

YUMMY NORTHWEST

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IT AIN'T JUST PEANUTS

Although March is National Peanut Month, November rejoices in abundance to become Peanut Butter Lovers Month. We do give thanks.

We also celebrate the Pacific Northwest's one know peanut producer, Alvarez Organic Farm. Georgia is the number one peanut producing state, with Texas second. But in Eastern Washington, the Alvarez farm manages to dedicate three acres to



growing peanuts. Because one acre yields enough peanuts to make 30,000 peanut butter sandwiches, this is a big deal. The

farm is located in Mabton, near Sunnyside. To visit, call (509) 830-5242. During the summer, Alvarez employees sell roasted peanuts (along with other organic produce) at the farmers market in Kent, Wash.

Peanut butter as a work of art

L. Johnson, Huntersville, N.C., likes peanut butter so much that he decided to express his joy with an interpretive artwork made just for **Yummy Northwest** with peanut



Look a little closer...

Chunky peanut butter is preferred on the West Coast, creamy on the East Coast.

Peanut butter does not spoil at room temperature, but its oil can become rancid – you will know this by taste or smell.

Peanut butter sticks to the roof of your mouth because its high protein content absorbs moisture. People who are afraid of this happening to them have arachibutrophobia.

Nutritional value:

2 tablespoons has

8 grams protein
 7 grams carbohydrates
 16 grams fat
 188 calories



butter as the medium. His mother, M. Johnson, captured some special creative moments on camera.



The intense concentration of the artist is evident.



If you can't enjoy your food, there's no point in having it.



The hands of the artist are good enough to eat.

Beef Kebabs with Peanut Dipping Sauce

Note from contributor M. Johnson, Huntersville, N.C.: Instead of going to the trouble of making kebabs, what I do instead is stir fry the meat (chicken is also good) with the peppers and onion and toss the peanut sauce over pasta. I serve up the pasta with a generous portion of stir-fry on top and drizzle with fresh lime juice. It's outstanding!

1/2 cup light soy sauce
2 tablespoons granulated brown sugar substitute (I just add a little maple extract to Splenda to create a substitute for this)
2 tablespoons sugar substitute
4 cloves garlic, pressed
1 1/2 pounds sirloin steak, 1 1/2-inches thick, cut into 1-inch pieces
1/2 cup creamy unsweetened natural peanut butter
3/4 cup water
3 tablespoons lime juice
1 tablespoon finely chopped ginger
1/4 teaspoon ground red pepper
1 green bell pepper, cut into squares
1 red bell pepper, cut into squares
1 large onion, cut into wedges

In a shallow dish, combine half of the soy sauce, 1 tablespoon brown sugar substitute, 1 tablespoon sugar substitute, and 2 garlic cloves. Add the steak and stir to coat. Let stand for 20 minutes, stirring once.

Meanwhile, in a heavy saucepan over high heat, combine the peanut butter, water, lime juice, ginger, ground red pepper, the remaining soy sauce, 1 tablespoon brown sugar substitute, 1 tablespoon sugar substitute, and 2 garlic cloves. Cook, stirring constantly, until the mixture boils. Remove it from the heat.

Coat a grill rack with cooking spray. Preheat the grill to high.

Thread the steak, peppers and onion onto four metal skewers. Place on the grill rack and cook, turning occasionally, for 10 minutes, or until the steak is no longer pink and a thermometer inserted into the thickest portion registers 160 degrees F. and the juices run clear. Serve with the peanut sauce.

Makes 4 servings.

From "The South Beach Diet Cookbook" by Arthur Agatston

A bite of history

Although George Washington Carver (1864-1943) found over 300 uses for peanuts, he didn't think of peanut butter.

In 1890, a gritty ground peanut paste was sold as a health food by a St. Louis doctor. Krema (www.krema.com), the oldest U.S. brand, was first sold 1898. In 1922, Joseph Rosefield figured out how to homogenize the mixture so the oil did not separate, which also made it creamy. In 1933, Rosefield began selling Skippy peanut butter. Today, Jif is the number one American brand.

The U.S. Government is currently researching ways to preserve a peanut butter and jelly sandwich so fighting troops can enjoy them.

Smuckers caused a big stir in 2000 when the company patented a crustless peanut butter and jelly sandwich. While the extent of the patent is still disputed, the company has brought lawsuits against perceived competitors. So be safe and leave those crusts on.



Locally...

Buy Kettle Foods roasted nut butters made in Salem, Ore. Yum!!

www.kettlefoods.com

Grind your own

By U.S. law, peanut butter must contain 90 percent peanuts. And although adding artificial sweeteners, artificial colors, and preservatives are prohibited by law, why wonder what the other 10 percent is: sugar? salt? hydrogenated oil? Buy a natural brand, find a store that has a grinder so you can make your own on the spot (such as Fred Meyer), or make your own.

Peanut Butter – a recipe

Measure 1 cup of roasted, shelled, skinless peanuts.

If you want chunky, put the peanuts in a food processor and run the chopped mixture through three or more times until the peanut butter is the consistency that you like. For creamy style, chop up the peanuts in a blender.

Add one to two tablespoons of oil in small amounts and regrind or blend the mixture until it is the familiar paste consistency. You can also add sugar to taste.

Recipe courtesy of www.kinderart.com/kitchen/peanutbutter.shtml.

Try this with honey-roasted nuts, almonds, cashews or hazelnuts.

Keep it smooth

You might find the natural oil settled on top of the peanut butter. An easy way to redistribute the oil is to turn the jar upside down and keep an eye on it until the oil is halfway through the mixture. (If it reaches the other end, turn it over and start again.) A faster, albeit messier, way is to use a knife to stir it in. Or put it in a mixer with a paddle attachment and blend, and then use a rubber spatula to return it to the jar. When kept in the refrigerator, the peanut butter will not separate again. (Do not freeze.)

About Yummy Northwest

Each monthly issue highlights an edible delight available in the Pacific Northwest.

New Web address!

Online at www.rainydayrose.com.

Contact the editor

Comments, corrections, topic ideas and submissions are all most welcome: Yummy_Northwest@hotmail.com