

# Cucumber-Dill Yogurt Dip

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups plain whole milk yogurt
- 1/4 English hothouse cucumber, small dice (about 3/4 cup)
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh dill
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 3/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1/2 teaspoon white wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

Serving Suggestion: Assortment of vegetables such as green beans, celery, cucumber, mushrooms, roasted beets, or boiled potatoes

## DIRECTIONS

In a medium bowl, mix together yogurt, cucumber, dill, coriander, red pepper flakes, vinegar, and salt until evenly combined. Season well with freshly ground black pepper, taste, and adjust seasoning, as needed. Serve with an assortment of vegetables for dipping.

# Banana Pudding Bundt Cake

## INGREDIENTS

For the cake

- Cooking spray
- 1 box yellow cake mix
- 1 (3.4-oz.) box vanilla pudding
- 4 large eggs
- 1/2 c.
- (1 stick) melted butter
- 1 c. water

For the frosting and decorating

- 1/2 c. heavy cream
- 1 (8-oz.) block cream cheese
- 4 tbsp. butter, softened
- 1 1/2 c. powdered sugar
- 2 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 c. crushed Nilla Wafers
- 1 banana, sliced into coins

## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350° and grease a bundt pan generously with cooking spray. In a large bowl, whisk together cake mix, pudding mix, eggs, melted butter, and water. Pour into prepared pan

and bake until a toothpick inserted in middle of cake comes out clean, 45 minutes. Let cool in pan 10 minutes, then run a knife around edges and invert onto a cooling rack. Let cool completely.

2. Meanwhile, make frosting: In a large bowl, using a hand mixer beat heavy cream until stiff peaks form.
3. In another large bowl, beat cream cheese and butter together until no lumps remain. Add powdered sugar and beat until smooth, then add in vanilla. Fold in whipped cream until just combined.
4. Using a serrated knife, cut cake in half horizontally. Remove top half.
5. Frost bottom half with about half the frosting, then top with crushed wafers and half the banana slices. Top with top half of cake and frost with remaining frosting and garnish with remaining crushed wafers and banana slices.

## **Instant Pot Shredded Beef Nachos**

### **INGREDIENTS**

For the chuck roast:

- 1 2-lb. beef chuck roast
- 2 tsp. dried oregano
- 2 tsp. brown sugar
- 1 1/2 kosher salt
- 1 tsp. chili powder
- 1 tsp. cumin
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. vegetable oil
- 1 (12-oz.) can Mexican beer, such as Tecate

For the nachos

- 1 (13-oz.) bag corn chips
- 3 c. Monterey Jack cheese
- 1 c. drained pickled jalapeños
- 1 avocado, cubed
- 2 radishes, sliced into rounds
- 1/4 c. loosely packed cilantro leaves
- 1/4 red onion, finely chopped
- Lime wedges, for serving

### **DIRECTIONS**

1. In a small bowl, whisk to combine oregano, brown sugar, salt, chili powder, cumin, and garlic powder. Rub spice mix all over roast.
2. Heat Instant Pot to Sauté and add vegetable oil. Sear all sides of chuck roast until golden, about 2 minutes per side. Remove roast.
3. Pour beer into Instant Pot, then add chuck roast back to pot. Scatter onions over pot roast and secure Instant Pot lid.

4. Select Pressure Cook and cook on high for 55 minutes. Let pressure release naturally for 10 minutes, then quick release remaining air. Remove roast from instant pot and use two forks to shred into bite-sized pieces.
5. Preheat oven to 375° and line a large baking sheet with aluminum foil. Spread an even layer of chips onto the baking sheet, then top with 1/3 of the cheese, jalapeños, and shredded beef. Top with more chips, and another 1/3 of cheese, jalapeños, and beef. Finish with one more layer of chips and the remaining cheese, jalapeños, and beef. Bake until cheese is melty and chips have crisped slightly, 10 minutes.
6. Garnish with avocado, radishes, cilantro, and red onion. Serve with lime wedges on the side for squeezing.

## **Tropic Like It's Hot Cake**

### **INGREDIENTS**

For the cake

- 2 1/4 c. (335 g) all-purpose flour
- 1 tbsp. baking powder
- 1/4 tsp. table salt
- 3/4 c. (170 g) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 1/2 c. (315 g) granulated white sugar
- 3 large eggs
- 1 tbsp. vanilla extract
- 1 1/3 c. (310 ml) milk
- Yellow, green, and red food coloring
- Cooking spray

For the frosting

- 4 oz. (1/2 cup) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 8 oz. cream cheese, cold
- 1 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 16 oz. powdered or confectioners' sugar

For the magic

- 1 3/4 c. pink, orange, green, and yellow sprinkle explosion mix
- 1 lb. dried sweetened shredded or flaked coconut
- Food coloring: brown
- 1 paper umbrella (you can also use an old-fashioned candy stick)
- 1 paper straw
- 1 c. crushed graham crackers for the sand (about 6 full rectangles)

### **DIRECTIONS**

#### **BAKE THE CAKE**

1. Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C) and put the oven rack in the middle of the oven. If you are using a convection oven, set it to 325° (165°C).
2. Combine the flour, baking powder, and salt in a large bowl and whisk until they are really mixed together. You have to mix all the dry ingredients together first, so that there are no clumps in your batter, which will create white spots. Set aside.
3. In a separate bowl, use an electric mixer on medium speed to blend the butter and sugar together, until they become fluffy. Make sure to scrape the sides of the bowl with a spatula so it's all mixed in from the sides.

4. Add the eggs, one at a time, to the butter-sugar mixture, with the mixer on medium speed. Again, make sure to scrape the sides of the bowl. Add the vanilla to the milk and set it aside.
5. Mix about one-third of your dry ingredients into the butter-sugar-egg mixture, then blend in half of the milk, always mixing on medium speed.
6. Mix in the second third of the dry ingredients, then the remaining milk mixture.
7. Stop the mixer for a few seconds and use a spatula to push down anything sticking to the sides of the bowl as you go, then mix in the last of the flour mixture. Make sure it's all mixed in from the sides and everything is smooth. You don't want any lumps, but don't overmix it—stop the mixer as soon as the batter is smooth.
8. To bake the cake, divide the batter into three portions. Dye the portions yellow, green, and orange if you'd like. Pour the batters into one greased 6-inch (15-cm) round cake pan and two greased 6-inch (15-cm) oven-safe glass or stainless-steel mixing bowls. First bake the bowl cakes for 12 minutes, then turn and bake for another 12 minutes. Bake the round cake for 10 minutes, then turn and bake for another 10 minutes.
9. Let the cakes cool in the pans for 5 to 10 minutes. (When they're warm, they're really fragile, and that's when they tend to break.) Then flip them over onto a baking sheet or cooling rack and let them cool completely before you frost them.

### **MAKE THE FROSTING**

1. Use an electric mixer on medium speed to blend the butter until it is smooth. Add the cream cheese and blend it together until there are no lumps. Then add the vanilla. Stop the mixer and use a spatula to push down anything sticking to the sides of the bowl, making sure it's all mixed in from the sides and everything is smooth.
2. Mix in the powdered sugar a little bit at a time on the lowest speed—otherwise it will fly everywhere! Use the spatula to push down anything sticking to the sides of the bowl, making sure it's all mixed in from the sides and everything is smooth.
3. Use right away. Technically the frosting will last at least a week in the refrigerator, but fresh frosting is key! It tastes and feels so much better.

### **MAKE THE MAGIC**

1. First, dye the coconut: Put the coconut in a glass or stainless-steel mixing bowl. Sprinkle on about 2 tablespoons brown food coloring and toss with your hands or a metal spoon to coat, adding color as needed until the coconut is fully dyed. (If you use your hands, wear plastic gloves, or else your hands will be dyed.)
2. Now build a three-layer coconut explosion cake! With the fully cooked cakes, build the cake using the two bowl cakes as your top and bottom and the flat layer between them; cut the hole for the explosion in the flat layer and the bottom bowl layer. (The top bowl should be upside-down, so that the end result is spherical like a coconut.) Don't forget to add the sprinkles to the center, for the explosion! Coat the outside of the cake with a thick layer of white frosting so that the coconut will stick. Cover the cake with the dyed coconut—but be careful to leave a circle of white frosting on the top, so that it looks like a coconut you've cut open.
3. Make it extra beachy, if you like: Garnish the cake with a paper umbrella and a straw, then sprinkle the graham crackers around the base, so it looks like it's in a bed of sand.

## **Churro Cupcakes**

## INGREDIENTS

For the cupcakes

- 2 c. all-purpose flour
- 1 c. granulated sugar
- 1 1/2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 3/4 c. (1 1/2 stick) melted butter, cooled
- 1 c. milk
- 1 large egg
- 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- Cinnamon-sugar, for sprinkling

For the frosting

- 1 (8-oz.) block cream cheese, softened
- 4 tbsp. butter, softened
- 3 c. powdered sugar
- 2 tbsp. heavy cream
- 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- Pinch kosher salt
- Cinnamon-sugar, for topping
- Churros, for garnish

## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350° and line two muffin tins with cupcake liners. In a large bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking powder, cinnamon, and salt.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together melted butter, milk, egg, and vanilla. Add to dry ingredients and mix until just combined. Divide batter evenly among liners, filling ¾ full, then sprinkle tops with cinnamon-sugar.
3. Bake until a toothpick inserted in middle comes out clean, 20 minutes. Let cool completely.
4. Meanwhile make frosting: In a large bowl using a hand mixer, beat cream cheese and butter until smooth. Add powdered sugar and cinnamon and beat until no lumps remain. Add heavy cream, vanilla, and a pinch of salt and beat until combined. If frosting is too thick, add more heavy cream a tablespoon at a time until desired consistency.
5. Transfer frosting to piping bag fitted with a large open star tip. Pipe frosting onto cooled cupcakes, then sprinkle with cinnamon sugar and top with a mini churro.

## Pear and Pistachio Guacamole

### INGREDIENTS

- 3 Hass avocados, halved, pitted and cubed
- 2 firm ripe Seckel pears or 1 large Anjou pear, cored and finely diced
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 1/2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 3/4 teaspoon ground coriander
- Kosher salt
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped

- 1 small jalapeno, minced with some seeds
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 3 tablespoons chopped roasted pistachios
- Lime wedges, for serving
- Blue corn tortilla chips, for serving

## **DIRECTIONS**

1. Toss together the avocados and pears in a medium bowl. Stir in the cilantro, lime juice, coriander, 1/2 teaspoon salt, the garlic and jalapenos until combined. Add additional salt and pepper to taste.
2. Transfer to a serving bowl, sprinkle with the pistachios and serve with lime wedges and blue corn tortilla chips.