

K's Kitchen: Feasting on nachos

By Kathryn Reed

Sometimes it is better not to be a statistic – like being one of the U.S. households that throws out \$1,200 worth of food a year.

I try to discard as little food as possible. I do this partly because I'm cheap, partly because I usually only buy food when I'm going to cook with it and partly I try to be a little creative in the kitchen.

Composting is one way to re-use food. I did this when I lived in Sonoma County, but I have not tried it in Tahoe. I know others have been successful here.



Veggies on the wilted side are good for soups or dishes where presentation doesn't matter. Pureeing veggies is a sure way to make sure no one knows what they looked like to start with.

Nachos are a meal I like to make when I don't really want to cook. It's also a way for me to clean out the fridge. No two concoctions are ever the same. They are also great to nosh on during football playoffs.

I usually start with onion and garlic, add whatever veggies I have. I can't think of a vegetable I wouldn't use. I try to use fresh. But I have corn kernels in the freezer from last summer's farmer market that can be used.

Sometimes a can of diced jalapenos is thrown in. I like fresh cilantro in the mixture as well as distributed on top when the

nachos are done cooking. I add two cans of black beans, sometimes refried beans, and I've mixed pinto and black beans, and red and black beans.

I make a huge batch each time. I like to reheat them for breakfast or lunch. Making one meal and living off of it for a few days is perfect for me. If you don't do leftovers, then make them on a plate to better judge the mound you are creating.

The amount and kind of cheese is up to you.

Kitchen Sink Nachos

1 bag tortilla chips

Grated cheese

2 cans beans

Olive oil

Onion, diced

Minced garlic

Vegetables, diced

Cilantro, fresh or dried

Salsa

Preheat oven to 250 degrees.

Lightly coat a pan with olive oil. Once it's hot, toss in onion and garlic. Add vegetables based on what takes the longest to cook – which is usually hardest to softest. Add beans. Cook over medium heat until mixture is hot. Season to your liking – herbs, hot sauce, red pepper flakes, salt and pepper.

Pour half the bag of chips onto a jelly roll pan – the ones

with a side so stuff doesn't ooze out. With a slotted spoon, spread half of the bean mixture across the chips. Cover with a layer of cheese. Add the rest of the chips, beans and cheese.

Bake until cheese is melted.

Remove from oven – time to add salsa, avocado/guacamole, sour cream.

Dive in.