

Crock Pot Nacho Fries

I remember as a kid going to diners and cute little restaurants with good homecooking and a little grease on everything. It was always a treat to get something smothered or covered or dipped or drizzled. I don't usually eat a lot of fried and greasy, especially not in the crock pot, but today it just sounded good. I'm serving my crock pot dish with a side salad and low-cal dressing. Maybe if I wash it down with a Diet Coke it will just cancel out the bad stuff.

One of my favorite appetizers from my youth was "not-so-fries"— it was cheese and bacon and sour cream on top of silver dollar shaped french fries. The fried coins were coated in toppings and best when shared with friends! I also really like bar food like nachos— again with the cheese covered goodness! My other favorite food isn't as unhealthy, but I really like pita and tzatziki sauce. There is something about the cold, creamy cucumber that becomes highly addictive. As you can probably conclude, I am completely food-oriented, so most of my memories include visual and culinary associations.

So, it is now my intention to combine three of my favorite snack foods in one amazing crock pot side dish. Enjoy!

1 lb. bag frozen french fries

1 c. shredded cheddar cheese

1/2 c. frozen corn kernels

2 oz. jarred jalapeno slices

4 oz. salsa

toppings:

sour cream

1/2 English cucumber, peeled, sliced and quartered

Coat crock pot with non-stick spray. Spread frozen french fries in bottom of pot, layer with ingredients. Cook on high for 2 hours. Serve with a dollop of sour cream and some cucumber. Feel free to use a fork or your fingers to consume!

Vinaigrette Salad

***“To make a good salad is to be a brilliant diplomatist –
the problem is entirely the same in both cases.***

To know exactly how much oil one must put with one’s vinegar.”

Oscar Wilde 1856-1900, British Author

Dinner was not a crock last night. We grilled out brats and had cold side dishes, drank chilled wine and enjoyed time with friends. Sometimes I really enjoy the contrast of a hot main dish and the refreshment of cold accompaniments. I made a



vinaigrette salad last night that everyone seemed to really enjoy, so I thought I’d share the recipe with you too. Tomorrow I’ll use the crock pot, but this was a nice change.

Making a vinaigrette salad takes only a few ingredients, but

just the right balance (as Oscar Wilde said in the quote listed above). You want chemistry and harmony and simplicity in the perfect mix. Depending on the potency of your ingredients, you may want to divide the dressing measurements in half and add a bit at a time until you get a good balance. Remember that when the vegetables marinate, they will absorb some oil and vinegar and release some water, so you might want to drain the salad a little bit before serving. Enjoy!

1 English cucumber, peeled and cut into chunks

2 c. cherry or grape tomatoes, cut in half

1/2 medium sweet onion, cut into chunks

1 15 oz. can garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed

1 15 oz. can green beans, drained and rinsed

3 T. fresh parsley, chopped

1/4 c. extra light olive oil

3 T. red wine vinegar

1/2 t. salt

1 t. coarsely ground pepper

Mix all vegetable together, then drizzle with oil, vinegar and seasonings. Toss salad together and then add parsley and mix one more time. Refrigerate at least an hour and then drain, if needed, before serving.