



**March 9, 2016**

## **Your Guests Will Melt for this Elegant Entertaining Idea**

Fondue is making a comeback! It's about time, really, because who can say no to sharing a meal of rich, melted cheese?

The first step is to make sure you have the appropriate fondue pot. Cheese fondue pots are generally made of ceramic or earthenware – stainless steel pots meant for oil or broth fondues can also work, but control the heat as the cheese may burn. Use a burner that uses gel- or alcohol-based fuel. Tea lights are only good for chocolate.

Our Cheese Fondue with Spiced Pear has many traditional elements, such as the use of Emmental and Gruyère cheeses, with a hint of Kirsch, a cherry brandy. The fondue is dotted with pear that is lightly spiced with cinnamon and nutmeg, adding sweetness and texture to the dish.

Keep things simple by serving the fondue with your favourite crusty French loaf and some crudités, or if you have a little more time, try your hand at some homemade Sesame Bread Sticks. These crisp, pretzel-like treats are so addictive; your guests won't be able to get enough!

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### **CHEESE FONDUE WITH SPICED PEAR**

1 tbsp salted butter  
1 firm ripe pear, peeled, cored and diced (about 3/4 cup)  
1/2 tsp cinnamon  
1/4 tsp nutmeg  
Pinch freshly ground pepper  
1 clove garlic, halved lengthwise  
2 cups dry white wine  
2 cups shredded Emmental cheese  
2 cups shredded Gruyère cheese  
3 tbsp cornstarch  
1 tbsp Kirsch (cherry brandy), optional  
1 tbsp water  
1/2 tsp freshly ground pepper

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1/4 tsp nutmeg

1. To prepare spiced pear, melt butter in a small non-reactive frypan over medium-high heat. Add pear, cinnamon and 1/4 tsp nutmeg; sauté until lightly browned, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in pinch of pepper; set aside.
2. Rub garlic halves on inside of a large non-reactive saucepan; discard garlic halves.
3. Add wine to saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium-low heat; boil, uncovered, for 2 minutes.
4. Gradually add Emmental cheese and Gruyère cheese, cooking and stirring constantly until cheese is melted.
5. Whisk together cornstarch, Kirsch and water until blended. Gradually whisk into cheese mixture and cook, whisking constantly, until thickened. Stir in 1/2 tsp pepper and 1/4 tsp nutmeg.
6. Transfer fondue to a fondue pot. Sprinkle with spiced pear.
7. Serve with cubed French bread. *Serves 8.*

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## **SESAME BREAD STICKS**

2 3/4 cups all-purpose flour, divided  
1 tsp instant yeast  
1 tsp salt  
3/4 cup buttermilk, heated to 100 - 110°F  
2 tbsp liquid honey  
1 large egg  
2 tbsp salted butter, softened  
Canola oil (for oiling bowl)\*  
Water (for brushing dough strips)  
3 tbsp sesame seeds

1. Combine 2 1/2 cups flour, yeast and salt in a stand mixer fitted with a flat beater.
2. Add buttermilk and honey. Using low speed, beat until dough comes together.
3. Add egg and butter. Continue beating for 10 minutes, gradually beating in remaining 1/4 cup flour if dough is too sticky.
4. Transfer dough to an oiled bowl; turn dough to coat with oil. Cover with plastic wrap. Let dough rise in a warm draft-free place until doubled in volume, about 1 - 2 hours.
5. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough into an 18x12 inch rectangle. Cut rectangle crosswise into 1/2 inch wide strips.
6. Place strips in parchment paper-lined rimmed baking sheets.



7. Cover with greased plastic wrap and let stand for 30 minutes.
8. Meanwhile, preheat oven to 400°F.
9. Uncover pans. Lightly brush strips with water and sprinkle with sesame seeds.
10. Bake until bread sticks are golden brown, about 12 - 14 minutes.
11. Let bread sticks stand in pans for 1 minute.
12. Remove from pans and cool on racks. May be frozen. *Makes 3 dozen.*