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CAN I HAVE S'MORE?

Creative Twists on the Campfire Classic

You're just three ingredients away from the perfect summertime treat: chocolate, graham crackers, and marshmallows. The s'more is a fan favorite on camping trips and at backyard bonfires alike. Though they say you can't improve perfection, we've found a few creative twists on the classic treat that will make your summer a little sweeter.

THE ELVIS

A campfire snack fit for a king — of rock 'n' roll, that is. This s'more pays homage to Elvis Presley's love of peanut butter and banana sandwiches. Swap out the chocolate bar for a peanut butter cup candy and add a few slices of fresh banana between the graham cracker and marshmallow. If you're feeling particularly adventurous, you can even add some bacon.

S'MORES IN A JAR

Here are s'mores you can enjoy all year long. Layers of crushed graham cracker, melted marshmallow, and creamy chocolate turn a simple jar into a great dessert! Learn how to make the perfect s'mores on the go at family.disney.com/recipe/smares-in-a-jar.

STRAWBERRY S'MORE-CAKE

If you really want to wow your guests at the next bonfire, try your hand at this creative take on the

summertime classic. Goopy s'mores meet fresh strawberry shortcake in a dessert that's as delicious as it is original. Find the whole recipe, including tips on making the perfect shortcake, at aspicyerspective.com/smares-strawberry-shortcake-recipe.

S'MOREO

A simple but memorable twist on the campfire classic. Grab a box of Oreo cookies, pull a cookie apart, and use that in place of your graham cracker. The cream filling will pair nicely with the chocolate and toasted marshmallow.

S'MORES MILKSHAKE

Too hot for a campfire? Cool down with a s'mores milkshake! The trick is to lightly toast the marshmallows in the oven so they mix well with the other ingredients in the blender. Get the recipe at spoonfulofflavor.com/2013/08/30/smares-milkshake to enjoy this sweet treat even in the heat of summer.

It's the simple recipe that opens the door for creative interpretations of the classic s'more. Be adventurous this summer and see what great new s'mores you can create!



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A POP-UP SUMMER

Camping, Biking, and Exploring the Wilds of Idaho

I've always wanted a camper. As you may know, I'm a huge nature lover, and spending time in remote places is one of my favorite ways to relax. Tent camping is a ton of fun, but as I've learned from experience, it's not always the best when you're camping with young children. I figured the arrival of summer was the perfect impetus to step the Thomason family camping game up a notch.

The first decision we had to make was which type of camper would make the most sense for us. We don't have the space for a full-sized RV at the house, and I wasn't thrilled at the idea of paying a chunk of change every month to store the RV in some far-flung lot miles away from our house. After doing plenty of research, we came to the conclusion that a pop-up camper we could fit in the garage was our best option. So far, I'd say we made the right call.

To test out and fiddle with the camper, we took the kids to Roystone Hot Springs in Sweet. It may not be anyone's idea of off the grid, but we wanted our maiden voyage to give us the chance to make any adjustments before heading off to wilder surroundings. As a bonus, it was a ton of fun. Now that we've ironed out the kinks, I'm looking forward to spending a good portion of the summer exploring some remote places.

In my excitement to get going, I've already booked a few places to visit, including a trip to Deadwood. I'm also trying to pressure my brothers into camping in Copper Basin with me. If you know of any spots worth checking out, I'm open to recommendations. The more secluded and farther off the beaten path, the better.



More than anything, I'm looking forward to introducing my kids to the wonders of camping. In our daily lives, we are constantly connected to an endless stream of stimulation and information. Our phones buzz with alerts throughout the day, and emails seem to arrive every second. For me, taking some time to disconnect is the perfect remedy. There's nothing quite like being in a place where you can't go online even if you want to. My hope is that the pop-up camper will provide just enough comfort to get the kids excited about camping without making it feel like just another trip.

When I think of getting away from it all, I don't want to imply that I spend my camping trips in quiet contemplation. There's certainly some of that, but I also enjoy firing up the dirt bike and tackling some terrain. That's another thing I hope to get the kids into this summer. I was lucky enough to receive the "brother discount" on a 50cc Honda, which will be the perfect introductory bike for Avy and Jett. Given that Max just turned 1, I think I'll wait a little while before I get him behind the handlebars.

Like a kid with a new toy, I'm looking forward to spending as much time as possible with my camper this summer. Fingers crossed that, by the end of it, my family doesn't think I secretly want to become a reclusive mountain man.

-Dr. Chris Thomason

LEARNING THAT DOESN'T FEEL LIKE SCHOOL

Every summer, parents across the country have to deal with the same delicate problem. They want to make sure their kids continue to learn without feeling like they're being assigned tasks. After all, summer homework is every child's worst nightmare. Luckily, you don't have to rely on math problems and book reports to keep your child's development from taking a two-month vacation. Here are a few mentally stimulating activities that are as educational as they are fun.



FOR LITTLE ONES: HOMEMADE BUBBLES

Bubbles fascinate young children, so why not spend a day making your own solution and experimenting by blowing different types of bubbles? The formula is simple: 1 part dish soap (Dawn or Joy work

best) to 10 parts water. Optionally, you can also include 1/4 part glycerin. The process of making the solution will teach ratios, and finding creative ways to blow bubbles fosters problem-solving skills and creative thinking.

FOR TEENAGERS: FAMILY DINNER PARTY

Cooking teaches so many important skills: math, science, nutrition, concentration, cultural understanding, following directions, creativity, time management, and more. Even better, it doesn't feel like learning; it feels like fun. Encourage your older children to take the reins for preparing regular meals throughout the summer. You can pick guiding themes, like "a trip to Mexico" or "pasta party," but let them choose the recipes and prep the meals on their own.

FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY: AN EDUCATIONAL FIELD TRIP

Field trips always inspire excitement in students, and you'll find the same goes for your family members. You can tailor your destination to the interests of your kids for maximum engagement. If you have a family of art lovers, head to a museum for some inspiration and discussion. Kids who prefer the outdoors will enjoy a nature walk or hike. You can bring along a field guide to identify flora and fauna. These trips may not pack the thrill of a water park, but they're fun in an entirely different way.

KARA'S CORNER Safe, Effective Ways to Brighten Your Smile



For whatever reason, summer is the season when we receive the most questions about whitening options. As the number of methods and tools to whiten teeth has increased, it's become harder for patients to decide which treatment is right for them. Hopefully, I'll be able to provide a little insight on how whitening works and how you can get safe, long-lasting results.

Despite the dozens of whitening products available on store shelves and online, there are really only two fundamental ways to treat stains. The first is to treat surface level stains with over-the-counter whitening strips or toothpaste. While these methods are less intensive than other treatments, you still need to be mindful of using them correctly to avoid damaging your enamel. Whitening toothpastes, including the increasingly

popular charcoal options, contain microabrasives. Too much exposure to these compounds can wear down tooth enamel, so it's important to use them only as directed. A whitening toothpaste shouldn't be used for every brushing session.

The second way to whiten is from the inside out. It's more comprehensive and longer-lasting than surface-level treatments. At Eagle Dental Care, we can create custom trays for you to use during your whitening program. We'll also provide instructions on how to get the best results from your treatment.

Many patients experience sensitivity during and after whitening treatments. Brushing with fluoridated toothpaste is a great way to limit the intensity and duration of any sensitivity. We recommend you use it during your whitening, no matter which method you choose.

Of course, preventing stains is crucial when you've just completed a whitening program. Dark beverages like coffee, tea, and red wine are often the major culprits for stains. Limiting your consumption of these drinks or enjoying them through a straw is a great way to keep your smile sparkling.

Here's to a bright, shiny summer.

UNDER PRESSURE

WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT JAW PAIN



Did you know the average strength of a human jaw can produce a bite of 162 pounds per square inch (psi)? This is enough to scratch pure iron, but it's nothing compared to the power of some bites in the animal kingdom. The strongest bite on Earth belongs to the Nile crocodile of sub-Saharan Africa, at 5,000 psi. You definitely don't want to get on this croc's bad side.

Our jaw is designed to help us bite and tear food, but some meals are a little tougher on your jaw than others. Some of the most difficult foods to eat, in terms of jaw pressure, are things like nuts (especially walnuts), popcorn (due to the kernels), and raw fruits or vegetables, which put extra pressure on the incisors. Even softer foods can wear out your jaw. Well-done steak and caramel candy require extra chewing, and therefore extra jaw pressure.

Eating a lot of food that's hard on your jaw can lead to pain, but if you experience chronic jaw pain, it might not be caused by your diet. Jaw pain can be brought on by a number of problems, including the following:

TEETH GRINDING

A lot of people grind their teeth due to stress, but you can also grind your teeth in your sleep without realizing it. Grinding in your sleep is often a sign of a sleep disorder like sleep apnea.

UNTREATED CAVITY

If you fail to get a cavity treated right away, the damage can work its way beneath your enamel and down the pulp of your tooth. Most people with major cavities aren't able to determine which tooth is the problem because the pain radiates throughout their jaw.

BAD BITE

If your teeth aren't lined up right, you can end up with an overbite or an underbite. A bad bite can get in the way of your ability to chew, wearing out your jaw muscles and leading to pain.

A lot of the time, your dentist can help you determine the cause of your jaw pain. If you suffer from an aching jaw, be sure to mention it during your next appointment. We'd be happy to help you find the reason *and* the solution for your pain.



KIELBASA KABOBS

This take on the classic Italian sausage and peppers uses fully cooked Polish kielbasa so you can prep the kabobs and bring them to your next cookout.

Inspired by Good Housekeeping

INGREDIENTS

- 2 pounds fully cooked smoked kielbasa
- 2 large onions
- 2 green bell peppers
- 3 red bell peppers
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat grill to medium.
2. In a small bowl, combine oil, garlic, and a pinch of salt and pepper.
3. Cut pepper, onion, and kielbasa into 1-inch chunks.
4. Thread onto skewers, alternating ingredients.
5. Brush with oil mixture and grill, covered, 10–12 minutes.

[NOTE: If using bamboo skewers, soak in water for 30 minutes before threading to prevent burning.]



LAUGHING GAS

