



Journey through Thyme

Jodi Schneider
Columnist

Healthy comfort foods for fall

What comfort foods do you turn to when you're curled up on the couch on a cold evening?

Ranker recently conducted a survey to determine which comfort foods are the most loved by Americans, and the foods that top the list come as no surprise: Ice cream, chocolate, grilled cheese, pizza...

Comfort food is usually food prepared traditionally with a nostalgic or sentimental value. Many comfort foods have soft consistencies and are full of salts, butters and fats. It's simple, really: Whatever food comforts you the most is comfort food.

Why are comfort foods so comforting? A study published in the journal *Appetite* found that there is a "social" component to foods that provide us solace: Foods are comforting because of the memories they evoke, and the emotions and relationships that we associate with them. If your grandmother served you chocolate chip cookies as a child that may be why you make a pit stop at the bakery on your way home from the office after a particularly stressful day.

"Comfort foods are often the foods that our caregivers gave us when we were

children. As long as we have positive association with the person who made that food then there's a good chance that you will be drawn to that food during times of rejection or isolation," said Shira Gabriel, psychologist at the University of Buffalo and co-author of the study. "The study helps us understand why we might be eating comfort foods even when we're dieting or not particularly hungry."

However, there are several other likely behavioral and biological components. Lighter, cooler foods like fresh fruits and vegetables were historically less available during the winter, so there may be an inherent preference for foods that are in season like starchier vegetables.

There is also considerable research showing seasonal affective disorder (SAD) — which affects 1 to 3 percent of the population — is linked to increased appetite and carbohydrate cravings, which are probably consumed in the form of "comfort foods." This is likely due to changes in brain chemistry brought about by the change in seasons and alterations in circadian rhythm, the body's biological clock.

Comfort foods are generally sweet, fatty and calorie-dense, which may also help temporarily improve mood and alleviate anxiety or stress.

A cool refreshing salad simply does not taste nearly as comforting as a hot bowl of soup on a cold autumn day! The good news is there are lots of healthy substitutes that can still taste fantastic. Soups and stews are a terrific idea in the winter, as long as they are not cream-based or loaded with high-fat meat.

Fulfilling that comfort craving and sticking to your healthy goals can be achieved.

See **COMFORT** on page 28

FOOD DRIVE: Businesses are supporting Kiwanis program

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have moved out of the area.

Checks may be made out payable to Sisters Kiwanis Food Bank. Donations of money are especially useful, as they allow volunteers to

be more flexible in obtaining the types of food required by Food Bank clientele.

"The need is real, and we wanted to provide a convenient and easy way for the community to help out," said Jim Cornelius, editor in chief of *The Nugget*.

Two other Sisters businesses are assisting the Food Bank.

Essentials Skin Care &

Spa is donating 10 percent of their proceeds for the month of November to the Kiwanis Food Bank.

Sisters Vacation Rental has started "Project Feed." Renters of properties they manage are invited to leave any unused nonperishable food items in a bag provided to them, and Sisters Vacation Rentals will donate them to the Kiwanis food bank.

"What's for dinner, mom?"



That's a tough question when you don't have enough food for your family.

Sisters is fortunate to have the Sisters Kiwanis Food Bank to ensure everyone in our community has food to put on their table, but that requires year-round community support...

Cash Donations ... Food Donations ... Volunteers

Financial donations allow the greatest flexibility in meeting the needs of food bank guests.

Checks payable to Sisters Kiwanis Food Bank can be mailed to P.O. Box 1296, Sisters, OR 97759

For information on volunteering visit SistersKiwanis.org/food-bank.



Sisters Kiwanis FOOD BANK

Food is distributed every Thursday from 9 AM to 2 PM at 328 W. Main Ave. (Intersection of Oak and Main).

Ready to donate? The staff at The Nugget will receive your donations and deliver them to Sisters Kiwanis Food Bank during our food drive.

The Nugget Newspaper

FOOD DRIVE Oct. 25 - Nov. 23

442 E. Main Ave. • 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. • Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri

Financial donations and non-perishable food (not past expiration) will be accepted. Sisters Kiwanis is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

Make checks payable to "Sisters Kiwanis Food Bank."

PROJECT FEED



541-977-9898

www.sistersvacation.com

In our time in the rental business we have noticed that our guests often have food leftover when they are done with their stay. We believe in community and giving back.

We are now donating these non-perishable foods to the Sisters Kiwanis Food bank!

It's our way of thanking the community and offering a helping hand so that visiting guests can make an impact right here in Sisters!