

Apple Nachos inspired by the book *Zero Tolerance*, by Claudia Mills

When Sierra gets in trouble for breaking her school's zero tolerance policy against weapons, her mom keeps trying to keep her spirits up. She's affectionate and loving, but most noticeably (as most good moms do) she keeps feeding Sierra comfort foods. As the book goes on and Sierra becomes more and more disgusted by her own actions, she develops aversions to particular foods. I can't say I blame her! If only she hadn't brought that knife to school by accident...

Below, I've included some ideas for apple nachos--if you're a kid, have an adult help you with the chopping and heating parts. You can vary the amounts as you wish, but for a lot of the toppings just a tablespoon of each will do. Recipes for the sauces follow. And please, remember to leave the knife at home!

Enjoy!

Alethea from *Read Now Sleep Later*

Credit: I first found the basic recipe on Allyson Kramer's blog.

Apple Nachos

Ingredients:

An apple, any variety
A lemon
Assorted toppings

Equipment:

A knife
A cutting board
A mixing bowl
A serving plate
(or a container with an air-tight lid if you're taking it to school)



"The Sweet Sierra"

Makes 1-2 servings

1. Wash and dry an apple. You can peel the skin off if you want to, but I like to keep it on unless it's a variety that has a bitter or waxy skin.
2. With an adult's help, chop the apple into quarters. Carefully cut out the core with the stem and seeds, then slice each quarter into thinner slices. These are your "chips".
3. Cut the lemon in half and squeeze the juice into a bowl.
4. Toss the apple chips in the lemon juice and let them soak for a minute. This will stop them from turning brown right away. Drain and pat the apple chips dry with a paper towel.
5. Arrange the slices on a plate and add your choice of toppings. You can drizzle the sauces on or put them on the side for dipping.
6. Eat it right away, or take it to school with you.

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Suggested Toppings:

The Sweet Sierra (shown on the previous page)

the sweet and sour variation

Dulce de leche or caramel sauce + raisins + mini chocolate chips + shredded coconut

The Media Circus

the nutty variation

Peanut butter sauce + raisins + chopped pecans + banana slices

The Principal Besser

the school lunch variation

Nacho cheese (yes, apples taste great with cheese!)
+ diced tomatoes, olives, and jalapeños (optional)

The Gerald Edward Shepard, Esquire

the fine dining variation

Extra-virgin olive oil + balsamic glaze or vinegar
+ pine nuts + crushed dried basil or oregano + parmesan cheese
(You can toss a little crushed garlic in there if you're really feeling brave)

The Cornflake

the French toast variation

Maple syrup + crumbled shredded wheat or other cereal + cinnamon sugar

The Angie Shepard

the tough cookie variation

Cookie butter sauce + slivered almonds + dried cranberries

The Comfort of Friends

the hot chocolate variation

Chocolate syrup + mini marshmallows + whipped cream*

*You're going to want to eat this right away, unless you for some reason have access to a refrigerator at school. You can also toast this combo after adding marshmallows but before adding the chocolate syrup and whipped cream!

From top to bottom: The Principal Besser (school lunch); The Gerald Edward Shepard, Esquire (fine dining); The Angie Shepard (tough cookie), and The Comfort of Friends (hot chocolate)



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Sauces:

Caramel sauce (based on Ree Drummond's ingredients)

2 Tbsp brown sugar

1 Tbsp half and half, heavy whipping cream, or milk

1/2 Tbsp butter

Tiny pinch of salt

A few drops of vanilla extract

In a small saucepan over low heat, stir together all the ingredients except the vanilla. When the sauce has melted and blended together (about 1 minute), stir in the vanilla. Turn off the heat and keep stirring all the while to help it cool down. When it is no longer very hot, pour over apple nachos.

Peanut butter sauce

2 Tbsp peanut butter, smooth or crunchy

1 Tbsp half and half, heavy whipping cream, or milk

1 Tbsp white or brown sugar

Tiny pinch of salt

1 tsp maple syrup or light corn syrup

In a small saucepan over medium heat, stir together all the ingredients until well blended. Turn off the heat and keep stirring all the while to help it cool down. When it is no longer very hot, pour over apple nachos.

Cookie butter sauce

2 Tbsp cookie butter, regular or crunchy

1 Tbsp half and half, heavy whipping cream, or milk

1 Tbsp white or brown sugar

Tiny pinch of salt

In a small saucepan over medium heat, stir together all the ingredients until well blended. Turn off the heat and keep stirring all the while to help it cool down. When it is no longer very hot, pour over apple nachos.

Tips:

- I used a Granny Smith apple for The Sweet Sierra variation since it's a little tart -- it balances out all the sweet stuff and I thought this represented Sierra's character changes throughout the book. I used Gala apples for all the rest but you can use any kind you like or have available.
- I used Mallow Bits for the hot chocolate variation, but use regular mini-marshmallows if you're going to toast it.
- You can serve this for a big crowd – place toppings in serving bowls with spoons or ladles, and let everyone make up their own combination!