

EASY MEXICAN BUFFET

Shown on pages 76-77

• For meaning of recipe symbols, see page 28.

DINAH'S TIPS FOR LAST-MINUTE ENTERTAINING

Because she's always on the run, especially at this time of year when she's busy with her annual Nabisco/Dinah Shore Invitational Golf Tournament March 27-April 3, Dinah has lots of tips for last-minute guests.

• Keep plenty of crunchy vegetables on hand to serve with dips. Some good examples are green peppers, tomatoes, carrots and jicama (a Mexican vegetable much like a turnip).

• For hors d'oeuvre in a jiffy, set out several types of mustards with hard cheeses, such as Gruyère and Cheddar. Guests dab their choice of mustard on cheese—it's delicious!

• Another quick appetizer is quesadillas. You're always prepared to make them (they take just a few minutes) if you stock your kitchen with cheese, hot pepper salsa and tortillas.

• For tangy cocktail meatballs, mix ground beef with a little barbecue sauce. Wrap around shelled pecans; broil.

• Here's a different dip: Combine sautéed mushrooms with sour cream and onion or with sweet cream and pimientos.

• Melba toast goes with just about anything, from appetizers to main courses. Make your own to have ready when company drops by. Butter slices of leftover bread, sprinkle with Parmesan cheese; cut in 2-inch squares and bake at 250° for about 1 hour, or until bread is very crisp and light golden brown.

• To whip up Tex-Mex or down-home Southern cornbread or biscuits in a hurry, keep jars of dry ingredients already mixed in your cupboard. Saves precious time!

• Be prepared for spur-of-the-moment cooking by preserving fresh herbs in jars of olive or vegetable oil. Now you'll never run out!

• Unexpected company for dinner? Impress them with a gourmet fish dish that's a cinch to make. Just dip fish into beaten egg, then bread crumbs seasoned with herbs, and sauté quickly. It's simple, but it always works.

• Any meal can be a company meal if you add a "different" side dish. One I prefer with many of my dinners is Southern-style hot water hoe cakes. They're easy to make from hot water, white cornmeal and salt. You cook them like pancakes!

CHICKEN ENCHILADAS

Bake at 350° for 20 minutes.
Makes 15 servings at \$1.26 each.

- 5 whole chicken breasts (about 12 ounces each)
- 1 medium-size onion, quartered
- 1 clove garlic, quartered
- 1 stalk celery
- 1 carrot
- ½ teaspoon salt

- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1 medium-size onion, thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 6 cups Enchilada Sauce (*recipe follows*)
- 12 green onions, finely chopped
- 2 cans (6 ounces each) pitted black olives, finely chopped
- 2 cups shredded sharp Cheddar cheese (8 ounces)
- 2 cups shredded Monterey Jack cheese (8 ounces)
- Vegetable oil for frying
- 30 corn tortillas

1. Put chicken breasts, the quartered onion, garlic, celery, carrot, salt and pepper in a kettle or Dutch oven. Add enough water to cover. Bring to boiling; lower heat; cover. Simmer for 20 minutes or until chicken is tender but not falling apart. Transfer chicken to a plate to cool slightly. Strain and reserve 2 cups of the chicken broth. Shred chicken when cool enough to handle.
2. Sauté the sliced onion in the 2 tablespoons oil in a large skillet until tender, about 3 minutes. Add shredded chicken and 1 cup of the Enchilada Sauce. Simmer 2 minutes; taste. Add additional seasoning, if needed.
3. Combine the green onions, olives and the cheeses in a medium-size bowl.
4. Pour enough oil in a small skillet to make a ¼-inch depth; heat. Sauté tortillas just until limp, about 10 seconds. Drain on paper toweling.
5. Measure 1 cup Enchilada Sauce into the bottoms of each of two 13x9x2-inch baking dishes.
6. Dip tortillas in remaining Enchilada Sauce. Fill with chicken mixture using about 1 generous tablespoon for each. Top with some of the green onion, olive and cheese mixture. Fold one side of each tortilla over filling, then roll up into a thick cylinder. Place seam side down in baking dishes. Pour 2 cups sauce over each filled baking dish. Sprinkle tops with remaining onion, olive and cheese mixture.
7. Bake in a moderate oven (350°) for 20 minutes until sauce is bubbly.

ENCHILADA SAUCE

Makes 3 to 3½ quarts for \$7.21.

- 1 medium-size onion, grated
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 can (16 ounces) tomatoes, coarsely chopped
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 4 cans (8 ounces each) tomato sauce
- 4 cans (10 ounces each) mild enchilada sauce
- 3 cans condensed tomato soup
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- Dash liquid red pepper seasoning
- 1 can (10 ounces) Salsa de Chile Fresco OR: hot enchilada sauce

Sauté onion in oil in a large kettle until tender, about 3 minutes. Add tomatoes, chicken broth, tomato sauce, enchilada sauce, tomato soup, salt, pepper, sugar, red pepper

seasoning and salsa to taste. Bring to boiling; lower heat; simmer, stirring often, 1 hour.
Note: This sauce freezes well.

SOPAIPILLAS

Makes 40 squares for \$3.76.

- 1¼ cups milk
- 1 envelope active dry yeast
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- ¼ cup very warm water
- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 quart peanut or other vegetable oil
- 10X (confectioners') sugar
- Dipping Sauce (*recipe follows*)

1. Heat milk in a small saucepan just until bubbles appear around edge; cool to lukewarm.
2. Sprinkle yeast and sugar over very warm water in a medium-size bowl. ("Very warm" water should feel comfortably warm when dropped on wrist.) Stir to dissolve yeast. Let stand until bubbly, about 10 minutes. Stir in cooled milk.
3. Combine flour, salt and baking powder in a large bowl. Cut in butter with a pastry blender until mixture is crumbly.
4. Make a well in the dry ingredients; pour in milk-yeast mixture. Stir until soft dough forms. Turn out onto floured surface; knead dough 15 to 20 times, using as little flour as possible. Invert a bowl over dough; let dough rest for 10 minutes.
5. Pour enough oil into a heavy kettle or deep fat fryer to make a 2½- to 3-inch depth. Heat to 400° on a deep-fat frying thermometer.
6. Roll out ½ the dough to a 10x8-inch rectangle. Cut into 20 two-inch squares.
7. Slightly stretch a few dough squares at a time; drop into hot oil. (Keep remaining dough covered.) Fry squares about 2 minutes, turning once, or until golden and puffed. Drain on paper toweling. Repeat with remaining half of dough. Dust sopaipillas with 10X sugar; dip in sauce when eating.

DIPPING SAUCE: Combine 6 tablespoons brown sugar and ½ cup water in a small saucepan. Bring to boiling, stirring constantly. Lower heat; simmer 15 minutes or until slightly thickened (watch carefully). Remove from heat; stir in ½ cup dry sherry and ½ cup raisins. You may add ½ teaspoon maple flavoring, if you wish. Serve hot.

MOLDED RICE

Bake at 375° for 20 minutes.
Makes 12 servings at 65¢ each.

- Green Rice (*recipe follows*)
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- White Rice (*recipe follows*)
- 1 jar (2 ounces) pimiento, drained and chopped
- Red Rice (*recipe follows*)
- ½ medium-size head iceberg lettuce, shredded
- ½ sweet red pepper, cut in strips
- ½ sweet green pepper, cut in strips