

Back-to-School DAYS

The Best Hometown Peanut Butter Recipes In America

(Family Features) In kitchens, cafeterias and restaurants nationwide, our local food preferences may be unique, and our culinary traditions may be diverse, but we all share a common bond: a love for peanut butter.

"Affordable, nutritious and of course delicious, peanut butter is a staple found in most American homes," said Leslie Wagner, executive director of Southern Peanut Growers. "While some parts of the country prefer their foods hot and spicy, others prefer savory or sweet. But no matter where you go, families love making peanuts or peanut butter a key ingredient in their favorite recipes."

To celebrate the unique flavors from coast to coast, and to find the best hometown PB recipes, Southern Peanut Growers conducted its first "PB My Way" regional recipe contest.

Peanut butter lovers nationwide submitted their recipes, from spicy stuffed peppers inspired by the Southwest to decadent chocolate bars in the Northeast. These are the top regional PB-powered recipes in our "United States of Peanut Butter."

For more recipes, visit www.peanutbutterlovers.com



After School Peanut Butter Apple Pie

Recipe contributed by winner Alisa L., Midwest region

Servings: 8 pieces

Prepared pie crust

Chopped peanuts (optional)

Filling:

7 apples, peeled cored and sliced

2/3 cup sugar

3 tablespoons flour

1 teaspoon lemon juice

Crumble:

3/4 cup rolled oats

1/4 cup butter

1/4 cup peanut butter

1/3 cup brown sugar

1/2 cup flour

Place crust in 9-inch pie pan and crimp edges. Use dried beans to weigh down bottom. Bake crust for 10-15 minutes, or until crust is lightly browned.

Mix all filling ingredients together and put in crust. Using hands, mix crumble ingredients until in pea-sized pieces. Top apples with crumble. Don't worry if sky high, apples will cook down and pie will be perfectly proportioned.

Bake at 350°F for 40-50 minutes. Keep edges covered with foil until last 15 minutes. Garnish with chopped peanuts.



Easy PB & J Breakfast Tarts

Recipe contributed by winner Susan M., West region

Servings: 8 tarts

2 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for rolling

1/2 cup whole wheat pastry flour

6 tablespoons sugar

1 teaspoon sea salt

2/3 cup shortening

6 tablespoons peanut butter plus

4 heaping teaspoons for filling

(1/2 teaspoon per tart)

1/2 cup cold water

5 tablespoons jam

(strawberry works well)

Drizzle option 1:

1/2 cup powdered sugar

1 tablespoon jam

1 tablespoon milk

Drizzle option 2:

1/2 cup powdered sugar

1/4 teaspoon strawberry extract, optional

1 tablespoon milk

Preheat oven to 350°F. In medium bowl mix together flours, sugar and sea salt.

Using pastry cutter, cut-in shortening and peanut butter, until mixture resembles small peas. Drizzle mixture with cold water until mixture is moist and holds together. Roll out on floured surface to at least 1/16th of an inch thickness.

Using 3-by-5-inch index (recipe) card for template, cut into sixteen 3-by-5-inch shapes. Re-rolling works fine. In middle of eight shapes, smear 1/2 heaping teaspoon peanut butter and heaping teaspoon of jam on top. Be careful not to go to edges. Using fingers, wet edges with water and place another piece of pastry on top. Press all sides well, and using fork press all edges to secure. Using fork, gently poke tops in four places so steam can escape.

Place inch apart on parchment lined baking sheet. Bake for 13-14 minutes until starting to brown around edges. Cool on rack.

Whisk together drizzle of choice in small bowl. Drizzle over cooled tarts.

Note: This pastry is very user-friendly and delicate. Freeze tarts up to one month and defrost at room temperature before serving.

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Carolina Dreaming Appetizer Meatballs

Recipe contributed by winner Janice E., Southeast region

Servings: 24 meatballs

1/2 cup peanut butter

1/4 cup fig preserves

2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce

2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

1 tablespoon minced or grated fresh ginger

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1/4 teaspoon ground red pepper

1 1/4 pounds ground turkey

4 green onions, finely chopped (including green tops)

1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley

1 large egg

1 teaspoon salt

Diced green onion tops or chopped parsley (optional)

Preheat oven to 425°F. Whisk together peanut butter, preserves, Worcestershire sauce and lemon juice until well blended. Add ginger, black and red pepper, mixing well. Reserve.

Place approximately half peanut butter mixture into mixing bowl (reserve remainder for later). Add turkey, green onions, parsley, egg and salt to mixing bowl and mix lightly but thoroughly.

Roll mixture into 1-inch balls and place 1 inch apart on lightly greased, rimmed baking sheet.

Place into oven and bake for 15 minutes. Remove pan from oven and brush tops of meatballs with remaining peanut butter mixture.

Return pan to oven and bake for about 5-8 minutes more, or until nicely browned.

Remove from oven. Arrange on serving

plate and sprinkle with diced green onion tops or parsley, if desired.

Note: Use with decorative toothpicks placed in each meatball for easy consumption.



Nutty Jalapeno-Chicken Stuffed Peppers

Recipe contributed by winner Lori M., Southwest region

Servings: 12 peppers

12 large jalapeno peppers, split open

(not all the way through) and seeded

1/2 cup peanut butter

1 cup shredded cooked chicken

13-ounce package cooked bacon pieces

1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese

1/4 cup mayonnaise

1 cup crushed cornflakes

Preheat oven to 350°F. Place peppers in medium bowl and cover with boiling water 2 minutes. Drain and pat dry.

In medium bowl, mix together peanut butter, chicken, bacon and cheese. Fill each jalapeno with mixture. Smear each pepper with a little mayonnaise and roll in cornflakes in shallow dish to cover.

Place jalapeno on non-stick baking sheet. Bake in preheated oven until golden, about 15-20 minutes.

RECIPES | PAGE 3

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