

Keep The Pop In Pop Corn

On these cold winter afternoons and evenings do you often imagine a heaping bowl of fluffy popped corn—all warm and buttery? You look through your kitchen cabinet and, happily, find some corn left over from the last time you brought out the popper. But instead of the large, tender bits of popcorn you made before, the kernels turn out to be only half-popped and half-tender. So much for your dream!

Want to know what happened in the few days since you removed specially processed, perfectly poppable corn from its original airtight container?

The popcorn kernels dried out—because of the relatively warm air in our modern homes. Once popcorn has been opened, use one single precaution to maintain correct moisture content. Seal the kernels again in a jar, can, or plastic bag and keep in a cool place or in the freezer. If corn is already dried out from incorrect storage, raise the moisture content by moistening a cloth or blotter in salt solution, rolling it up, and putting it into a tight container with the corn. Let stand at least 24 hours. When ready to use the corn, mix it thoroughly and test-pop a few kernels. If still too dry, repeat the moistening procedure.

And equally important for the largest, tenderest popped corn—be sure to use hot oil, close to 500 degrees in temperature. An accurate heat test of the oil can be made by dropping in a few kernels to see if they "spin." If they do, you're ready to pop. Pour in only one layer of kernels, having oil deep enough to just cover them. Put on the lid and shake, keeping the heat high. In less than a minute you'll hear so much action going on you won't be really surprised if the huge air morsels lift the lid all by themselves. At the sound of the last few pops, remove from heat.

Delicious popcorn—every time—is that easy to make. Good eating!



GRILLED CHEESE SANDWICHES provide an easy, speedy way to serve a group. Set out a sandwich grill for self-service. Serve your choice of beverages; if beer, the new handy large size bottles are a convenience. Paper plates and napkins eliminate later dishwashing.

Effortless Entertaining

How long has it been since you have used your electric sandwich grill? If it has found its way to a top shelf in your kitchen, it's time to take it down and relearn what a handy piece of equipment it is.

For informal entertaining, a grill is a wonderful asset. It toasts sandwiches deliciously, it can be used wherever there's an outlet, it allows the hostess to be with guests and, better still, it encourages self-service.

So, the next time guests drop in, or when you're planning late-evening refreshments that are relatively quick and easy-to-fix, set out the grill and sandwich makings. And, if you want to be especially thoughtful, provide a beverage choice. Have coffee for those who want it and plenty of tangy beer for guests who prefer a relaxing, cooling contrast to the hot sandwiches.

Basic directions for toasting sandwiches in an electric grill and suggestions for simple sandwiches follow:

TO GRILL SANDWICHES

1. Choose day-old bread.
2. Cut bread at least a half-inch thick for best results.
3. Preheat grill with grids closed.
4. Toast sandwiches without turning with grids closed, or double the cooking area by turning the top grid back flat and cooking the sandwiches about 5 minutes on each side with moderate heat.

GRILLED CHEESE SANDWICHES

1. Place two thin slices of processed, processed American cheese on buttered white or whole wheat

bread. Top with a layer of canned deviled ham, then spread with prepared mustard. Cover with second slice of buttered bread. Spread outside top and bottom of sandwich with softened butter. Grill until cheese is melted and sandwich is golden brown.

2. Using pumpernickel or rye bread, make each sandwich with a slice of Swiss cheese and a thin slice of cooked ham or tongue. Add a thin slice of tomato or onion, if desired. Grill as above.

3. Using any non-sweet bread, make each sandwich with a layer of sharp cheese spread and a top-

ping of sliced, stuffed green olives or pitted ripe olives. Grill as above.

4. Using any non-sweet bread, make each sandwich with grated natural cheddar cheese, crumbled bacon and thin tomato slices. Grill as above.



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FOR A REALLY CHOICE MEAL, tender, juicy sirloin steak is hard to beat. This time of year, top quality beef becomes more plentiful so you can take advantage of good supplies and serve it frequently.

Sirloin Steak

Top quality beef steak is wonderfully easy to serve, but you do want to prepare it correctly. Broiling is the cookery method which best develops the flavor and retains the tenderness of a fine, aged steak. Simply broil the steak until one side is brown, season, turn, and broil the other side and season.

Unless you're a "pro" at the broiler, you'll probably want to follow a good broiling schedule. You then can vary the schedule to suit your own broiler as you gain experience. A good rule of thumb is that a thick steak, to be well browned outside and juicy rare inside, should be broiled 3 inches below the heat source. However, if you want the steak well done, you should lower the broiler pan or lessen the heat so the steak will cook through without burning.

There are a variety of seasonings that enhance rather than cover the wonderful meat flavor. A tasty one is seasoned butter. Simply whip the butter, add chopped parsley or chives, and spread over the hot broiled steak.

Another idea is to brush the steak with salad oil that has been flavored gently with garlic, before broiling. Roquefort or Blue Cheese spread lightly on top of the broiled steak gives a flavor combination treasured by many.

DEVILED SIRLOIN STEAK
Yield: 8 servings
1 sirloin steak (3 1/2 inch thick) about 3 pounds
1/2 cup butter or margarine
1 teaspoon chili powder
1 teaspoon garlic salt
1 tablespoon paprika
2 teaspoons salt

Pan-broil steak until well brown, approximately 10 minutes on each side. Blend together butter, chili powder, garlic salt, paprika and salt. Spread over steak. Cover and heat five minutes. Uncover. Spoon sauce over steak. Serve hot.

BEEF STROGANOFF

Yield: 4 to 6 servings
1 1/2 pounds sirloin steak cut in 1/2-inch strips
1/4 cup flour
1 teaspoon salt
2 small onions, chopped fine
1/2 pound mushrooms cut in pieces
1 clove garlic
3 tablespoons fat
2 tablespoons flour
1 cup beef bouillon (canned or made with cubes)
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
1 cup sour cream
Roll steak in flour and salt. Pan-fry onions, mushrooms, and garlic in fat for 5 minutes. Add beef and brown evenly. Then remove meat, onions and mushrooms from pan. Combine flour with drippings, in the pan. Add bouillon and Worcestershire sauces. Cook until thickened. Add sour cream and heat slowly until gravy simmers. Add beef and vegetables and heat for a few minutes.

NOODLES DIAVOLO

Call them what you will — diavolo, diable or just plain deviled — noodles dressed this way make an epicurean, penny-wise main dish. Cook one pound noodles as directed on package and drain thoroughly. While the noodles and saucepan are still hot, add a generous dollop of butter, a clove of garlic, one-half cup grated cheese and a family size can Underwood deviled ham. Cover saucepan lightly, shake and toss contents until noodles are well coated. Remove garlic clove and serve.

CHOWDER FOR BREAKFAST

Weekend breakfast should be more leisurely than those served on the other five mornings of the week. Tempt the family to linger longer around the table by presenting this festive chowder accompanied by hot biscuits, eggs scrambled with croutons and whole fruit. Combine one can each condensed cream of celery soup and clam chowder with an equal amount of top milk. Heat gently; do not allow to boil. Ladle piping hot into generous bowls and sprinkle with paprika and chopped parsley. Makes six servings.

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