian sausage, regular or reduced fat sausage
6 whole wheat English muffins, split
3/4 cup prepared pizza sauce
3/4 cup chopped fresh tomatoes
3/4 cup shredded Parmesan cheese

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Over medium heat, squeeze sausage from casings into a large heavy non-stick skillet. Cook, breaking up sausage, with back of a wooden spoon, into small pieces. Cook until sausage is brown. Remove sausage from pan with a slotted spoon and drain on a clean paper towel.
3. Place 12 muffin halves on a large baking sheet.
4. For each muffin half, spread 1 tablespoon pizza sauce over top of muffin, spreading to edges.
5. Top each with 2 tablespoons cooked and drained sausage.
6. Sprinkle each with 1 tablespoon chopped tomato and finally sprinkle with 1 tablespoon Parmesan.
7. Bake pizzas in preheated oven for 12-15 minutes or until cheese melts and pizza is hot throughout. Serve warm.

Grilled Hot Dog & Fruit Kabobs

Yield: 6 to 8

- 1 medium tart crisp apple (such as Gala), quartered and cored
 - 1 medium crisp pear, quartered and cored
 - 1 (8-ounce) can pineapple chunks in natural juices
 - 1/2 cup sweet honey mustard, DIVIDED
 - 1 (16-ounce) package hot dogs, cut in 1½ -inch pieces
 - 8 (12-inch) metal or wooden skewers
 - (if using wooden, soak in cold water for 30 minutes)
 - 1 tablespoon honey
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1. Cut apple and pear quarters into thick wedges. Then cut each wedge in half.
2. Measure 2 tablespoons pineapple juice and reserve in a small bowl. Pour pineapple chunks and remaining juice into a 9 X 12-inch pan. Add apples and pears to juice and toss to coat all surfaces. (This will prevent the fruit from turning brown). Add 1/4-cup mustard and hot dog pieces. Stir to coat all surfaces.
3. Alternately thread hot dogs, apples, pears and pineapple on skewers. Liberally brush assembled kabobs with mustard mixture.
4. Mix remaining 1/4 cup mustard with honey and reserved 2 tablespoons pineapple juice. Save for a dipping sauce.
5. On a preheated grill or broiler, cook kabobs using the direct heat method. Cook, using medium-high heat, about 5 inches from heat. Turn a quarter of a turn every 2 to 2½ minutes. Cook until hot dogs reach an internal temperature of 165 degrees F, about 8 to 10 minutes.
6. Serve kabobs with mustard dipping sauce.

Smoked Sausage with Sweet and Sour Sauce

Yield: 4 entrée servings

- 1 (20-ounce) can pineapple chunks with natural juices
- 1 tablespoon light brown sugar
- 1/3 cup prepared sweet and sour sauce
- 1 teaspoon canola oil
- 1 green bell pepper, seeded and sliced into long strips
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh gingerroot
- 14-16 ounces smoked sausage, cut, diagonally, in 1/4-inch slices (reduced fat preferred)

Hot cooked rice

1. Drain pineapple and reserve 2 tablespoons pineapple juice. Blend reserved juice with sugar plus sweet and sour sauce. Set aside.
2. Heat oil in a large, heavy non-stick wok or skillet over medium-high heat. Add pepper strips. Stir-fry until pepper strips are crisp-tender. Transfer to a bowl and set aside.
3. Add ginger and sausage to same wok/skillet and stir-fry for 2 to 3 minutes. Drain any fat.
4. Stir in sweet and sour mixture and cook, stirring until sausage is coated.
5. Add drained pineapple chunks and reserved peppers. Stir to coat all surfaces and heat throughout.
6. Serve over hot rice.