

Do TikTok recipes live up to the hype?

By **AMY WONG**
The Seattle Times

As much as TikTok gets a bad rap for being some sort of mind-numbing Gen Z culture pit, I will say that if you look in the right places, you can learn a lot from the app. Oftentimes I'll find myself lost in the trenches of "FoodTok," discovering how to cook things that I either didn't know existed or didn't know I could make at home.

Here are three foods that have caught my eye recently, how to make them and my evaluation of whether they're as good as TikTok makes them seem.

Two-ingredient 'chicken'

This is actually just a simplified recipe for seitan, a protein packed wheat-gluten, that actually originated in Asian cuisine centuries ago.

Combine flour and water in about a three to one ratio (I used 1 1/2 cups of flour and 1/2 cup of water) into a ball of dough, and let rest for one hour. Then knead and rinse the dough in water, until it runs clear-ish. Incorporate a sprinkle of paprika, garlic powder,

onion powder and salt, then let rest for another hour. Then pan fry in a neutral oil and boil and cover in vegetable broth for 45 minutes.

Is it any good?: I did a pretty hearty job of seasoning this, so it had a great, garlic-chicken flavor. But, the texture was fairly rubbery, almost like raw chicken (this could be due to the fact that the vegetable broth I cooked it in evaporated in 30 minutes, rather than the recipe's 45). Having to let the wheat-gluten sit for a few hours, this was a fairly time consuming process, and not one that I would replicate for a subpar meat substitution. If this is something you'd like to try though, I'd recommend eating it in a sandwich — the presence of other ingredients to add texture would likely elevate this to a solid meal.

Pesto eggs

This is probably one of the most straightforward recipes I've seen on TikTok: Warm a tablespoon of pesto in a pan, then drop two eggs in and cook to your liking. The sizzling oil in the pesto helps cook the eggs and adds flavor during

the process. You can serve the eggs over toast with ricotta or avocados, or just eat it plain.

Is it any good?: Yes. If you like pesto and you like eggs, then you will definitely enjoy this. I don't think there's anything particularly groundbreaking about this cooking method — spreading pesto on a slice of toast and topping it with a fried egg would give you essentially the same results — but I guess prior to seeing this TikTok I wouldn't have thought to combine the ingredients.

'Don't Mix It' cake

Are your dreams haunted by the "Don't mix it" lady? Because mine are. For the uninitiated, Sophia Wasu (@aquickspoonful) has built an empire of almost 700,000 followers with her fast, simple, "dump cake"-style recipes. Ingredients differ between different types of bases, cake mixes and fillings, but she always has one crucial step, in which she yells at you with gusto: "DON'T MIX IT."

I chose to make one of Wasu's most-viewed recipes, consisting of: two



Amy Wong-Seattle Times/TNS

A dump-style cake comes out very sweet, but still edible.

packs of cinnamon rolls, a can of whipped cream cheese frosting, chopped walnuts, a box of cinnamon cake mix (NOT MIXED!), topped with 1 3/4 cup of butter sliced thin and placed on top in a 9-by-13-inch pan, then baked at 350 degrees Fahrenheit for 45 minutes. Knowing that my roommate and I would definitely not finish a whole tray, I halved the recipe in a loaf pan and baked for

about 30 minutes.

Is it any good?: I'll admit, going into this recipe, I was afraid. I was worried about how sweet it would be, whether the pile of flour on top would cook, and most of all, the fact that Betty Crocker cream cheese frosting doesn't actually contain any dairy in it (what is in this bioengineered goop, I will never know). That being said, it was... pretty good. Yes, it

was painfully sweet. And yes, I winced at the bubbling pools of butter on top when I pulled it out of the oven. But overall, I enjoyed eating it. I'd best describe it as a cinnamon roll stuffed coffee cake — pillowy rolls of dough on the bottom with a crisp, buttery streusel on top. I would not recommend eating this on a regular basis, but if you're itching for the occasional indulgence, this is it.

BARBECUE

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beans or coleslaw are some of the featured foods found at barbecues. We cannot omit the desserts either — the fruit pies, cream pies, cakes, ice cream and the like.

Beef, chicken, pork and fish are all healthy sources of protein which provide important nutrients such as zinc, iron, Vitamin E and B vitamins. Fish also contains Omega3 fatty acids, which can help with heart health.

Yet, while people are finally enjoying a meal with their loved ones and friends, the furthest thing from their minds is a foodborne illness. Although getting a foodborne illness, usually referred to as food poisoning, is possible any time of the year, it seems we hear about it more often during the summer months when food tends to be left outside in the warm weather.

Bacteria love moist, warm environments, like those created when macaroni salads or cream pies are left on the picnic table for more than an hour or two. The "danger zone" for optimum bacterial growth is between 40 degrees Fahrenheit and 140 degrees Fahrenheit. Therefore, keep cold foods cold (on ice until served if your event is outside, and iced while transporting) and hot foods hot — below 40 degrees and above 140 degrees. Food should be refrigerated as soon after eating as possible, but no longer than two hours; no longer than one hour if the temperature outside is very hot (above 90 degrees).

Before cooking, start with clean utensils, cutting boards, plates and hands. Hands (including under the nails, backs of the hands and wrists) should be washed for 20 seconds under warm running water with soap, rinsed thoroughly and dried with a paper towel or clean cloth towel.

When cooking raw meat, it should not touch "ready to eat" foods such as raw fruits or vegetables, and the same utensils and plates used for raw meat should not be used for cooked meat. Doing so causes cross contamination, which is the transference of bacteria in the raw meat back to the cooked meat, or to the raw fruits and vegetables. This includes knives and cutting boards — these can transfer bacteria from raw meats to uncooked food, too.

Incomplete cooking is another way foodborne illnesses are transmitted. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA),

new cooking regulations for meat are that beef should be cooked to an internal temperature of 145 degrees for fresh cuts of meat (steaks, roasts, etc.) and then allowed to rest for three minutes, once removed from the heat source. This allows the internal temperature to continue to rise, thoroughly killing all bacteria. For ground meat (ground beef or pork) the internal temperature is 160 degrees, with no rest time needed. Fresh pork (roasts or chops) needs to be cooked to an internal temperature of 145 degrees and allowed to rest for three minutes. The internal temperature of meat can be tested using a meat thermometer. Fish should be opaque and flake easily with a fork when done. All poultry products (i.e., drumsticks and thighs, etc.), including ground chicken and ground turkey, need to be cooked to an internal temperature of 165, with no resting time needed.

Meats are not the only food items which can harbor bacteria that can cause a foodborne illness. Foods containing milk or eggs are also culprits. These may include potato or pasta salads, cream pies, cheesecakes, etc.

Symptoms of a foodborne illness include nausea, vomiting and diarrhea, and can strike a few hours or up to 72 hours after the contaminated food has been eaten and will usually last about 24 hours. The Mayo Clinic.org website recommends treating food poisoning with rest, drinking clear fluids such as water or club soda (as tolerated) to replace fluids lost through vomiting or diarrhea, then soft, easily, digestible foods such as crackers, or Jell-O (as tolerated).

Some groups are more susceptible than others to foodborne illnesses — children, the elderly, pregnant women and people with compromised immune systems. If symptoms are severe, one should seek medical attention. A loss of fluids due to vomiting or diarrhea can lead to dehydration, which requires medical intervention.

By following a few simple cooking and food safety techniques you can ensure that your outdoor barbecue or family get together will be safe, fun and free of foodborne illnesses.

Ann Bloom has worked for the OSU Extension Service for 15 years as a nutrition educator. She studied journalism and education at Washington State University. She lives in Enterprise.



April Gamiz/TNS

Using a meat thermometer can ensure you barbecue meat to the proper temperature to foil bacteria that can cause food poisoning.

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Music for Miners Jubilee July 16, 17, 18 and Community Night Out August 3

concert date	ARTIST	Band	concert date	ARTIST	Band
July 11	Levi Blom		July 25	Wasteland Kings	
JUBILEE JULY 16 - 18					
<i>Music sponsored in part by Sorbenots Coffee</i>					
Friday 4:30 - 6:30 pm	Wasteland Kings		July 31	Saturday 6 - 8 PM	Barefoot & Bonafide
Saturday noonish	Drum & Bugle	(tbd)	TUES. Aug 3 Community Night Out 6 pm Barefoot & Bonafide		
Saturday 1:00 to 2:30 pm	Leather and Lace		August 1	Brass Fire	
Saturday 5:30 to 7:30 pm	Brass Fire		August 8	Inland Northwest Musicians	
Saturday 8 to 10 FRANK CARLSON sponsor OTEC STREET DANCE at Main & Court					
Sunday noon to 2 pm: Blue Yesterdays sponsor Cole's Tribute Center					
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