

FALL FOOD IDEAS

It is fun to share time together before a school break with a celebration. This is a great time of year to emphasize character education traits such as citizenship, caring and respect. Have a great time learning and laughing together and enjoying a healthy balance.

Try serving foods that are orange colored such as: Carrots and low-fat dip, dried apricots, orange wedges, snack cups of peaches or mandarin oranges in their own juice. Other great finger foods are: apples with yogurt dip or sliced and topped with spooky sprinkles, grapes, light or low-fat popcorn, tortilla chips and salsa, or roasted pumpkin seeds. Try milk, water, or apple cider to drink. Check out some of these recipes for school or home.

WITCH'S BREW

Mix together one 24 oz bottle of cranberry juice cocktail, 1 can of frozen orange juice concentrate and ½ gallon of apple cider.

For added fun try:

1. Floating funny face ice cubes in the brew. Half-fill and freeze ice tray (or use a muffin tin) with water, garnish each cube with blueberry eyes (or a grape half) and a mandarin orange smile and then fill rest with water and freeze again.

OR

2. Mix in some slimey gooey fish eyes. In a medium saucepan over high heat, bring 4 cups of water to a boil. Add 1 cup of tapioca pearls and ½ cup sugar, then return to a boil. Lower heat to medium and simmer for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Transfer the gooey fish eyes to a bowl, cover and refrigerate until chilled. Mix into Witch's Brew before serving.

APPLE BITES

- Apples
- Slivered Almonds

INSTRUCTIONS:

Quarter and core an apple. Cut a wedge from the skin side of each quarter, then press slivered almonds in place for teeth. Tip: If you're not going to serve them right away, baste the apples with orange juice to keep them from browning.

PUMPKIN-SHAPED TORTILLA DIPPERS RECIPE

- 8 (from an 11.5 oz pkg) roasted red pepper tortillas
- 8 (from an 11.5 oz pkg) spinach tortillas

INSTRUCTIONS:

Heat oven to 375 F. Cut tortillas into pumpkin shape using a 3-in. pumpkin-shaped cookie cutter. You should get about 6 pumpkins per tortilla. Arrange on baking sheet. Coat with non-stick spray. Bake 5 to 8 minutes or until lightly browned and crisp. Let cool slightly on wire rack.

EERIE EYEBALLS

- Apple rings (1 per eye)
- Dried apricots (1/2 per eye)
- Raisins (1/2 per eye)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. For each pair of eyes, gently flatten two dried apple rings with the palm of your hand.
2. Carefully slice a dried apricot through the middle so that you end up with two circular halves. Press a half, sticky side down, onto the center of an apple ring, covering the hole.
3. For pupils, use kitchen scissors to cut a raisin in two, and press the halves sticky side down, onto the apricots.



SPOOKY SPINACH DIP IN BREAD BOWL CAULDRON RECIPE

Dip Ingredients:

- 1 cup low-fat sour cream
- ½ cup light mayo
- 1 tsp dried basil
- ½ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 pkg (10 oz) frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry
- ½ cup chopped scallions
- ¼ cup shredded carrots
- Wilton leaf green icing color (optional)

Cauldron Ingredients (optional):

- 2 refrigerated breadsticks (from an 11 oz can)
- Wilton black icing color
- 1 round loaf pumpernickel bread
- 1 pkg (8 oz) light cream cheese

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. To make Dip: In medium bowl, combine sour cream, mayonnaise, basil, black pepper, garlic powder and salt; mix well. Stir in spinach, scallions and carrots; blend well. Tint green with icing color id desired. Cover and refrigerate 2 hours or overnight for flavors to develop.
2. To make cauldron: heat oven to 350 F. Unroll 2 breadsticks- twist and form into handle shape. Insert toothpick into each end and bake as package directs.
3. Remove to rack to cool completely. Paint handle with black icing color. Cut top off bread and hollow out to form a bowl. Insert handle into top of bread bowl.
4. In a small bowl, tint cream cheese black with icing color. Transfer to zip-top bag. Snip ½ inch from corner of bag. Pipe around top of cauldron. Spoon dip into top of cauldron.

CARROT- FINGER FOOD

- Low-fat vegetable dip
- 4 long carrots
- 1 medium carrot
- Softened low-fat cream cheese
- Sliced-almond
- Baby carrots

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. To prepare them, just fill a serving bowl with your favorite vegetable dip. Wash and peel 4 long carrots for fingers and 1 medium carrot for a thumb.
2. With a paring knife (a parent's job), cut a flat, shallow notch in the tip of each carrot. Then use a dab of dip or softened cream cheese to glue a sliced-almond fingernail atop each notch.
3. Stick the fingers in the dip and serve with plenty of peeled baby carrots for dipping.

PUMPKIN SEEDS

Wash the seeds from one pumpkin, dry, lay in a single layer on a cookie sheet sprayed with cooking spray (like PAM), preheat the oven to 350 and pop them in for 20-25 minutes. (Watch them, you want them browned but not burnt)

WATERMELON BRAINS

Choose a small, seedless melon and peel off the green skin. Score the white pith with a knife to resemble the brain's squiggly folds. Then carve to expose the watermelon's red flesh. Then "perform brain surgery" and scoop of the watermelon with a spoon or melon baller.

RESOURCES USED:

www.familyfun.go.com
www.womensday.com
www.eHow.com
www.weissice.com
www.makeandtakes.com

BLACK BEAN CAT CRUDITES

Assorted vegetables of your choice, such as:

- Celery
- Cherry tomatoes
- Broccoli
- Carrots
- Green beans
- Mushrooms
- Zucchini

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Arrange vegetables in the shape of a cat, Serve with Black Bean Dip as the face. Make ears out of veggies as well.

BLACK BEAN DIP

- 1 15.5-ounce can black beans
- 1/3 cup medium-hot salsa, 1 tablespoon for garnish
- 1/4 cup cilantro leaves, plus extra for garnish (optional)
- 4 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 small garlic clove, minced

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Drain and rinse the black beans, setting aside 1 tablespoon for garnish.
2. Combine the black beans, salsa, cilantro leaves, lemon juice, and garlic in a food processor. Blend until smooth.
3. Makes 1 1/4 cups and serves 4 to 6.

BOO-NANAS

Dip peeled bananas in orange juice, then roll in shredded coconut to make white ghosts. Add small raisins for eyes, then insert wooden craft stick for a handle (so the ghosts can flit about hauntingly). Serve as-is or frozen.

JACK O LANTERN FACES

Mix some low fat cream cheese with orange food coloring and spread on a whole wheat English muffin. Take some raisins to make a Jack-o-Lantern face.

PUMPKIN DIP

Mix together 3 Tablespoons canned pumpkin, 1 cup low-fat vanilla yogurt, 1 Tablespoon orange juice concentrate, 1/2 tsp of cinnamon. Dip in with graham crackers.

PUMPKIN MUFFINS

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Sift together:

- 1 3/4 cups whole wheat pastry flour (or half whole wheat and half all purpose flour)
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg

Beat in a separate bowl:

- 2 eggs

Add to the eggs:

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 3/4 cup low-fat milk
- 1 cup canned pumpkin

INSTRUCTIONS:

Combine the wet and dry ingredients with a few swift strokes (don't over mix). Fill greased muffin cups two-thirds of the way full and bake for 20 to 25 minutes. Makes a dozen muffins.

SILLY PUMPKIN HEAD

Draw a face on a whole pumpkin. Make hair for the pumpkin using fruit and low fat cheese kabob sticks (if you don't want to use sticks for the kids try a thin straw). This treat also doubles as a decoration!