

Appetizers

Handling Your Food Safely

When you leave cooked foods or foods that require refrigeration at room temperature, bacteria may grow to dangerous levels. Bacteria grow rapidly between the temperatures of 40° F and 140° F. This range of temperatures is often called the “Danger Zone”.

Listed below are some helpful tips to keep you and your food safe, so you can enjoy the food and not the germs!

- The 2 hour rule states that perishable foods should not be left out at room temperature for longer than 2 hours. If they are left out longer than this, they should be thrown in the trash.
- If the room temperature is above 90° F, perishable foods must be thrown in the trash after 1 hour.



HELPFUL HINT



Once you remove a product in the grocery store from refrigeration, the 2 hour clock starts ticking. It is a good idea to put your refrigerated items in the cart last, and make the grocery store your final stop before you head home.

- You may think that the 2 hour rule will be hard to follow, especially during parties and holiday dinners, but there are some simple actions that can be taken to keep your food safe.



- Cold foods need to remain at 40° F or below. Keep cold foods in the refrigerator until it is time to eat. If the cold food is intended for snacking, set out a smaller amount and restock when the food is running low.
- Hot foods need to remain at 140° F or above. Keep hot foods in the oven until it is time to eat. Set the oven to a temperature that will keep the foods internal temperature above 140° F. Warming trays, crock pots, slow cookers, and chafing dishes can also be used to keep your hot foods hot.



- If you are transporting food use a cooler with ice packs to keep cold foods cold. Hot foods can be transported in insulated carriers.



Remember to keep your hot foods hot and your cold foods cold.



Sausage-Stuffed Mushrooms

1 1/2 pounds large button mushrooms
1/2 pound of ground pork sausage
1/4 cup fine dry bread crumbs
1/2 cup shredded mozzarella cheese

1. Place mushrooms into a colander. **Run cold water over the mushrooms while rubbing each mushroom gently with your finger tips.** Once dry, remove the stems from mushrooms, chop, and set aside.
2. In a skillet cook the ground pork sausage, 8-10 minutes or until thoroughly cooked, stirring frequently. **Be sure to wash your hands after handling the raw pork sausage.**
3. Remove sausage from the skillet and drain leftover drippings into a bowl.
4. In a skillet add 2 tablespoons of leftover drippings. Cook mushroom stems on medium heat for 5 to 10 minutes, until tender and browned.
5. Remove from heat and stir in sausage, bread crumbs, and mozzarella cheese. Fill mushroom caps with the sausage mixture and place on a baking sheet.
6. Heat the oven to 450°F. **Insert the cooking thermometer into the center of the stuffing in a mushroom cap. Bake until the internal temperature reaches 160°F (about 15 minutes). Then it will be time to enjoy.**
7. **If you are not serving right away, set the oven to a temperature that will keep the mushrooms' internal temperature above 140°F.** Keep mushrooms in the oven until it is time to eat.

Additional Food Safety Notes Related To This Recipe

- Always store raw sausage on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator, away from fresh produce, ready-to-eat foods, and cooked foods (leftovers). Place the sausage package on a pan or plate to catch any juices that may drip.
- Defrost frozen sausage on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator. Place the sausage on a plate or a pan to catch any juices that may drip. This method of defrosting usually takes 1 day.
- Wash hands correctly after handling raw sausage.
 - Moisten hands with warm water and apply soap.
 - Rub hands together for 20 seconds. Don't forget to use a soft brush to clean your nails and nail beds.
 - Rinse hands and dry with a clean towel.
- Keep food out of the "Danger Zone".
 - Raw sausage should not be out of the refrigerator for longer than 2 hours.
 - Warming trays or chafing dishes can be used to keep your mushrooms at a safe temperature.
 - It is best to put any leftovers into the refrigerator within 1 hour.
- When storing leftovers, divide into small portions and place into a clean, airtight storage container. Do not forget to label the container with the name and the date.
- When reheating leftover mushrooms be sure to use a cooking thermometer. Reheated mushrooms need to reach a temperature of 165°F.

Recipe Source

<http://southernfood.about.com/od/christmasfood/r/blxm76.htm>



Cajun Meatballs

1 pound lean ground beef	1/4 cup milk
1 1/2 teaspoons hot pepper sauce	1 egg
2 tablespoons Cajun seasoning	1/2 cup barbeque sauce
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce	1/2 cup peach preserves
1 tablespoon dried parsley	
1/2 onion	
1/4 cup fresh bread crumbs	

1. Remove the outer skin of the onion. **Scrub with a vegetable brush while holding under cold running water.** Finely chop.
2. Break egg into a clean bowl and beat. **Be sure to wash your hands after handling the raw egg.**
3. In a large bowl, using a long handled wooden spoon stir in the ground beef, hot pepper sauce, Cajun seasoning, Worcestershire sauce, parsley, onion, bread crumbs, milk, and egg. Form the mixture into golf ball sized meatballs and place on a lightly greased baking sheet. **Be sure to wash your hands after forming the meatballs.**
4. Heat oven to 350°F. **Insert the cooking thermometer into the center of the largest meatball. When the internal temperature reaches 165°F (about 30 minutes) the meatballs are done.**
5. In a bowl, mix the barbeque sauce and peach preserves.
6. Place the meatballs in a serving dish and cover with the barbeque sauce mixture. Toss to coat.
7. If you are not serving right away, **set the oven to a temperature that will keep the meatballs internal temperature above 140°F.** Keep hot until it is time to eat.



Additional Food Safety Notes Related To This Recipe

- Always store raw ground beef on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator, away from fresh produce, ready-to-eat foods, and cooked foods (leftovers). Place the ground beef package on a pan or plate to catch any juices that may drip.
- Defrost frozen ground beef on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator. Place the ground beef package on a plate or a pan to catch any juices that may drip. This method of defrosting usually takes 1 day.
- Wash hands correctly after beating egg and handling raw ground beef.
 - Moisten hands with warm water and apply soap.
 - Rub hands together for 20 seconds. Don't forget to use a soft brush to clean your nails and nail beds.
 - Rinse hands and dry with a clean towel.
- Keep food out of the "Danger Zone".
 - Raw ground beef should not be out of the refrigerator for longer than 2 hours.
 - Warming trays or chafing dishes can be used to keep your meatballs at a safe temperature.
 - You have 1 hour to put any leftovers into the refrigerator.
- When storing leftovers, divide into small portions and place into a clean, airtight storage container. Do not forget to label the container with the name and the date.
- When reheating leftover meatballs be sure to use a cooking thermometer to make sure the internal temperature of the meatballs reaches 165°F.

Recipe Source

<http://allrecipes.com/recipe/cajun-appetizer-meatballs/>



Apple Onion Sausage

- 1 small onion
- 1 1/2 teaspoons butter
- 2 tablespoons apple jelly
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 8 ounces miniature smoked sausage links
- 1 small apple
- 3/4 teaspoon cornstarch
- 1-1/2 teaspoons water

1. Remove the outer skin from the onion. **Scrub the onion with a vegetable brush while holding under cold running water. Chop the onion on your produce cutting board.** Place onion in bowl. **Wash cutting board in warm, soapy water. Hold apples under cold running water. Rub with both palms while turning continuously. Use a vegetable brush to scrub around the stem area.** Peel and core the apples. **Slice the apples on your produce cutting board.**
2. Heat butter over medium heat in a large nonstick sauté pan. Add the chopped onions. Cook onions until they are soft, about 5 minutes. Stir in apple jelly and brown sugar.
3. Remove wrapper from the sausage links and add to the sauté pan. **Wash hands using soap and warm water.** Cook, uncovered, over medium-low heat until sauce has thickened, stirring occasionally, about 15-20 minutes.
4. Add sliced apple to the pan. Cover and cook over medium-low heat until apples are tender, about 8-10 minutes.
5. Mix cornstarch and water in a small bowl until smooth. Stir mixture into sauté pan and bring to a boil. Cook and stir until thickened, about 1 minute. Serve warm.



Additional Food Safety Notes Related To This Recipe

- When buying apples be sure that they have good color and are firm to the touch. Avoid those that are soft and have spots. Onions should be hard with dry papery skins. They should be free of green spots or green leathery areas.
- Before buying smoked sausage links be sure that there are no broken seals on the package or discoloration on any of the links. Check the expiration date or sell-by date.
- If purchased before the expiration date, an unopened package of sausage links has a recommended storage time of 2 weeks in the refrigerator. After 2 weeks the sausage should be thrown in the garbage. An opened package only has a recommended storage time of 1 week in the refrigerator. Be sure to wrap tightly after opening.
- Wash hands correctly after handling smoked sausage links. Even if they are considered ready-to-eat, it is important that you wash your hands after handling all meat products
 - Moisten hands with warm water and apply soap.
 - Rub hands together for 20 seconds. Don't forget to use a soft brush to clean your nails and nail beds.
 - Rinse hands and dry with a clean towel.
- Keep food out of the "Danger Zone".
 - Sausage should not be out of the refrigerator for longer than 2 hours.
 - Warming trays or chafing dishes can be used to keep your appetizer at a safe temperature.
 - Put any leftovers into the refrigerator within 1 hour of serving.

Recipe Source

<http://www.tasteofhome.com/Recipes/Apple-Onion-Sausage-Appetizers>



Tex-Mex Potato Skins

- 3 large potatoes
- 4 strips of bacon
- 3/4 cup shredded pepper jack cheese
- 1 1/3 cups dried fried onions
- 1/4 cup green chilies
- 1 jar salsa
- 1 tub of sour cream

1. **Scrub the potatoes with a vegetable brush while holding under cold running water.** Preheat oven to 400°F. Bake the potatoes for 1 hour or until done. Remove from oven.
2. Lower the oven temperature to 350°F
3. Allow potatoes to cool, then split lengthwise. Scoop out the inside of potato halves, leaving 1/4 inch shells. Save the inside of the potatoes for another use. **Store them in a tightly sealed container on the top shelf of your refrigerator. Be sure to label and date the container.**
4. In a skillet, cook the bacon over medium-high heat until browned and crisp. **Be sure to wash your hands after handling the raw bacon.** After bacon is browned and crisp remove from the pan and set aside. Once the bacon has cooled crumble into small pieces.
5. **Remove stems and scrub the green chilies with a vegetable brush while holding under cold running water. Chop into small pieces on your produce cutting board.**
6. Arrange potato halves on a baking sheet. Top with cheese, 1/3 cup fried onions, chilies, and bacon.
7. Bake in 350°F oven until the cheese is melted, about 15 minutes.
8. Serve topped with salsa, sour cream, and remaining fried onions.



Additional Food Safety Notes Related To This Recipe

- When buying potatoes in the grocery store, be sure that they are free of most blemishes and are firm to touch. Avoid those that are bruised, sprouting, shriveled, or green-tinged. Green chilies should have a firm exterior with a bright glossy skin.
- When buying bacon in the grocery store, be sure that there are no broken seals on the package or discoloration on the strips.
- Bacon has a recommended storage time of 7 days in the refrigerator. Be sure to store in a tightly sealed container after opening and label with the date opened. After 7 days the bacon should be thrown into the garbage.
- Wash hands correctly after handling bacon. Even if the bacon is ready-to-eat, it is important that you wash your hands after handling all meat products.
 - Moisten hands with warm water and apply soap.
 - Rub hands together for 20 seconds. Don't forget to use a soft brush to clean your nails and nail beds.
 - Rinse hands and dry with a clean towel.
- Keep food out of the "Danger Zone".
 - Bacon should not be out of the refrigerator for longer than 2 hours.
 - Warming trays or chafing dishes can be used to keep your appetizer at a safe temperature.
 - Put any leftovers into the refrigerator within 1 hour.
- Scrub cutting boards after each use with warm soapy water.

Recipe Source

Tex-Mex Recipes, Publications International, LPD



Ham It Up Crescent Rolls

- 1 (8 ounce) package of crescent roll dough
- 8 slices deli ham
- 4 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 1 cup shredded swiss or cheddar cheese
- 2 tablespoons sesame seeds

1. **Clean and sanitize your kitchen work surface.** Unroll the crescent roll dough onto your kitchen work surface. Firmly press diagonal perforations to seal and separate into 4 long rectangles.
2. Place 2 deli ham slices on each of the rectangles. **Be sure to wash your hands after handling the ham.**
3. Spread 1 teaspoon of Dijon mustard on each rectangle and sprinkle with 1/4 cup of swiss or cheddar cheese .
4. Starting at the shortest side, roll up each rectangle, press and seal. Coat each roll with sesame seeds.



5. Cut each of the 4 rolls into 5 slices forming 20 slices. Place cut side down on an ungreased cookie sheet.
6. Preheat oven to 375°F. Bake the rolls in the preheated oven for 15-20 minutes. **After 15 minutes insert the cooking thermometer into the center of your largest roll. Continue baking until the internal temperature reaches 140°F and the crescent is golden brown.**
7. **If you are not serving right away, set the oven to a temperature that will keep the crescent rolls internal temperature above 140°F.** Keep the crescent rolls in the oven until it is time to eat.



Additional Food Safety Notes Related To This Recipe

- Always start and finish with a clean work area by washing cutting boards, dishes, countertops, and cooking utensils with hot soapy water.
- Older adults, people with weakened immune systems, and people with chronic illnesses should not eat deli or luncheon meats cold without reheating until steaming hot.
- If purchased before the expiration date, an unopened package of deli or luncheon meat has a recommended storage time of 2 weeks in the refrigerator. After 2 weeks the deli or luncheon meat should be thrown into the garbage. An opened package only has a recommended storage time of 3-5 days in the refrigerator. Be sure you seal the package tightly after opening.
- When storing in the refrigerator, place deli or luncheon meats on a separate shelf or in a refrigerator bin away from raw meat, poultry, and seafood.
- Follow the 2 hour rule. The 2 hour rule states that refrigerated or cooked foods left in the danger zone for longer than 2 hours when the air temperature is 40-80°F must be thrown into the trash. If the air temperature is above 90°F, the food must be thrown into the trash after 1 hour.
- When storing leftovers, divide into small portions and place into a clean, airtight storage container. Do not forget to label the container with the name and date.

Recipe Source

<http://www.food.com/recipe/ham-it-up-crescent-rolls-86644#ixzz1zZUX1GiE>



Baked Brie Recipe

- 1 large sheet of puff pastry dough
- 1 (8 ounce) package of pasteurized brie cheese
- 1/4 cup raspberry preserves or your favorite preserves
- 1/8 cup toasted almond slices

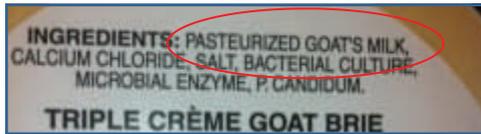
1. Lay out the puff pastry on a lightly greased cookie sheet.
2. Place brie round or wedge on top of the puff pastry sheet, leaving the rind on the brie.
3. Place the preserves on top of the cheese and add the almond slices on top of the raspberry preserves.
4. Bundle the puff pastry up and around the cheese, preserves, and sliced almonds.
5. Preheat oven to 425°F. Bake the brie pastry in the preheated oven for 20 minutes. **After 20 minutes insert a cooking thermometer into the center of the brie pastry. Continue baking until the internal temperature reaches 140°F and the puff pastry is golden brown.**
6. Serve warm with crackers and apple slices. **If you are not serving right away, set the oven to a temperature that will keep the brie pastry's internal temperature above 140°F.** Keep the brie pastry in the oven until it is time to eat.



It is important that you read the label of your brie cheese, making sure that it is pasteurized.

Additional Food Safety Notes Related To This Recipe

- Always start and finish with a clean work area by washing cutting boards, dishes, countertops, and cooking utensils with hot soapy water.
- Read the label of all mold ripened, blue veined, or soft cheeses (such as Blue, feta, Camembert, Brie, or queso fresco cheeses) making sure they are made from pasteurized milk. If you cannot find pasteurized on the label, the cheese is not safe to eat.



- When shopping in the grocery store, pasteurized brie cheese and puff pastry dough should be the last items to go into your cart. Go straight home after leaving the grocery store. If you need more time, pack a cooler with ice packs in your car to keep your cold food cold.
- When storing in the refrigerator, place cheese on a separate shelf or in a refrigerator bin away from raw meat, poultry, and seafood.
- If the puff pastry dough is frozen the best way to defrost the dough is to leave it in the refrigerator overnight. Do not thaw the pastry on the kitchen counter or in the kitchen sink.

Recipe Source

<http://www.rachaelrayshow.com/food/recipes/baked-brie/>



Spicy Banana Zucchini Balls

- 1 1/2 zucchini
- 1 large banana
- 1 egg
- 2 teaspoons turmeric
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- 2 teaspoons crushed chilli pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 cup panko breadcrumbs
- 1/2 cup flour (or more if required)
- vegetable oil for frying

1. **Scrub the zucchini with a vegetable brush and gently rub the banana while holding under cold running water. Cut the ends off the zucchini on your produce cutting board.** Using a grater, coarsely grate the zucchini and squeeze dry. **Peel the banana and chop finely on your produce cutting board.**
2. Break the egg into a small clean bowl and beat. **Be sure to wash your hands after handling the raw egg.**
3. Place all ingredients into a large bowl and mix with a wooden spoon until a soft dough forms. Add more flour if needed.
4. In a large skillet, heat vegetable oil on medium heat to 350°F. Drop a teaspoonful of dough into the hot oil and fry until brown. Turn the zucchini ball to ensure an even browning. Make sure your oil is not too hot or your zucchini balls will get too brown.
5. Remove zucchini ball from skillet when browned and drain on a paper towel. Repeat with the rest of the dough.



Additional Food Safety Notes Related To This Recipe

- Check your refrigerator thermometer, making sure that the refrigerator is not warmer than 40°F.
- When storing in the refrigerator, place fresh produce on separate shelves or in produce bins away from raw meats, poultry, and seafood.
- Clean and sanitize the cutting board before and after each use. It is a good idea to have two separate cutting boards in the kitchen. One can be used for raw meats, poultry, and seafood while the other is used for fresh produce and breads.
- Wash hands correctly
 - Moisten hands with warm water and apply soap.
 - Rub hands together for 20 seconds. Don't forget to use a soft brush to clean your nails and nail beds.
 - Rinse hands and dry with a clean towel.
- Follow the 2 hour rule. The 2 hour rule states that refrigerated or cooked foods left in the danger zone for longer than 2 hours when the air temperature is 40-80°F must be thrown into the trash. If the air temperature is above 90°F, the food must be thrown into the trash after 1 hour.
- When storing leftovers, divide into small portions and place into a clean, airtight storage container. Do not forget to label the container with the name and date.

Recipe Source

<http://www.cafenilson.com/2009/07/royal-foodie-joust-spicy-banana-zucchini-balls/>



Spinach, Bacon, and Onion Dip

2 packages (10 ounces each) frozen spinach
1 medium onion
4 slices bacon
1/8 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon ground pepper
1 teaspoon all-purpose flour
1 cup whole milk
1/2 cup sour cream
1 bar (8 ounces) cream cheese
1/2 cup grated Parmesan

1. **Defrost spinach on the top or middle shelf of your refrigerator; away from any raw meat, poultry, or seafood.** This method of defrosting usually takes 1 day. Squeeze dry the defrosted spinach and place in a bowl to the side.
2. Remove the skin from the onion. **Scrub the onion with a vegetable brush while holding under cold running water. Dice the onion on your produce cutting board.**
3. **Thinly slice bacon crosswise on your clean meat cutting board.** Cook bacon in a medium sauce pan over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until browned and crisp (about 10 minutes). Remove browned bacon from the pan and drain on a paper towel. **Be sure to wash your hands after handling the raw bacon.**
4. Discard all but 1 tablespoon of bacon fat from the pan. Add diced onion to the sauce pan and season with the salt and pepper. Cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until tender (about 8 minutes).
5. Add flour to the sauce pan and cook for 30 seconds. Add spinach, milk, sour cream, and cream cheese to the sauce pan.



6. Cook over medium heat while stirring until the cream cheese has melted (about 2 minutes). Remove sauce pan from heat and stir in bacon and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of Parmesan cheese.
7. Transfer mixture to a $1\frac{1}{2}$ quart baking dish and top with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Parmesan cheese.
8. Heat oven to 350°F. Bake the spinach dip until bubbling (about 14 minutes). Change the oven setting to broil, and broil until the top browns.
9. Let sit 5 minutes. Serve dip warm with your favorite crackers or chips.

Additional Food Safety Notes Related To This Recipe

- Always start and finish with a clean work area by wash cutting boards, dishes, countertops, and cooking utensils with hot soapy water.
- Always store raw bacon on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator. Place the raw bacon package on a pan or a plate to catch any juices that may drip.
- Clean and sanitize the cutting board before and after each use. It is a good idea to have two separate cutting boards in the kitchen. One can be used for raw meats, poultry, and seafood while the other is used for fresh produce and breads.
- Wash hands correctly after handling raw bacon.
 - Moisten hands with warm water and apply soap.
 - Rub hands together for 20 seconds. Don't forget to use a soft brush to clean your nails and nail beds.
 - Rinse hands and dry with a clean towel.

Recipe Source

<http://www.marthastewart.com/329037/spinach-bacon-and-onion-dip>