



Galley Guide; Healthy Entertaining



Whether you're inviting people over, are meeting on the beach du jour or are setting up on the dock here are a few ideas to make your next sunset get-together a little less stressful and a little more happy and healthy.

Impromptu gatherings are pretty standard among yachties, especially around the holidays. The time honored tradition of “sun downers” is often potluck style, everyone bringing some finger food to share. However, given short notice and limited ingredients onboard some people are pushed to their culinary breaking point. Grabbing a bag of chips might be a quick fix but it is far from a nutritious one.

TAKE A DIP

A great way to please a crowd is to make a dip. Store bought dips, although convenient, can be full of oils, additives and calories and all the ingredients to make a scrumptious spread are right in your galley. Served with a selection of crudités, crackers and bread a delicious dip can almost be a meal.

If you like a dairy based dip, yogurt is a great starting point. All natural yogurt is full of active bacteria that is essential to a healthy gut, so look for

brands that have as few ingredients as possible or make your own onboard. With the addition of minced garlic, lemon juice and dried or fresh herbs such as basil, oregano or dill you can make a veggie dip in a matter of minutes. Yogurt also goes well with fruit, which boats in the tropics often have an abundance of. Add a squirt of honey and a little ground cinnamon and ginger and you have a dessert dip that even the kids will love.

If you've been out sailing for a while, crunchy crudités might be at a premium but that doesn't mean you can't serve veggies. Potatoes and squash are two examples of vegetables that keep well onboard and can be used to make tasty, low fat spreads.

Thin extra mashed potatoes with a little low-fat milk or yogurt and seasoned with garlic, paprika and parsley. Top it with a little crumbled bacon and it will taste delightfully decadent. Squash combines well with herbs such as thyme but to make things more interesting try pureeing cooked squash with a splash

of coconut milk and some curry powder for an Asian inspired spread.

When provisioning watch out for crackers that are heavily flavored as they often have MSG listed in the ingredients. For an easy to store and leaner option to crackers try cutting tortillas or pita bread into wedges and toasting them briefly in a dry frying pan. Corn chips may seem like a healthy alternative to a bag of potato chips but are often just as high in fat, so take a moment to read nutrition labels. Rice crackers are crispy and light and are great to serve alongside dips and spreads; break large ones into bit sized pieces for a rustic look.

ONE TRICK PONY

It is great to have a fall back recipe—that always-delicious, made-in-a-minute, never-fail dish that everybody loves. Back in South America, where cans of refried beans were cheap and plentiful, mine was a bean dip. One night, I brought a bowl of bean dip to a friend's boat and as I placed it on the cockpit table someone I didn't know exclaimed “Oh, this must be Heather's Famous Bean Dip!” It was definitely time to shake up my refried reputation.

Beans are a staple on most boats, not only do they keep well but they are

one of the most economical and healthy items in the pantry. They are packed full of protein and low in fat. I carry an assortment of dried beans and lentils on board, but for those days where I need a short notice snack I reach for the canned variety. White, black, red, refried, lentils and chickpeas; you can find almost any kind of bean in a can, just read the label to make sure it isn't packed full of preservatives or added sugar.

To transform my bean dip recipe I simply changed up the type of bean I used and mixed and matched flavors. Suddenly I had a new dip for every can of beans in my galley. When using canned beans always remember to discard the water from the can and rinse the beans before use. Canned beans are usually high in sodium so I always wait until final tasting to add additional salt to the recipe.

FIVE MINUTE FIX

When the clock is ticking and I am looking for a fun delicious snack to bring to the party, I pull out my heavy bottomed pot and a bag of popcorn kernels. Gone are the days of boring, and fattening, movie style popcorn; this snack has gone gourmet.


A recent trend is to pair flavored popcorn with wine. Skip the over-processed store bought flavor packets and reach for the spice rack instead. For traditional matches try grating some parmesan cheese over hot popcorn and serving it with a bold red. To compliment a cool, crisp white wine dust lightly buttered popcorn with dried rosemary or thyme. A classic combination that goes with any drink is a drizzle of good olive oil and some freshly ground black pepper and sea salt.


Virtually a blank canvas, popcorn will carry any flavors that you sprinkle on it, so don't be afraid to experiment. Try serving a fiery Mexican version by adding lime zest, salt and some smoky hot paprika to the bowl. For a holiday inspired sweet treat, sprinkle popcorn with icing sugar, cinnamon and a dash of nutmeg. If you like a more exotic take on things, try my personal favorite and shake freshly popped popcorn with a bold, spicy curry powder.

Popcorn not only takes only minutes to make it transports well, can sit on a table for hours without spoiling and requires no dishes to serve. If you're planning a beach gathering why not impress your friends; make a fire and pop the popcorn right over the coals.

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where you may be quenching your thirst with a cocktail instead of water. Using a few simple tricks you can cut your consumption of alcohol while still enjoying a social drink.

If you prefer wine, enjoy a spritzer by mixing your favorite grape with soda water, or add a little juice and some tropical fruit and sip on sangria. Beer drinkers can choose a light beer that save on calories and are lower in alcohol. Rum has long been the drink of choice with sailors. If you're a fan, next time try mixing a single shot in a tall glass, but be careful if you drink it with soda that you aren't doubling up on sugar.

Every season there are new reports of boating accidents; boats big and small running aground, dinghies flipping and yachties getting injured or killed by a prop. There are no lines to stay between on the ocean so many of us forget that a tender with an outboard is considered a motorized vehicle. In

most countries allowable blood alcohol limits that apply to drivers on land also apply to boaters. It is always important to drink and drive responsibly.

Here are a few common sense habits that should be a part of every one's daily dinghy routine.

- *Wear a kill switch cord, even when starting an outboard. If wearing it on your wrist gets in the way trying putting it around your ankle.*
- *Carry a VHF in the dinghy, you never know when you might run into trouble.*
- *Keep a light handy, especially if you're heading out in the evening.*
- *And most importantly never let someone drive home drunk.*

So the next time you give or get that last minute invitation and the sun is already bending towards the horizon remember; making food that is healthy and delicious doesn't have to be difficult or time consuming. Enjoy a stress free sundowner and don't forget to toast to your health! **BWS**

BYO...COMMONSENSE

The beer is cold, the company is warm and the conversation is flowing; there is a reason it is referred to as "happy hour." It is easy to overindulge, especially in warmer weather

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HEATHER'S FAMOUS BEAN DIP

Bean dips are fast, filling and fun to make! The variations are endless but each dip follows the same method and starts with the same base. By changing the type of beans used and the flavors added, a delicious new dip is designed.

Here are the four simple steps:

* Start with a base of onions and garlic.

Add a can of drained and rinsed beans. Warm slightly and lightly mash.

Add herbs and spices and mix well to combine.

Remove from heat.

Turn into a nice bowl and add toppings.

Serve dip with crudité's, bread, toast points or crackers. Enjoy!

* BASE:

In a small frying pan heat a tablespoon of olive oil. Add half an onion, finely minced, and sauté until translucent. Add one to two cloves grated or finely minced garlic, sauté until fragrant, about 30 seconds, stirring to prevent burning.

BEANS AND FLAVORS:

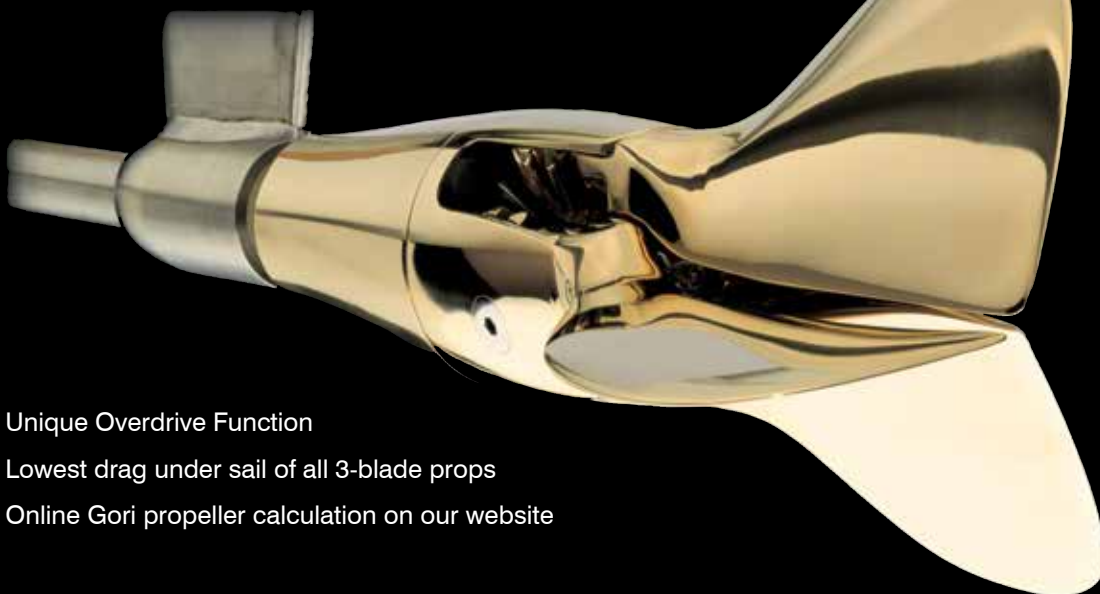
Mediterranean Dip—use white beans and add a teaspoon of dried herbs de provence or half a teaspoon each dried basil and oregano. Top with a few strips cooked and crumbled bacon and a tablespoon of crispy fried capers.

Indian Dip—use lentils and add a teaspoon of ground cumin, one small tomato finely diced and chili powder to

taste. Mix well and cook until tomato breaks down slightly. Top with toasted cumin seeds and fresh cilantro.

Mexican Dip—use black beans, add a half teaspoon each cumin and oregano and one or two chipotles in adobo, finely minced depending on how hot you like it. Top with diced tomato and pickled jalapeños. Add some diced avocado if in season.

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