

Easy MEALS

to cook with kids



Healthy, Family-Friendly
Recipes from
Around the World

Recipes are
mostly vegetarian
and many are
dairy-free and
gluten-free!

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Chapter 6

De-Lightful Latin Dishes



Go south of the border for a fiesta of flavors and finger foods that kids will love!

Discover ways to incorporate high-fiber items, such as beans and vegetables, into delectable Latin dishes.

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Elotes

(Mexican Corn-on-the-Cob)

Prep time: 25 minutes

Total time: 25 minutes

Serves: 4

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Ingredients

4 ears of corn

4 bamboo skewers

4 tablespoons mayonnaise

**½ cup Mexican queso fresco or Cotija,
grated or crumbled**

4 teaspoons of freshly squeezed lime juice
(about 1 lime)

Kosher salt or sea salt to taste

Optional: **¼ teaspoon chili powder**

The first time I was introduced to this dish by my Mexican friend and instructor, Jacquie Grinberg, I was skeptical about combining mayonnaise, lime juice, cheese and spices on one of my favorite foods. But after my first bite, I was in love and so were my little students – they couldn't get enough of it!

Directions

ADULTS: Break each cob in half. Put a steamer basket in a large, wide pot (that has a tightly-fitting lid) and fill it with a few inches of water. Arrange the corn in the steamer basket so that it's not overcrowded. Cover and steam the corn over medium-high heat for about 15 minutes or until the corn is bright yellow and tender. (If you have access to a grill, you can grill the corn instead.) Let the corn cool down for a few minutes before handling it.

If the cobs are still warm, grab them with a clean dish towel. Drive a bamboo skewer into the wide end of each cob, so that you can hold it without touching the kernels. (Or, you can use corn-on-the-cob holders.)

KIDS 4 and up: With a butter knife, spread approximately 1 tablespoon of mayonnaise onto each cob, coating the kernels generously and evenly.

KIDS 2 and up: Spread cheese on a flat plate or cutting board and roll each cob in about 1-2 tablespoons of cheese, gently pressing the cheese into the mayonnaise. Squeeze about 1 teaspoon of lime juice over each cob. Sprinkle salt (and chili powder, if using) over each cob. Serve immediately. This dish does not store well.



Kids Tips

- 🍅 Arrange a “dipping” bar with each ingredient so that each family member can customize his or her own cob.
- 🍅 For kids who don’t like mayonnaise, use butter instead, but keep in mind that the cheese won’t adhere to the butter as well as it does to mayonnaise.

Cooking Tips

- 🍅 If you can’t find Mexican cheese, substitute grated Monterey jack or Parmesan cheese.
- 🍅 Steaming and grilling are two healthy cooking techniques but you can also boil the corn too.

Poppin' Edamame Salad

Ingredients

One 10-ounce bag of shelled edamame, frozen

1 cup corn kernels (fresh; frozen and thawed; or canned)

1 large carrot or 10 baby carrots, diced

1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
(about ½ lemon)

1 tablespoon mirin

2 teaspoons rice vinegar

3 tablespoons toasted sesame oil

⅛ teaspoon kosher salt or sea salt

Freshly ground pepper to taste

Optional: **1 tablespoon fresh cilantro, chopped**

Prep time: 15 minutes

Total time: 25 minutes

Serves: 4

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After a few years in the classroom, I discovered that most kids will eat just about anything, including grains and vegetables, once it's been drizzled with toasted sesame oil. This dish is high in protein and takes very little time to prepare. It can be served cold or at room temperature, which makes it convenient for lunch boxes.

Directions

ADULTS: Cook the edamame according to package directions. Drain and transfer the edamame to a medium-sized bowl to cool for about 10 minutes.

KIDS 2 and up: Add corn and carrots to the edamame. In a separate bowl, whisk the lemon juice, mirin, rice vinegar and sesame oil together. Pour the dressing over the vegetables and stir to combine. Season with salt and pepper (and fold in the cilantro, if using). Serve immediately or store in the refrigerator for up to 5 days in a sealed container.



Kids Tips

- Many kids enjoy squeezing lemons. Don't be surprised if they eat the lemon right off the rind. I've found that many kids love it even though it's sour.
- Young kids can tear cilantro leaves off the stems, but only the older children or an adult should be in charge of peeling and cutting the carrots.

Cooking Tips

- You can buy a pre-cooked brand of edamame to shorten the preparation time.
- If the corn is frozen, heat it in a small skillet with a little olive oil on low heat for 3-5 minutes.
- If you are using fresh corn, you'll need about 2 ears. **See page 25** for directions on how to remove kernels from a cob.
- Try adding in different vegetables, depending on the season: sautéed butternut squash in the cool months or sautéed broccoli rabe in the warmer months.
- If you don't have mirin (a sweet rice wine and wonderful alternative sweetener), substitute honey or maple syrup.

Chocolate-Dipped Strawberries

Ingredients

30 medium-sized strawberries
6 ounces of semi-sweet chocolate
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
1 tablespoon corn syrup

Directions

KIDS 2 and up: Wash and dry the strawberries. Make sure that the berries are completely dry or the chocolate will not adhere to them. Line a baking sheet with waxed paper.

ADULTS: In the top of a double boiler that you've set over simmering water, stir the chocolate, butter, and corn syrup until the chocolate melts and the mixture is smooth. Remove the chocolate from the heat but leave the water simmering in case the chocolate starts to harden and you need to re-heat it. If you're worried about small kids touching a still-warm pan, you can transfer the chocolate to a cool dish.

KIDS 2 and up: Hold each strawberry by its stem and dip it $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way into the chocolate. Swirl it and shake off excess chocolate. Place the chocolate-dipped strawberry on the baking sheet lined with waxed paper and repeat with the rest of the strawberries. They can harden in the refrigerator or at room temperature.

Prep time: 20 minutes

Total time: 20 minutes
(plus 1 hour for hardening)

Yields: 30 strawberries

Dipping food into melted chocolate is always an exciting activity! When making this recipe with kids, make sure that you keep the chocolate cool enough for their little fingers to touch but not so cold that it hardens. Dip other fruits, pretzels, or graham crackers into the chocolate and make your own Fondue Party!



Kids Tips

- 🍓 If your kids want to create designs, melt some white chocolate, dip a spoon in, and swirl designs onto the chocolate-dipped strawberries. Or, they can dip the chocolate-dipped strawberries in sprinkles before the chocolate hardens.

Cooking Tips

- 🍓 It's best if the strawberries are at room temperature rather than cold.
- 🍓 If you don't have a double boiler (which is necessary since the chocolate will burn if put directly over heat), simply place a metal bowl on top of a saucepan or put a small saucepan inside another larger saucepan. Alternatively, you can microwave the chocolate, butter, and corn syrup in a microwave-safe bowl in 30-second intervals until it is melted.
- 🍓 "Simmering" means a few small bubbles are barely breaking the surface.
- 🍓 This recipe can be prepared up to 1-2 days before serving – just store the strawberries in the refrigerator and remove 30 minutes before serving.