



Creative Living with Sheryl Borden

6100 Series



Foods + Nutrition - Section I

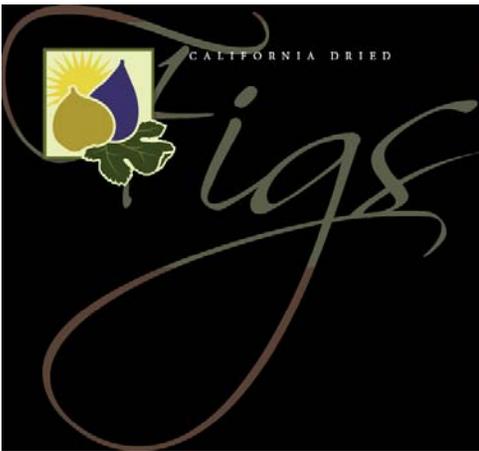


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**Due to the size of this section, it has been separated into two sections in order for it to be downloaded more quickly. For instance, “California Figs, Cheese & Wine” is in Section I on page 3, whereas “Quick & Easy Food Dishes” is in Section II on page 11.**



# California Figs, Cheese & Wine

There are five main varieties of California Figs and each has a distinct flavor.

- **Black Mission Figs** — fresh and dried
  - o Purple and black skin with deep earthy flavor like a Cabernet
  - o Dark purple color with soft, thin skin. Sweet fruity taste and firm texture. Great for snacking or as an ingredient in recipes. Mission figs are one of the principal varieties sold in consumer packages.



- **Brown Turkey Figs** — fresh only
  - o Light purple to black skin with robust flavor like a Pinot Noir



- **Calimyrna Figs** — fresh and dried
  - o Golden colored fruit. Sweet, slightly nutty flavor and well developed seeds. Great for snacking, stuffing or dipping. Only commercial variety that is caprifigged (pollinated.) Calimyrna figs are principally sold in consumer packages.

o Pale yellow skin with a buttery and nutty flavor like a Chardonnay



- **Kadota Figs**— fresh and dried only
  - o White to translucent amber color. Small in size, thicker skin with a limited number of small seeds. Kadota figs are also used in canning.

- o Creamy amber skin with a light flavor like a Sauvignon Blanc

- **Sierra Figs** — fresh only
  - o Light-colored skin with a flavor like a Riesling

## Camembert with Figs and Port Wine Sauce

- 1 round firm Camembert cheese with rind (8 ounces)
- 1 large egg, beaten
- 1 cup fresh breadcrumbs from crustless French bread
- 1 cup ruby port
- 1 cup dried California figs\*, halved lengthwise
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1/3 cup crumbled blue cheese
- Chopped fresh chives
- 1 French bread baguette, sliced crosswise and lightly toasted

Brush Camembert on all sides with egg; then coat with breadcrumbs. Place on foil-lined plate and cover.

Simmer port in heavy non-reactive saucepan over medium heat. Add figs; simmer until slightly softened, about 5 minutes.

Using slotted spoon, transfer figs to small bowl. Add sugar to liquid remaining in saucepan; simmer until reduced to thick syrup, stirring occasionally, about 5 minutes. Pour over figs. Let stand.

To serve, melt butter in heavy skillet over medium-high heat. Add Camembert and cook until breadcrumbs are brown and cheese is warm, about 2 minutes per side. Transfer to platter. Top with blue cheese, figs and syrup. Sprinkle with chives. Serve with toasted rounds for self-service. Yields: 1 crusted cheese round and 1 cup fig sauce. Serves: 16.

\* Black Mission figs recommended.

**COURTESY: Karla Stockli and Robert del Grande**  
**California Fig Advisory Board**

[www.californiafigs.com](http://www.californiafigs.com)

# Ways to Use Dried Figs

California Dried Figs make satisfying snacks and sweet and flavorful recipe additions. The dense, sweet flesh, coupled with their unique crunchy seed, goes well in baked goods, with meat, poultry, fish, vegetables and other fruits. Remember, too, that figs offer a powerhouse of nutrition; a combination of fiber, minerals, and nutrients that is unequaled by other fruits in nature. It's no wonder that they are known as "The Fitness Fruit."

1. A few California Dried Figs in a plastic bag go to the office, to school, to the game, or to the park for a quick snack. Easy to eat and satisfying to a sweet tooth.
2. Keep a container of figs in a desk drawer at work to satisfy late afternoon munchies or to nibble at coffee break time.
3. Slice a few California Dried Figs and add to tossed green salads. They add delightful sweetness and texture, as well as fiber.
4. Sweeten up mashed or cubed winter squash or sweet potatoes with some chopped California Figs. The figs add a richness of their own, so you can skip the butter or margarine.
5. Blend low-fat cream, ricotta or cottage cheese with some California Figs to create a great spread for toast or bagels or as a dip for sliced fresh fruit.
6. Scatter a few chopped California Dried Figs over instant or regular oatmeal or cold cereal of any kind. Skip the sugar and enjoy the figgie flavor and crunch.
7. Bite-size – nothing is as delicious for out-of-hand eating or has the robust flavors of Black Mission or the sweet nuttiness of the Calimyrna or the delicate sweetness of the Kadota.
8. No cooking is necessary. Just enjoy their naturally sweet goodness by itself, pair with your favorite cheeses, drizzle with a delicious dipping sauce, or simply add balance to your savory salsas and chutneys.
9. For an early autumn salad, arrange a good amount of baby greens on a large platter and layer with fig halves or quarters, Then, sprinkle toasted pine nuts over all and drizzle with a vinaigrette made by whisking 2 tablespoons fresh orange juice with 1 1/2 teaspoons champagne or white wine vinegar, 1/4 teaspoon salt and 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil. Quick, easy and perfect for almost any meal!
10. Combine 12 California Dried Figs with 1 1/4 cups water; heat to boiling and let stand overnight. Serve with cream to make 4 people very happy at breakfast time.

## Fig Layer Bars

### Filling

- 1 package (8 ounces) dried California figs, stems removed and chopped fine
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts
- 1/2 cup hot water

### Crust and Topping

- 1 cup butter
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 3/4 cups rolled oats
- 1 3/4 cups flour, sifted
- Ice water, as needed



For Filling, combine figs, sugar, nuts and water in small saucepan. Cook over medium heat 15 minutes or until thickened, stirring frequently. Set aside to cool.

**For Crust and Topping**, in mixing bowl, cream butter with sugar until light and fluffy. Add salt and vanilla; beat together. Add oats and flour, mix until blended. Press about half flour mixture evenly in bottom of lightly greased shallow 9 by 13-inch pan. Spread filling evenly over all. Add water to remaining flour mixture and mix lightly until it forms a ball and cleans sides of bowl. Turn onto lightly floured surface and roll into rectangle to fit on top of pan and arrange on top of filling, trimming edges to fit. Bake at 350° F for 25 to 30 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool in pan. Cut 4 x 6 to make 24 large squares or cut 4 x 12 to make 48 bars to serve as snacks. Serve warm with ice cream and drizzle with chocolate syrup. Yields: 24 or 48 bars.

**COURTESY: Karla Stockli**  
**California Fig Advisory Board**  
[www.californiafigs.com](http://www.californiafigs.com)

# Mini Desserts for Kids

## Mini Rio Star Grapefruit Pies

- 4 Texas Rio Star Grape fruits, sectioned
- 1 cup prepared strawberry glaze
- 4 mini pie shells
- Whipped cream



Drain all juice from grapefruit sections on a paper towel. Carefully fold sections in strawberry glaze. Pour mixture into pie shells and refrigerate until firm. Top with whipped cream.

## Angel Food and Grapefruit Lush Cake

- 5 cups chopped Rio Star Grapefruit sections, undrained
- 1 8 oz. pkg. vanilla instant pudding
- 2 cups thawed whipped topping
- 1 10-inch round angel food cake
- 1/2 Rio Star Grapefruit, sectioned
- 5 strawberries



Mix grapefruit sections and dry pudding mix in medium bowl. Gently stir in whipped topping. Cut cake horizontally into three layers. Place bottom cake layer, cut-

side up, on serving plate. Top with one-third of the pudding mixture. Repeat layers two times. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour. Top with grapefruit sections and strawberries just before serving. Store leftovers in refrigerator.



## Citrus Guacamole

- 1 Texas Red Grapefruit
- 2 large ripe avocados
- 2-3 tablespoons minced purple onion
- 2 tablespoons sour cream
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder (add more to flavor)
- 1/2 teaspoon salt



Peel and section grapefruit, reserving 2 tablespoons of juice. Measure 1 cup sections; cut into bite-size pieces and set aside. Peel avocados; mash with a fork until somewhat smooth, leaving some small chunks. Add the remaining ingredients and stir well. Gently fold in grapefruit juice and sections. Serve immediately or cover and chill until serving time. Yield: about 3 cups.

**COURTESY: Eleisha Ensign**  
**TexaSweat Citrus Marketing, Inc.**  
[www.texasweet.com](http://www.texasweet.com)

## 100 CALORIE SNACKS

**100-calorie snacks** are a huge trend right now. Rather than buying pre-made snacks, you can make your own for a lesser price.

- 1 Tbsp. of peanut butter with half a cup of sliced ap-ples provides only 120 calories and healthful unsaturated fat
- 2 whole grain cracker sandwiches (4 crackers) with cheese (1 cubic inch) and sliced turkey sausage (com-parable gram weight to cheese) provides 115 calories
- 1 cup of strawberries with a frozen lowfat, blue-berry nutri-grain waffle for 120 calories

- 1 cup of blanched asparagus spears (12 spears), and 2 tablespoons Ranch dressing is around 100 calories
- 2 Tbsp. hummus with 1 cup of sliced, peeled cucumbers is just over 100 calories.

A variety of protein choices, mixed with fruits, vegetables and whole grains can make for a satisfying, filling snack that can keep your appetite in check.

**COURTESY: Christine Palumbo**  
**Honeysuckle White & Shady Brook Farms**  
[www.honeysucklewhite.com](http://www.honeysucklewhite.com)  
[www.shadybrookfarms.com](http://www.shadybrookfarms.com)

# ENTERTAINING TIPS WITH TEXAS CITRUS

Texas Citrus not only tastes great and smells wonderful, it is also beautiful! Get creative and see how many ways you can incorporate citrus in your next dinner party. Appetizers, salads, desserts, centerpieces - the possibilities are endless! **Plan it, throw it, and enjoy it.**

Want a unique display at your next dinner party? **Citrus candles** are sure to wow, and are so easy to make!

## Items Needed:

- Texas Sweet Oranges
- White votive candles
- Small paring knife

Cut an orange in half, so that each side will sit flat. Take a paring knife and cut a circle in the



middle of the orange, a little larger than the votive candle. Place votive candle inside the center of the orange. Repeat for

additional orange halves. Arrange several orange halves on a table as a unique centerpiece. This interesting display idea can also be done with grapefruit.

## CITRUS FLORAL DISPLAY

Hide the stems in your vase with cut citrus...it's so easy! Simply add slices of citrus to a vase of flowers to give your blooms a fresh and distinctive look.

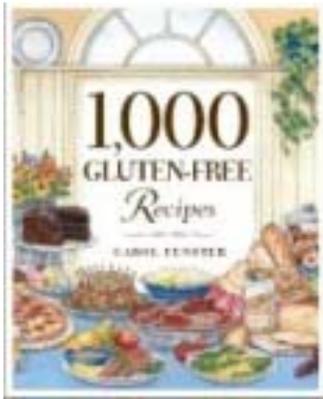


## CITRUS CENTERPIECES

Be creative with your table setting this season! Place whole grapefruit and oranges on a platter or in a bowl for a simple and elegant centerpiece. Enjoy the intermingling scents of flowers and citrus simply by adding a few blossoms to your centerpiece!



**COURTESY: Kymberly Meade**  
**TexaSweat Citrus Marketing, Inc.**  
[www.texasweet.com](http://www.texasweet.com)



## Making the Most of Gluten-Free Bread

According to author and nutritionist, Carol Fenster, PhD, gluten-free bread costs more than regular bread. Because of this, she suggests ways to make the most of every slice -- even stale, leftover bread, and here are three of her suggestions:

### CROUTONS

- 4 slices gluten-free bread of your choice
- Olive oil cooking spray
- Garlic powder (optional)
- Italian herb seasoning (optional)

Place a rack in the middle of the oven. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Line a 13x9-inch rimmed baking sheet (not nonstick) with foil. Trim the crusts from the bread and cut the slices into 1/2-inch cubes. Spray the cubes with cooking spray. Dust with garlic powder or Italian seasoning to taste, if using. Place the cubes in a single layer on the prepared sheet. Toast 5 to 10 minutes, until the croutons are lightly browned. Store tightly covered in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks and in the freezer for up to 3 months.

### PLAIN BREAD CRUMBS

- 4 cups gluten-free bread of choice, torn into small pieces

Place the bread in a food processor and pulse until the crumbs reach desired consistency. Store tightly covered in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks and in the freezer up to 3 months.

**Italian Bread Crumbs:** Add 1 teaspoon onion powder and 4 teaspoons Italian Herb Seasoning to the recipe above; toss well.

### HAM (OR PROSCIUTTO) AND CHEESE PANINI

- 8 slices gluten-free bread
- Cooking spray
- 4 thin slices Black Forest Ham or prosciutto
- 4 thin slices Swiss or Gruyere cheese or cheese alternative, such as Vegan Gourmet
- 4 Tbsp. apricot preserves

Lay the slices of bread on a flat surface and lightly coat with cooking spray (or brush with melted butter for a richer taste.) Turn 4 of the slices over and layer each slice with ham and cheese. Spread a tablespoon of preserves on each. Top with the remaining 4 slices of bread, sprayed side up. Heat a panini machine and grill the sandwiches, following manufacturer's directions. If you use a skillet, lightly coat the skillet with cooking spray and brown the sandwiches, turning once, and using a heavy object to weigh it down. Serve immediately.

**COURTESY: Carol Fenster  
Savory Palate, Inc.**

[www.savorypalate.com](http://www.savorypalate.com)



# ONIONS, ONIONS, ONIONS

An onion bowl is the perfect way to serve dips, salsas, guacamole, chutneys, or relishes at casual get-togethers or special events. Whether you make your dip or salsa from scratch or buy one at the supermarket, onion bowls make any gathering more fun than an ordinary bowl or container from the store. Best of all, when the party is over, no dishwashing is required. Onion bowls are also great for thick soups and stews.

## HOW TO MAKE AN ONION BOWL

Cut off the top third of a large (at least 3-inches in diameter) yellow, red or white onion. Trim the root end to make a flat support. Be careful to not cut the root end off completely as this will keep the onion intact and prevent the juicier dips from leaking. Peel off the outside layers of papery skin from the onion. Scoop out inner layers with a melon baller. Be sure to leave a couple outer layers intact. Spoon or pour your dip, salsa or chutney into your carved onion bowl and enjoy!



### Roasted Corn, Onion and Olive Salsa

- 4 ears corn in husks (about 2 pounds)
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 2 cups chopped yellow onion
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon bottled crushed red pepper flakes or 1 to 2 tablespoons minced fresh chilies
- 2 cups chopped tomatoes
- 1 cup sliced black olives
- 1/2 cup coarsely chopped cilantro leaves
- 1/4 cup freshly squeezed lime juice
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 2 to 3 teaspoons diced chipotles, canned in adobo sauce
- 1 to 2 teaspoons adobo sauce from canned chipotles
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

Husk corn and cut kernels from cob using long-bladed knife. Heat oil in large skillet over high heat. Add corn and sauté for about 2 minutes or until it gets some golden patches. Add onion and sauté 1 minute longer; stir in cumin and crushed red peppers. Remove from heat and combine with all other ingredients in bowl. Makes about 5 cups.

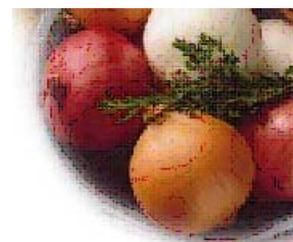
### Creamy Onion Dip

- 2 cups finely chopped onions
- 1 tablespoon olive or vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 cup regular or light sour cream
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Heat oil in large skillet. Add onion; cook over medium heat stirring often, 3 minutes, or until barely tender. Stir in paprika. Combine onion mixture and sour cream in medium bowl. Add salt and pepper, to taste. Cover; refrigerate until ready to serve. Makes 10 servings or 1- 2/3 cups.

To serve in onion bowl: Cut off top third of large red onion. Trim small edge off root end to make flat support. Peel onion. Scoop out inner layers, leaving outer two layers intact. Spoon dip into hollow onion.

**COURTESY: Kim Reddin**  
**National Onion Assn.**  
[www.onions-usa.org](http://www.onions-usa.org)



# Potato Varieties



## 1. Fingerlings

Firm, waxy and flavorful, these small, slender potatoes are finger-sized (2-4 inches in length) and come in different shapes. Varieties are grown in every color - red, gold, yellow and purple—with flavors like those of their larger cousins.

### *Fresh idea*

Finger-Food Fingerlings—Roast fingerlings whole with olive oil, fresh herbs and coarse salt; serve as a shared appetizer with hot sauce and blue cheese dressing or garlic mayo for dipping.

## 2. Yellow

Widely used in Europe; becoming increasingly popular in the U.S. Dense, creamy texture and golden color mean you can use less or no butter for lighter presentations.

### *Fresh idea*

Smashed Potato “Cakes” - Cook yellow potatoes till tender, then press under a heavy saucepan to flatten. Roast or fry until golden and serve with a signature sauce, dressing or seasoned mayo.

## 3. Blue/purple

Originated in South America; now becoming popular in the U.S. Subtle, nutty flavor and flesh ranging from dark blue or lavender to white. Microwaving best preserves color, but steaming and baking are also recommended.

### *Fresh idea*

Red White and Blues—Combine blue potatoes with whites and reds in salads or roasted medleys to make all three colors “pop.”

## 5. Russet

The most widely used potato variety in the U.S. High in starch; light and fluffy when cooked; ideal for baking, mashing, frying and roasting.

### *Fresh idea*

Big-Flavored Oven Fries—Tap into on-trend ethnic flavors by drizzling russet wedges with olive oil and dusting with seasonings like Spanish smoked pimentó, Japanese shichimi pepper blend or Cajun blackening spices.

## 6. Red

Rosy red skin and white flesh. Firm, smooth, moist texture; well suited for salads, roasting, boiling and steaming. Round reds are often referred to as “new potatoes,” but the term “new” technically refers to any variety of potato that is harvested before reaching maturity.

### *Fresh idea*

Roast Reds for Salads - Instead of boiling red potatoes for salads, try roasting them, whole or cut up, to intensify their flavor and bring out their sweetness. Then add vinaigrette or a mayo-based dressing.

## Potato Cooking Basics

### Oven Baked Potatoes

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Scrub potatoes and pierce to allow steam to escape. Bake on oven rack or cookie sheet for 60-75 minutes. (To test for doneness, squeeze with an oven mitt. Potatoes should give easily.)

Favorite toppings are sour cream or butter. Healthy alternatives include salsa, broccoli and low fat cheese, or chili.

### Variation: Half Baked potatoes

Cut potatoes in half lengthwise. Sprinkle parmesan cheese on the cut surface and place cut side down on greased or sprayed baking sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

## Mashed Potatoes

Scrub one 5-1/3 oz. potato for each person. Bring a medium pot of salted water to a boil. Add the potatoes and cook until tender, about 20 minutes. (Test for doneness by piercing with a fork). Drain water and return pot to warm stove-top for a few seconds, shaking pot to remove remaining moisture.



We recommend not peeling potatoes, but if you wish you can easily slip off the skins at this point with a knife. Place potatoes in a large bowl and mash. Popular additions are butter, milk and pepper. Alternative seasonings include minced garlic, sour cream, or buttermilk.

Scrub four 5-1/3 oz. potatoes, place into a microwave safe dish and cover with lid or plastic wrap. Do not peel or poke potatoes, and be sure to vent the container. Some microwave containers have venting lids on the cover, or you can cover with plastic wrap and leave slightly open on one side.

Microwave for 8 minutes or until potatoes are done. Use oven mitts to remove dish from microwave, as steam will have built up. Also use mitt to remove top from cooking container. Mash right in the container, adding milk, butter, salt and pepper as desired.

## Oven Roasted Potatoes

Allow one 5-1/3 oz. potato per person. Heat oven to 450 degrees. Scrub potatoes and cut into wedges wider than traditional fries (or one inch cubes if you prefer). Coat a baking sheet with cooking spray. Place potatoes on cooking sheet and drizzle with one to two tablespoons of olive oil and toss to coat. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Roast for 30 minutes. Turn and roast for an additional 15-30 minutes, until potatoes are crunchy on the outside.

Alternative seasonings include chili powder or parmesan cheese.

**COURTESY: Patty Mastracco**  
**U.S. Potato Board**  
[www.potatogoodness.com](http://www.potatogoodness.com)

## Greek Salad

- 3 medium firm ripe Jersey beefsteak tomatoes or Holland hydroponic tomatoes
- 1 medium red onion, peeled, halved and cut into 1/8-inch slices
- 1 large cucumber, peeled and cut into 1/8-inch rounds
- 8-12 Gaea Pitted Kalamata olives
- Coarse salt or sea salt to taste
- 4 ounces Greek feta, cut into one square piece
- 1 scant teaspoon Gaea Green Olive tapenade
- Grated zest of 1/2 lemon
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste
- Pinch of salt
- 2 tsp. fresh oregano leaves or 1/2 tsp. dried Greek oregano
- 1/4 - 1/3 cup DOP Sitia extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tsp. capers
- 1 oversized tortilla shell or 3-4 pita breads



Wash and wipe dry the tomatoes. Cut in half and using a sharp paring knife, remove the stem end. Cut the tomato halves into 3 or 4 wedges, depending on their size. Place in a serving bowl. Add the onions, cucumbers, olives, and salt. Toss. Place the feta on top.

Whisk together the green olive tapenade, lemon zest, pepper, salt, fresh oregano and olive oil plus a few drops of lemon until emulsified. Pour over the salad.

Serve, breaking the feta with the salad forks before either distributing on individual plates or serving communally. The whole idea is for the feta to crumble into ever-smaller pieces as the salad is consumed. Add the capers on top of the salad. Additional proposals for serving: the

Greek salad can be served on an oversized tortilla shell or along with pita breads. Yield: 4 servings.



**COURTESY: Aris Kefalogiannis**  
**Gaea Products**  
[www.gaea.gr](http://www.gaea.gr)