

# K's Kitchen: French dip without the meat

By Kathryn Reed

I'm guessing the last time I had a French dip sandwich was when I lived under the roof of my parents' house. That's what happens when you become a vegetarian.

It's amazing how portabella mushrooms can be such a wonderful substitute for beef. I'm not sure why it took so long to figure out this would work well.

Sandwiches are something I tend to eat more of in the summer than winter, but this is so hearty that I can see making it year-round.

Be aware that regular Worcestershire sauce has anchovies. There are vegan varieties available.

I bought the mushrooms presliced to make things easier.

To have the sandwiches all done at once it will be best to put them under the broiler to melt the cheese. I only made two and just zapped them in the microwave. Swiss is the traditional cheese used on French dip, but you could use something else. I would stick with a white cheese, though.



**Mushroom French Dip Sandwiches**

- 2 tsps unsalted butter
- 2½ T olive oil, divided
- 2 large yellow onions, vertically sliced
- ¼ tsp kosher salt
- 1¼ lbs portabello mushroom caps, gills removed, sliced into strips
- ¾ C vegetable broth
- 1/3 C dry sherry
- 1 T vegetarian Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tsp chopped fresh thyme
- 1 tsp soy sauce
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 2 T Dijon mustard
- ½ tsp horseradish
- 4 hoagie rolls
- 4 slices ultra-thin Swiss cheese

Heat butter and 1½ teaspoons of oil in a large skillet over medium. Lower heat to medium-low, cooking until golden. Then add salt, stir.

Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a separate large skillet over medium-high. Arrange half of the mushrooms in skillet in a single layer and cook until golden-brown on both sides. Place mushrooms in a bowl. Repeat process with remaining 1 tablespoon oil and half of mushrooms.

Combine all mushrooms in pan, add broth, sherry,

Worcestershire sauce, thyme, soy sauce, and pepper. Bring mixture to a boil; reduce to a simmer; cook 5 minutes.

Combine mustard and horseradish. Spread on top halves of rolls.

Divide mushrooms onto bottom half of rolls. Pour au jus into four ramekins.

Preheat broiler to high. Divide onions onto mushrooms, then cover with cheese. Place on baking sheet, broil until cheese melts. Serve with au jus.

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# Getting to the bottom of tequila/mezcal

**By Jeffrey Miller, The Conversation**

In less than a decade, worldwide sales of tequila have doubled, while sales of premium and ultra-premium brands have shot up by 292 percent and 706 percent, respectively.

In recent years, you may have heard of tequila tastings and walked by a new mezcal bar – and wondered about the difference between the two. Or you've seen a headline proclaiming that a shot of tequila a day will keep the doctor away.

As a food historian, I hope to debunk some myths and explore some little-known aspects of the Mexican spirit that's become a global phenomenon.

## **What's the deal with the worm?**

Walking through the tequila section of your local liquor

store, you may see a bottle with a worm floating in it. But if you see one, you're looking at a bottle of mezcal – not tequila.

While all tequila is mezcal, all mezcal is not tequila: To be labeled as tequila the spirit must be distilled from at least 51 percent blue agave (*Agave weberii*) and made within a region around the Mexican town of Tequila.

Mezcals, on the other hand, can be made from any of 30 aloe-like succulents and can be made in a number of Mexican states.

As for the worm, it's the larva of the maguey moth, an animal that lives and feeds on agave plants.

It was originally inserted into bottles of Gusano Rojo mezcal as a marketing gimmick. The worm isn't a psychedelic as fraternity lore would have it, but it is edible and is sold as a delicacy in food markets across central Mexico.

### **Can tequila actually be good for you?**

Tequila has long been thought of as a cure for various ailments.

During the influenza pandemic of 1918, Mexican doctors would prescribe tequila with lemon and salt to treat flu symptoms. To this day, Mexicans stir it into hot tea with honey to assuage sore throats.

In recent years, you may have come across articles giddily announcing that a shot of tequila a day can lower bad cholesterol and blood sugar.

But the study showing lower cholesterol levels was conducted on mice, and there's been no evidence showing the same effect on humans. (In fact, the findings for mice couldn't be replicated in a similar study.) Meanwhile, agave has been shown to have a higher fructose content than sugar – and even high-fructose corn syrup.

In the end, there's not likely to be any inadvertent health benefits to your tequila benders.

### **Is the margarita named after a woman?**

Tequila is mixed with lime juice, salt and liquor to make the margarita, one of the more popular summer cocktails.

Most of the margarita's origin stories claim it was named after a girl named Margarita. One version of the legend says that the drink was named after dancer Marjorie King: On a trip to Mexico, she asked a bartender near Tijuana to make her a drink with tequila since she was allergic to grain-based spirits. Another version traces the drink to Ensenada, Mexico, where, in the early 1940s, a bartender concocted the drink to honor Margarita Henkel, the daughter of the German Ambassador to Mexico.

Neither story is probably true. Before Prohibition, a very popular cocktail in California was the Brandy Daisy, a mix of brandy, Curaçao liqueur and lemon juice. As people drifted over the border into Mexico to evade Prohibition's restrictions, it's likely that bartenders began making the drink with Mexico's national spirit, which would have been more available and cheaper.

"Margarita" is Spanish for daisy, so when Americans ordered a daisy, it would have been natural for the bartender to reply, "One margarita, coming up."

*Jeffrey Miller is an associate professor and program coordinator for hospitality management, Colorado State University.*

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# K's Kitchen: Turning corn into salsa

By Kathryn Reed

Fresh corn is something I could probably eat every day. It has seemed so incredibly sweet this summer.

Eating it right off the cob is my first choice, but sometimes I like to cut off the kernels and transform into something more.

The recipe below is quite simple and satisfying. I used the mixture as a salsa with tortilla chips. This broke up what can be a monotony with tomato salsa. I added the last bit of it to an enchilada mixture.

I would think it would be great as a topping for fish, maybe even pork.

The corn can be boiled or barbecued or cooked in a skillet. Obviously the cooking method will change the flavor.



**Corn Salsa**

3 ears of corn, cooked

2 medium tomatoes, chopped

$\frac{1}{2}$  tsp salt

$1\frac{1}{2}$  tsp hot sauce

1 C cilantro, chopped

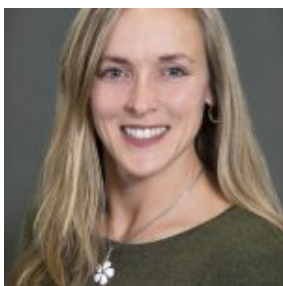
Take the kernels off the corn. Place in medium bowl. Add rest of ingredients. Stir. Refrigerate for at least an hour to let flavors meld.

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## Make your food go further

By Jen Trew

Each year, the typical American family tosses out \$2,275 worth of food and beverages. About 15 to 20 percent of the produce we buy is wasted. But as we all know, eating a diet full of fruits and veggies is good for your health and longevity.



Jen Trew

A few simple tasks can help each of us eat healthier and reduce food waste:

- Before food shopping, take inventory of what you have on hand. Make a plan for using up fresh items in your kitchen before they go bad.

- Buy only what you need. Make a list of how produce will be served once purchased.
- Store produce properly. If it's refrigerated at the store, it should be at home as well.
- Some plants emit a gas that speeds up ripening in other plants. These include avocados, bananas, mangos, peaches, apples, melons, and tomatoes. Don't keep these in the same bin with other fruits and veggies.
- Some produce has a shorter life span than others, such as mushrooms, tender greens, berries, herbs, and summer squash. Use these first.
- If your produce is nearing its end, lay it out on a sheet pan and freeze for later use.

Repurposing leftovers is a great way to minimize food waste.

Try these tips:

- Have a leftover night for dinner toward the end of the week.
- Everyone gets a small portion of each item.
- Roasted veggies and leftover grilled chicken are great for topping a baked potato or rice as an easy meal.
- An egg scramble or salad made with leftover veggies is another tasty way to use up what you have.

*Jen Trew is a registered dietitian at Barton Health.*

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# K's Kitchen: Salad hot off the barbecue

By Kathryn Reed

Salads are often an entrée in the summer, but sometimes I want something other than lettuce and fruit. That's when the barbecue gets fired up.

With how warm it has been lately, the last thing I want to do is get the kitchen even hotter. Again, the barbecue is the answer.

This ensemble was so incredibly easy to put together. Chopping the vegetables took the most amount of time. Any variety of veggies would work, so pick your favorites. The cooking time will depend on what you choose.

The assortment I had were done pretty fast, so you will want to make sure the orzo is already on the stove. If you have a side burner on your grill, this is a great time to use it so you aren't heating up the house.

The marinade is tangy, giving a refreshing finish.



**Grilled Vegetable Orzo Salad**

- 1 medium red onion, quartered
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded and quartered

- 1 yellow bell pepper, seeded and quartered
- 1 medium zucchini, cut into quarters
- 1 medium-size yellow squash, cut into quarters
- 1 portabella mushroom sliced in strips
- Olive oil cooking spray
- 10 ounces uncooked orzo
- 3 T red wine vinegar
- 3 T grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 T extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 T lemon juice
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp pepper

Preheat grill to at least 400 degrees.

Place vegetables on oiled grates. Cook until slightly charred. Chop vegetables into small pieces, and put in a large bowl.

Prepare orzo according to package directions for al dente; don't use salt. Drain and rinse under cold running water; stir orzo into vegetable mixture.

Add vinegar, Parmesan, oil, lemon juice, salt, and black pepper. Pour into veggie-orzo mixture.

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# Greg Boeger reflects on grape growing and winemaking

By Mike Dunne, Sacramento Bee

Just east of Placerville, where narrow and windy Carson Road starts to scale Apple Hill, a vista not of orchards but of vineyards suddenly opens to the north.

It's a landscape that could have been painted by Grandma Moses, or maybe Thomas Kinkade, all light, color and order – rows of lush vines rippling across the hills, a scattering of weathered outbuildings, a few equally old pear trees, a brook coursing through it all.

This is the home of Boeger Winery, which for 46 years has been a model of industry and imagination, creating vintage after vintage of wines notable for their lucidity and equilibrium.

**Read the whole story**

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## K's Kitchen: Quinoa enchilada bake

By Kathryn Reed

For some reason I had not thought of putting quinoa in enchiladas. Thank goodness Denise enlightened me.

And these were no ordinary enchiladas. For one, they weren't wrapped in tortillas and then they weren't baked.

The concoction was cooked in a slow cooker. Crockpots are such

great alternatives because they allow for cooking to go on all day and you don't have to be in the kitchen for hours right before your guests arrive. Plus, it makes the house smell so good.

Denise served tortillas on the side so the mixture could be wrapped in it. That was great. It was also so yummy on its own.

I will be serving this to others in the future.



**Quinoa Enchilada Bake**

1 $\frac{1}{4}$  C yellow onion, chopped

1 $\frac{1}{4}$  C red bell pepper, chopped

3 cloves garlic, minced

1 $\frac{1}{2}$  C dry quinoa

2 $\frac{1}{4}$  C vegetable broth

14.5 ounce can tomatoes with green chilies, undrained

8 ounce can tomato sauce

2 T chili powder

1 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp ground cumin

Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

14.5 ounce can black beans, drained

14.5 ounce can pinto beans, drained

1½ C frozen corn

1½ C cheddar or Monterey jack, or Mexican blend cheese

Avocado, diced

Fresh tomato, diced

Cilantro, chopped

Tortillas, optional

Add all ingredients through the corn to a crockpot. Cook at least three hours. Ten to 15 minutes before ready to serve add the cheese. Serve when melted.

Place avocado, tomato and cilantro in individual bowls and let people serve themselves.

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## A brief history of the s'more

**By Jeffrey Miller, The Conversation**

This summer, 45 million pounds of marshmallows will be toasted over a fire in America. Many will be used as an ingredient in the quintessential summer snack: the s'more.

Huddling around a campfire and eating gooey marshmallows and warm chocolate sandwiched between two graham crackers may feel like primeval traditions.

But every part of the process – including the coat hanger we unbend to use as a roasting spit – is a product of the

## Industrial Revolution.

The oldest ingredient in the s'more's holy trinity is the marshmallow, a sweet that gets its name from a plant called, appropriately enough, the marsh mallow. Marsh mallow, or *Althea officinalis*, is a plant indigenous to Eurasia and Northern Africa. For thousands of years, the root sap was boiled, strained and sweetened to cure sore throats or simply be eaten as a treat.

The white and puffy modern marshmallow looks much like its ancient ancestor. But for hundreds of years, creation of marshmallows was very time-consuming. Each marshmallow had to be manually poured and molded, and they were a treat that only the wealthy could afford. By the mid-19th century, the process had become mechanized and machines could make them so cheaply that they were included in most penny candy selections. Today the marshmallow on your s'more contains no marsh mallow sap at all. It's mostly corn syrup, cornstarch and gelatin.

Chocolate is another ancient food. Mesoamericans have been eating or drinking it for 3,000 years. The Europeans who encountered indigenous people in Mexico in the 1500s noted that chocolate was used to treat numerous ailments ranging from dysentery and indigestion, to fatigue and dyspepsia.

But again, it was the Industrial Revolution that made chocolate cheap enough and palatable enough for the average person. The chocolate that the Mesoamericans ate was dark, grainy and tended to be somewhat bitter.

In 1875, a candlemaker-turned-chocolatier named Daniel Peter invented a process to mix milk with chocolate. He then added some more sugar, and the modern milk chocolate bar was born. Peter's company eventually merged with Henri Nestle's two companies, and Peter's invention was dubbed the Nestle chocolate bar. It proved to be so much more popular than the darker bars on the market that other candy companies, from

Cadbury to Hershey, released their own versions.

Finally, the graham cracker was invented by the Presbyterian minister Sylvester Graham, who felt that a vegetarian diet would help suppress carnal urges, especially the scourge of “self-pollution” (read: masturbation).

The original graham cracker used unsifted whole-wheat flour. Graham felt that separating out the bran was against the wishes of God, who, according to Graham, must have had a reason for including bran.

In his “Treatise on Bread, and Bread-Making,” he gives many examples of prominent writers throughout history who urged the consumption of whole wheat flour.

Graham was highly influential in the development of the health food movement of the 19th century, and his acolytes included John Harvey Kellogg of the Battle Creek Sanitarium, who used the graham cracker as a basis for his famous flaked cereal line.

As for how the graham cracker became a part of the s’more, the snack’s true origin remains unclear.

The first mention of this treat is in a 1927 edition of the Girl Scout manual “Tramping and Trailing with the Girl Scouts.” In a nod to the treat’s addictive qualities, it was dubbed “Some More.”

The term s’more is first found the 1938 guide “Recreational Programs for Summer Camps,” by William Henry Gibson. Some think the s’more may be a homemade version of the Mallomar or the moon pie, two snacks introduced in the 1910s.

Today, the s’more has become so popular that it’s inspired a range of spin-offs. You can eat a s’mores-flavored Pop Tart for breakfast, munch on a s’mores candy bar for dessert and even unwind after a long day at work with a s’mores martini.

As I often tell my students, the health-conscious Sylvester Graham is probably rolling over in his grave after what became of his beloved cracker.

*Jeffrey Miller is an associate professor and program coordinator, Hospitality Management, Colorado State University.*

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# K's Kitchen: Many flavors of paprika

**By Kathryn Reed**

All paprika is not the same. There is hot, smoked and sweet. But what about that Hungarian paprika that is in stores?

Hungarian, as far as what is sold most places in the United States, is the hot variety.

I started doing a little research on paprika after my friend Carolyn brought me sweet and hot varieties of the spice back from her trip to Hungary.

Paprika is made from grinding bonnet peppers, so it stands to reason the heat factor would vary. The redness also adds color to dishes.

I used my gifts in the following potato concoction. I've started sprinkling it in various veggie dishes, too. Until the gift, I was rather sparing in when I would use paprika. It's becoming a go-to spice.



## **Paprika Laced Potatoes**

3 pounds small round or fingerling potatoes

4 T butter

2 T kosher salt

2 T red wine vinegar

1 tsp chili powder

1 tsp garlic salt

1 tsp hot paprika

1 tsp sweet paprika

1 tsp onion powder

1 T fresh chives, chopped

Preheat oven to 500 degrees.

Put potatoes in large saucepan; add water so it covers them by 1 inch. Bring to boil, then reduce to medium. Simmer until potatoes are tender. Drain and let stand.

Melt butter in microwave.

Place potatoes on rimmed pan. Pour melted butter over potatoes. Toss to coat.

Roast potatoes in oven for about 15 minutes.

In small bowl mix remaining eight ingredients.

Transfer potatoes to large bowl. Pour spices over potatoes. Mix/stir and serve.

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# Pot beer is coming to Nevada, California

**By Jen Skerritt, Bloomberg**

There's a new craft beer in town, and this one offers a different kind of buzz.

San Diego-based Cannabiniers will introduce what it says are the first line of de-alcoholized craft beers infused with tetrahydrocannabinol, or THC, marijuana's psychoactive ingredient. The Two Roots Brewing Co. products will launch in Nevada in July, and soon after will be introduced in California, said Kevin Love, director of product development.

The beers, which include a stout, a West Coast IPA and a lager, contain 2.5 milligrams of THC, enough that the consumer can feel its effects within five to seven minutes, but small enough that a person could drink multiple beers in one sitting, he said.

**Read the whole story**