

Avocado ranch dip with crudité

BY BRIAN MEDFORD

Two seemingly unrelated events happened over the past week. First, my eldest niece came to visit from Seattle. Then, for two days in a row, temperatures reached almost 90 degrees in Astoria. I don't believe in coincidences, so I've tried to reconcile these two events. While I'm not Agatha Christie, here's what I've come up with. It's too hot to heat up the kitchen and the universe is telling me to try another recipe from my niece's favorite food blog, Half Baked Harvest. Specifically, I decided to make the avocado ranch dip for crudité.

With a few exceptions, the items I cook from food blogs look like a fiasco. I mean, are these even the same dishes? I know how Rachel on "Friends" felt when she made a trifle with a ground beef layer. In Rachel's case, two recipes got stuck together and she thought she was following a single recipe accurately. In my case, it's probably that I'm missing a professionally lit studio and a food stylist. Still, I try, knowing my home cooked version won't be winning any beauty contests.

Half Baked Harvest is a blog that I've been fairly successful with from a styling perspective. While my recipe and the blog's may not be identical twins, most people would assume they were at least cousins. Perhaps that's the beauty of cooking. Find something you love, make your own version and delight in the imperfections.

A crisp and fresh crudité platter is helpful to have around when it's hot for something to snack on all day, or for when you're attempting to keep ravenous dinner guests from ransacking the almost ready protein from the grill. Kate, I'm making this for you next time you visit, just please don't look at the online version first.

Avocado ranch dip

Very slightly adapted from Half Baked Harvest

Add a bowl of homemade or store-bought hummus with this dip to complete your crudité platter. The crudité options are up to you, add what you love, skip what you don't.

- 1/3 cup plain Greek yogurt
- 1/2 cup buttermilk

- 1 ripe avocado, pitted
- 2 tablespoons fresh parsley, minced
- 2 tablespoons fresh dill, minced
- 1 tablespoon fresh chives, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 2 cloves of garlic
- Salt and fresh ground black pepper to taste (start with 1/2 teaspoon of kosher salt)

Crudité

- Greek olives
- Radishes, halved
- Sugar snap or snow peas
- Cherry tomatoes
- Cucumber slices
- Carrot sticks
- Cauliflower (or broccoli)

Combine all avocado ranch dip ingredients in a food processor and blend until smooth and creamy. Taste and adjust the salt and pepper. Cover and keep stored in the fridge for up to a day, or serve right away.

Brian Medford is the owner of Idlewild Biscuits and Bakes in Astoria and delights in Southern cooking. He is a staff instructor at The Pantry in Seattle. Contact him at blmedford@gmail.com.



Brian Medford

Avocado ranch dip with a spread of fresh vegetables.

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