

Let's get this party started

Feel inspired by this collection of mouthwatering recipes for canapés, light bites and finger food – perfect for seasonal festivities, large or intimate

RECIPES AND PHOTOGRAPHS HELEN CATHCART ©RYLAND
PETERS & SMALL EDITED BY EMMA COXON

Joy to the world – now is the time to gather your loved ones to eat, drink and be merry! If you are entertaining and need inspiration, *Party-Perfect Bites* by Milli Taylor (Ryland, Peters & Small, £16.99) is your ideal companion. With vibrant, crowd-pleasing recipes that are accessible for any home cook, Taylor shares tips from her experience as a self-taught chef with a passion for catering. She shows how to create maximum impact with minimum effort, sharing ideas for occasion nibbles in a culinary journey from Jamaica to Japan. Try seasonal 'Squash frittatas with pea puree', 'Roasted tomatoes' or 'Spinach, fennel and cumin ricotta cakes'. Indulge sweet-toothed guests with 'Mini pavlovas' and 'Banoffee pie shots'. Let's celebrate!

CRAB, CHILLI & LIME FILO TARTLETS

These Asian-inspired tartlets add elegance with their fresh, zingy ingredients and sumptuous seafood – sure to delight hungry guests.

MAKES 40

- 3 sheets of filo pastry (about 135g)
- 100g unsalted butter, melted

CRAB FILLING

- 400g fresh, cooked white crabmeat
- 5 spring onions
- 10g fresh coriander
- 2 red chillies, deseeded
- 4 tbsp mayonnaise
- Freshly squeezed juice of 2 limes
- Tabasco sauce, to season (optional)

1 Preheat the oven to 180°C, gas mark 4.

2 Stack the filo sheets and use a sharp knife to cut them into 40 6cm squares; each will have three layers of pastry. Keep the other squares covered to stop them drying out and prepare

a set of three squares. Lay one square on a board and brush with butter. Top with a second square, offset so the corners show. Brush with butter and repeat with the third square. **3** Press the layered pastry into the hole of a buttered, 12-hole muffin pan and repeat to fill the pan. Bake for 8-10 minutes, until golden. Cool and store in an airtight container until required. Repeat with the remaining pastry.

4 To make the filling, drain the crab and place in a bowl. Chop the onions, coriander and chillies finely, mix with the mayo and season with lime juice, Tabasco, salt and white pepper. **5** Fill each tart with the filling and serve immediately.

ASIAN SLAW & PRAWN TARTLETS

MAKES 34

- ¼ red cabbage
- ¼ white cabbage
- 1 Gala apple, peeled
- 1 large carrot, peeled
- 1 spring onion
- 1 fresh red chilli, deseeded
- 1 tbsp sour cream or mayonnaise
- 17 cooked and shelled prawns
- 34 filo baskets

FOR THE DRESSING

- 2 limes
- 1 tsp caster sugar
- 3 tsp fish sauce
- 2 tsp soy sauce

1 Mix all the ingredients for the dressing in a bowl and set aside.

2 Slice the red cabbage finely and place in a bowl. Shred the white cabbage, apple, carrot, spring onion and chilli in the same way and put in a separate bowl.

3 Season both bowls with salt and mix. Divide the dressing between the two and allow to sit for 10-30 minutes.

4 Drain the vegetables and mix just before serving so the red cabbage doesn't turn everything pink. Add the sour cream.

5 Spoon a little slaw into each filo basket and top with half a prawn, ends pinched together for height. >>>





GAZPACHO

Gazpacho, an Andalusian classic, is a cold blend of raw vegetables. This dish is probably more of a salmorejo, gazpacho's thicker, creamier cousin, but we'll stick with the better known name.

MAKES 1.3 LITRES
(20 slightly larger shot glasses)

- 1kg ripe tomatoes
- 1 thick slice of white bread, torn into pieces
- 3 garlic cloves
- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 red pepper
- 1-2 tsp sugar
- 2 tbsp sherry vinegar
- 1 slice of Serrano ham and 1 hard-boiled egg, chopped, to garnish

1 Blitz the tomatoes in a blender and push the bread pieces down into the juice. Allow the mixture to sit for 5 minutes.

2 Blend again with the remaining ingredients until smooth. Chill.

3 To serve, mix the soup well, pour into shot glasses and garnish with the chopped egg and chopped Serrano ham.

AJO BLANCO

This chilled white soup is a traditional dish from southern Spain, dating back to the Moorish Middle Ages.

MAKES 1.3 LITRES
(25 shot glasses)

- 300g whole almonds, skins on
- 300g white breadcrumbs
- 4 garlic cloves
- 150-200ml olive oil
- 4 tbsp sherry vinegar
- 2 ripe figs, thinly sliced
- Balsamic reduction, to serve

1 Put the almonds in a shallow bowl and cover with boiling water. After a couple of minutes, lift them out and remove and discard the skins.

2 Put 600ml cold water in a blender. Add the breadcrumbs, garlic, olive oil, vinegar and almonds and blend until smooth. Add 200ml cold water and blend until silky. Add extra water if needed to achieve a drinkable consistency. Season with salt, stir well and chill.

3 To serve, pour the soup into shot glasses. Top with a slice of fig and a drizzle of balsamic reduction.



Reader offer

Psychologies readers can buy *Party-Perfect Bites* (RRP £9.99) for the special price of £6 until 30 March 2020 (p&p charges may apply). To order, see rylandpeters.com and quote code 'PARTYP6' at the checkout.

RASPBERRY & LIME CHEESECAKES

Every party needs a cake! These mini cheesecakes provide a tart and sweet treat at the end of an evening of celebration.

MAKES 35

- 250g digestive biscuits, blitzed to crumbs in a food processor
- 125g unsalted butter, melted
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp ground ginger (optional)
- 250g white chocolate
- 275ml double cream
- 500g full-fat cream cheese
- 150g ricotta
- 5 gelatine leaves, soaked in cold water for 5-10 minutes
- Grated zest of 1 lime
- 300g raspberries
- 20 x 30cm brownie pan, lined with baking parchment

1 Place the biscuit crumbs in a bowl, then mix in the melted butter, spices and a pinch of salt. Put into the prepared pan and flatten to make the base. Chill.

2 Melt the chocolate with 150ml cream in a pan over a low heat. Transfer to a bowl, add the cream cheese, ricotta and zest, then whisk.

3 Squeeze out any excess water from the gelatine. Heat the remaining cream in a saucepan to simmering point, take off the heat and whisk in the gelatine. Add to the cheese mixture and whisk well.

4 Set aside 35 raspberries for decoration, then arrange the remaining raspberries over the base. Pour in the cheesecake mixture. Cover in clingfilm and place in the fridge to set overnight.

5 To serve, use a sharp knife to cut the cheesecake into 35 squares, then top each with a raspberry.

LEMON & LIME MERINGUE TARTS

A twist on the lemon meringue pie, plus lime and a gooey, not-quite-set topping... You know you want to!

MAKES 30

- 125g plain flour
- 45g unsalted butter
- 50g icing sugar
- 1 egg

FOR THE FILLING

- 45g unsalted butter

- 80ml double cream
- 1 egg
- 3 egg yolks
- 80g caster sugar
- 4 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp lime juice
- Grated zest of 1 lemon

- Grated zest of 1 lime
- FOR THE MERINGUE**
- 2 egg whites
- 120g caster sugar
- 1 tsp cornflour

1 Preheat the oven to 180°C, gas mark 4. To make the pastry, place all the ingredients in a food processor and pulse until combined.

2 Tip the dough onto a lightly floured surface and knead a couple of times, then wrap in clingfilm and refrigerate for 2 hours.

3 Roll out the pastry to 3mm thick and cut rounds with a 6cm cookie cutter. Press them into the holes of

a 24-hole greased mini muffin pan and bake for 9-10 minutes, or until golden and cooked. Cool on a wire rack.

4 To make the filling, melt the butter in a pan. Add the cream, stir, take off the heat and set aside.

5 Whisk the eggs and sugar together, place in a bowl over a pan of hot water (the bowl and water should not come into contact) and stir for a few minutes. Add the lemon and lime

juice, zests, cream and butter mix and stir well. Continue to cook, while stirring with a spatula until the mix thickens – about 5 minutes. Set aside.

6 To make the meringue, whisk the egg whites in a bowl with an electric handheld whisk until soft-peak stage. Slowly add the sugar while whisking.

When the meringue is glossy and stiff, whisk in the cornflour and transfer the mixture to a piping bag.

7 Fill each case with a teaspoonful of filling and pipe the meringue on top.

8 Using a chef's blowtorch, brown the sides; or brown at 200°C, gas mark 6 and leave to cool. (Meringue grows in the oven, so only pipe a small amount on each tart.)

9 Serve at once, or chill until serving.

