

Score A Big Hit With Game Day Sandwiches

(NAPSA)—No matter what team you root for, game day can be an excellent reason to host a get-together. Whether watching the game at home or tailgating in the stadium parking lot, one of the most important elements is the food.

An easy-to-use ingredient that amps up any game day menu is the Hass avocado. It is available year-round and can be identified by its dark, pebbly skin that generally turns from green to purplish-black when ripe. While it serves as the main ingredient in guacamole, its creamy texture also can be a great topping for just-grilled meats, sandwiches, salads and more.

To inspire sports fans to create a quick and delicious game day meal, Curtis Stone, host of TLC's "Take Home Chef" and author of "Relaxed Cooking with Curtis Stone: Recipes to Put You in My Favorite Mood," is sharing his recipe for "Grilled Bacon and Buffalo Mozzarella Sandwiches with Hass Avocado."

"When you are getting together with your friends for the game, you want to create good food that doesn't keep you away from the action all day," says Stone. "That's why I love working with Hass avocados; you can quickly dice them up and incorporate them into a variety of dishes to add a great flavor and texture."

Grilled Bacon and Buffalo Mozzarella Sandwiches with Hass Avocado

Recipe created by chef Curtis Stone for the Hass Avocado Board

Serves: 4

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cooking Time: 15 minutes

Total Time: 30 minutes

Hass Avocado Pesto

Ingredients

2 cloves garlic

1½ bunches fresh basil leaves

½ cup pine nuts, toasted

½ cup freshly grated

Parmesan cheese

½ cup extra-virgin olive oil



With their creamy texture, avocados can be a delicious topping for just-grilled meats, sandwiches, salads and more.

1 ripe, fresh Hass avocado, peeled, seeded and scooped out*

1 tsp. fresh lemon juice
Salt, to taste
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Instructions

1. In a food processor, puree the garlic into a coarse paste. Add in the basil, pine nuts and cheese; mix until combined.

2. Slowly pour in the oil and add in the avocado and lemon juice until combined. The pesto should be smooth but have a thick consistency. Season the pesto with salt and pepper to taste; set aside.

Grilled Bacon and Buffalo Mozzarella Sandwiches with Hass Avocado

Ingredients

4 (3-inch) square sections of a ciabatta loaf, cut in half lengthwise

Extra-virgin olive oil, for grilling

Hass Avocado Pesto (see make-ahead recipe above)

1 ripe, fresh Hass avocado, peeled, seeded, quartered and cut into ¼-inch slices*

1 tsp. fresh lemon juice
Salt, to taste

Fresh ground black pepper, to taste

1 large, vine-ripened tomato, cored and cut into ¼-inch slices

1 (8-oz.) ball of fresh buffalo mozzarella, torn into small pieces
8 slices bacon, cooked and broken in half

Instructions

1. Brush the outside of each piece of bread lightly with the oil, and lay the bread out with each half facing up.

2. Divide the Hass Avocado Pesto between the slices of bread and spread evenly.

3. In a shallow bowl, dress the avocado with lemon juice and season with salt and pepper to taste.

4. Season the tomatoes with salt and pepper to taste.

5. On the bottom half of each slice of bread, place even amounts of half of the mozzarella, tomato, avocado and bacon; and then place the remaining mozzarella on top of the bacon.

6. Place the tops of the bread onto the sandwiches and press firmly.

7. Place a sandwich in a pre-heated sandwich press.

8. Cook until the bread is toasted golden brown and the cheese has melted, about 7 to 8 minutes.

9. Repeat with remaining sandwiches.

10. Cut the grilled sandwiches in half, arrange on a platter and serve immediately.

*Large avocados are recommended for this recipe. A large avocado averages about 8 ounces. If using smaller or larger size avocados adjust the quantity accordingly.

Nutrition Information Per Serving: Calories 820; Total Fat 59 g (Sat 15 g, Trans 0 g, Poly 7.9 g, Mono 27.8 g); Cholesterol 55 mg; Total Carbohydrates 46 g; Dietary Fiber 8 g; Protein 29 g

For more game day recipes, visit the Hass Avocado Board Web site at www.avocadocentral.com.