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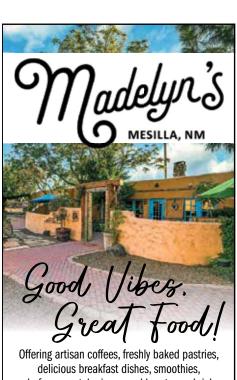






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Featured on the Cover:

April Spring frost at Nichols Ranch and Orchards. Photo by Bryan Oakley.

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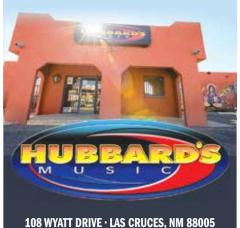








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FROM THE DWOUS NEST X DES t's a sunny and windy jump into May, leaving behind an even windier so-called "spring" - or shall we say, dust. Whichever

way you see it, we're so thankful to have you hopping along with us. We are trying something different in our May issue: virtually co-hosting a two-month-long art auction with Estate Sale Discoveries, where readers can

preview the art on page 7 and contact us for in-person viewing access.

Within this issue, you can also find out what agriculture will look like for our local farmers and ranchers after the late spring freeze.

Enjoy our salmon ball recipe and a re-print of our wine pairing chart as we offer ideas on easy bites in the garden.

Letter to the **Editor**

My name is Wyatt Gibson, and I'm an 18-year-old high school student and proud

member of the Boy Scouts. I'm writing because I'm concerned about the recent rise in violent crime among youth in the Mesilla Valley. As someone who lives here and sees these challenges firsthand, I believe it's time we have a real conversation about what's causing this and what we can do to help prevent it.

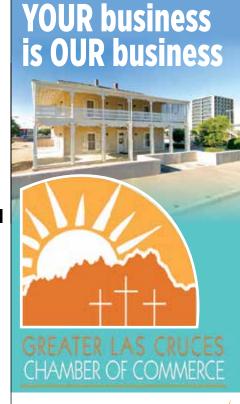
Many young people in our community feel bored, disconnected, or like they have nowhere to go. I think one part of the solution is offering more positive entertainment options — places where teens can hang out safely, have fun, and feel like they belong.

Whether it's community centers, late-night sports leagues, music events, or even safe outdoor hangouts, giving young people something to do can steer them away from harmful paths.

As a Scout, I've learned the value of community, responsibility, and service. I truly believe that if we invest in our youth and give them constructive outlets, we can reduce violence and make Mesilla Valley a safer place for everyone.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this. I hope this letter encourages more people to think about how we can work together to support the young people in our valley.

Sincerely, Wyatt Gibson



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PACOLARY OF EVENTS

Every Wednesday

- Live music: The Jazz Exchange will bring
live jazz music to El Paso at The Garrison. The
Jazz Around Town music series supports artists, highlights
the city's culture, and more. Guests are encouraged to bring
their own instruments, as many shows include a jam session.
Free, but RSVP to reserve a good seat at the venue. 7:30-10
p.m. 420 E. San Antonio Ave., El Paso, Texas.

Every Thursday

- Open Mic Night: No cover. 5-9 p.m. Madelyn's, 2488 Calle De Guadalupe, Mesilla, New Mexico.

Every Saturday

- Story Time: Free story time for children every Saturday at the Books Are GEMS Bookstore. The first 15 families get two free story time books. Join the fun in person or on Facebook Live. Free. 11 a.m.-12 p.m. 7744 N. Loop Drive Suite B, El Paso. Texas.
- STEAM Saturdays: What happens when...? Experiments with the Railroad Museum. Plan for a 30-minute program with 15 minutes for questions if needed. 2:15-3 p.m. Ages 13-17. Free. Railroad Museum, 351 N. Mesilla St., Las Cruces, New Mexico.

Every Sunday

- Yoga: The Breathwork and Yoga Nidra group hosts a weekly class at the Massage Therapy Training Institute led by Paul and Dave. The class targets managing stress, improving focus, mental clarity, regulating emotions, and more. Suggested donation is anywhere from \$10-20. 5-7 p.m. 1210 N. Main St., Las Cruces, New Mexico.

May 15

- Exhibition: Crossing Borderlines features artwork by several regional Chicano and Indigenous artists. The exhibit is hosted by Nopalito's Galería and will have a closing reception on May 31 at 11 a.m. Tonio LeFebre, Eric Sarracino, Amanda Santistevan, Celeste Santistevan, Jimmy Sanchez, Dave Sanchez, and Victor Lucero will all have their artwork in various mediums on display. Free. 5-9 p.m. 326 S. Mesquite St., Las Cruces, New Mexico.

May 16-18

- Renaissance Faire: The second annual Lincoln Forest Renaissance Faire returns to Ruidoso. Step back in time and experience the wonder and magic of medieval times. Adventurers have the opportunity to be knighted, dance the maypole, or take part in full contact armored combat. Advance tickets: Single day ticket \$25 plus fees; weekend ticket \$45 plus fees; VIP ticket \$100 plus fees. Day of tickets: Single day ticket \$30 plus fees and weekend ticket \$50 plus fees. Friday: 4-9 p.m. Saturday: 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Sunday: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Wingfield Park, 300 Center St., Ruidoso, New Mexico.
- Festival: Las Cruces UkeFest 2025 will have three incredible days of music and workshops. On Friday, May 16 at New Mexico State University's Atkinson Recital Hall, 1075 N. Horseshoe St., the instructors of the festival, Casey MacGill, Rachel Manke, Abby Lyons and Devin Scott, will perform. Saturday and Sunday at NMSU's Corbett Center, 1600 International Mall, will feature a jam session, open mic, marketplace and swap meet, and workshops for all levels of players. Rates begin at \$125 for full-time students with ID and \$225 for adults without a student ID. Tickets for children 11 and older can be purchased at the door for \$10. Children 10 and under are free with a paying adult. A ticket for only Friday's concert can be purchased for \$10. Friday concert begins at 7 p.m. and workshops on both Saturday and Sunday begin at 9 a.m. Las Cruces, New Mexico.

May 16-17

- Drunken Shakespeare: Blank Conversations Theatre Company presents "A Midsummer Night's Western" at the Rio Grande Theatre. The play is a western take on the Shakespeare classic. \$10. Doors open at 6 p.m. and the play begins at 7 p.m. 211 N. Main St., Las Cruces, New Mexico.

May 25

- Lotería: Little Toad Creek Brewery & Distillery will host a lotería with a heroic twist. Free to play with prizes each round. 5-7 p.m. 119 N. Main St., Las Cruces, New Mexico.

May 31

- Food competition: The inaugural ADOVADA de MESILLA is an ode to the famous New Mexican dish, adovada. The competition will host the region's best chefs as they make their own version of adovada. Guests will sample adovada from the cooks and enjoy live music. Frozen cocktails and local craft beer will be available. \$25. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. FARMesilla, 1840 Avenida de Mesilla, Mesilla, New Mexico.
- Tasting: The Branigan Cultural Center will host an agave tasting at Moonlight: Adult Night at the Museums, which will benefit the Foundation for Las Cruces Museums. This event is for guests to not only explore a variety of flavors, but to wander the exhibits, as well as enjoy live music and a small car show. Guests will receive a keepsake shot glass with purchase. \$10. 21+. 6:30-8:30 p.m. 501 N. Main St., Las Cruces, New Mexico.

June 4

- SongWriters Circle: Downtown Blues Coffee is the place to workshop song ideas and lyrics and play music during the SongWriters Circle. New members are always welcomed. Free. 10 a.m.-noon. 130 S. Main St., Las Cruces, New

June 5

Open Mic: Desert Voices hosts an open mic the first
 Thursday of the month at Grounded. The event is a showcase for the community to use their voice and connect. Free.
 6-8:30 p.m. 300 N. Main St., Las Cruces, New Mexico.





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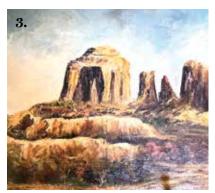
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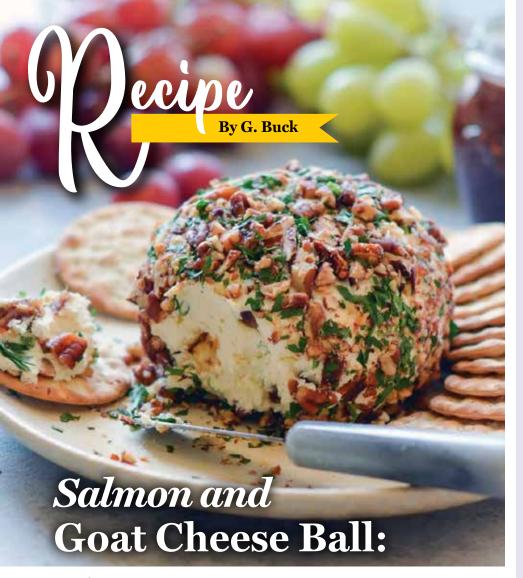












Ingredients:

5 ounces goat cheese at room temperature 4 ounces cream cheese at room temperature ½ teaspoon lemon zest

Directions:

Place goat cheese and cream cheese in a mini food processor and pulse until texture is smooth and creamy.

Add lemon zest, prepared horseradish, and Worcestershire sauce, and pulse several times until well incorporated.

Add about half of the smoked salmon to the cheese mixture and pulse until no lumps of salmon appear.

Transfer the salmon mixture to a small bowl. Mince chives and add to the salmon. Mince the remaining salmon and add to the cheese mixture, stirring until evenly combined. Line a small 1 cup-sized bowl (that has

the basic shape you'd like your cheese

- 1 tablespoon prepared horseradish 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 2 ounces smoked salmon
- 1 tablespoon minced chives
- 1 cup chopped walnuts or pecans

ball to be) with plastic wrap, leaving the ends hanging over the bowl. Transfer the cheese mixture to the bowl and gently wrap plastic wrap over the salmon cheese ball. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours and up to 24.

Add walnuts or pecans to a bowl and spread in an even layer. Remove the plastic wrap from the salmon cheese ball and rest it in the bowl.

Carefully turn it over until it's wellcoated. Transfer the salmon cheese ball to a serving platter and sprinkle with extra chopped chives for garnish, if

Serve with bagel chips, crackers, or crudité.

Pairing Wines

Provided by Mesa Vista Winery



Prime Rib

Prime rib pairs perfectly with acidic, tannic red wines. Recommended wines include Cabernet Sauvignon*, Merlot, and Syrah. Choose a full-bodied white wine—such as a buttery Chardonnay or a Viognier*—when serving the meat with a rich sauce. People who prefer lighter wines will enjoy a dry rosé* made from Syrah or Sangiovese aged two to three years. A dry rossparkling wine will also pair well and will appeal to a variety of palates.

Lamb

Lamb is such a versatile protein and can be paired with a variety of great wines. Recommended wines will work for most cuts and preparation methods. Great reds include Malbec,* Tempranillo*, and Grenache. A crisp white Chardonnay* also makes a great pairing. Honestly, most dry wines will successfully pair with Lamb.

Ham

Ham needs a high-acid wine to cut the saltiness. In return, the ham will draw out the beautiful fruit flavors in the wine. Perfect wine partners are Pinot Noir and Zinfandel (Primitivo). For something different, try a Refosco from Mesa Vista or several other wineries in the Mesilla Valley that are successfully producing a lovely Refosco. White wine drinkers will enjoy an off-dry Riesling* or Gewürztraminer. As with many foods, a nice dry rosé will complement the ham and please a variety of palates. If your ham is honey-glazed or is accompanied by a sweet side such as a pineapple casserole, look for an off-dry white wine or an off-dry red blend.

Turkey

Turkey pairing can be a little finicky. First, consider the fat content of the turkey, itself, then consider the method of preparation. As a general rule, you

can't go wrong with a light, fruity red wine such a Zinfandel or Gamay (Beaujolais). White pairings include Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay and dry Pinot Grigio.* One of the best options for Turkey is a light, juicy rosé. Deep fried turkey can benefit from a bit more acid such as Pinot Noir or Riesling.

White Fish

White fish dishes are best paired with a dry to off-dry Pinot Grigio* or Chenin Blanc. Although a bit sweet, white Zinfandel can also be a great match. When pairing wine to fish dishes, consider pairing to the sauce or side dishes. Be sure the wine is light-bodied and won't overpower the delicacy of the fish.

Salmon

Salmon is best highlighted by a full-bodied, dry white wine such as Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, or Viognier.* A light-bodied, red Beaujolais (Gamay) or a fruity Refosco* will also be successful pairings.

Enchiladas

Spicy foods pair best with a low alcohol wine with an alcohol by volume (ABV) of 8%-11%. Anything higher will increase the burning sensation and dull the flavorful spices. An off-dry or semi-sweet wine will also help cut the heat and any saltiness from the cheeses. Most medium-bodied white wines with a hint of sweetness will pair well. Recommended wines include off-dry Viognier,* off-dry Riesling,* off-dry Gewürztraminer and Chenin Blanc.



Pumpkin Pie

Pumpkin pie is delicious with a Moscato, a sweet Gewürztraminer, or an Oloroso Sherry.

Pecan Pie

Tawny Port is the way to go with a pecan pie. Other great options are Madeira and late-harvest Zinfandel.

Apple Pie

Apple pie is delicious with Marsala, late-harvest Riesling, or a sweet Gewürztraminer.

* Indicates wines available at Mesa Vista

Wine Pairing *Hints*

airing wines is a highly subjective activity. We like to drink the wine we like, and we like to eat the food we like, but the two don't always go well together. So, while there are no hard and fast rules about wine-pairing, there are a handful of simple guidelines to help the process along.

- 1. When possible, pair your wine to the main dish or protein and refine your choice based on sauces.
- 2. Acidic foods pair well with lowacid wines. For example, grilled chicken with salsa can be paired with a Chardonnay or Viognier. The medium-bodied white wine pairs well with chicken, while the low acidity of the wine will help balance the acids. Similarly, a Merlot or Granache will go well with a classic Italian bolognaise meal.
- 3. Highly salty foods can benefit from a high-acid wine. Think of pairing your ham with a Sauvignon Blanc or Riesling. Enjoy your pizza with a Sangiovese.
- 4. Fatty foods love a high-acid red wine. Pair your lamb with a Pinot Noir or Gamay. High-acid red wines offer

Wine Progression Sample |

hen pairing wines, there should be a natural progression of the wine through the meal.

Apéritif: A sparkling wine of any sweetness level is perfect for a "Welcome Wine" to serve with appetizers.

Salad Course: Pair wine with the dressing. For creamy dressings, select a Chardonnay* or a Viognier.* Vinegar or citrus based dressings hold up to highacid wines such as a dry Sauvignon Blanc or Riesling. Stay away from sweet wines as they can take on very sour notes.

Palate Cleanser: Choose a dry sparkling wine to cleanse the palate and ready it for the main course.

Entrée: Use recommended pairings. Note that one bottle of wine will serve approximately five guests a standard 5-ounce pour. For large gatherings, consider offering both red and white wine at dinner.

Dessert: Choose a wine that is as sweet or sweeter than the dessert.

- the highest pleasure point for most people and they tend to be the most harmonious with a variety of foods.
- 5. Save your tannic (astringent) red wines—Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah—for high-protein foods. Tannins bind to the protein in meat and become smooth and delicious.
- 6. Drink low-alcohol (8%-11%) wine with a hint of residual sugar when eating spicy Mexican, Thai, or Indian foods. High-alcohol wines increase the burn from the spicy peppers.
- 7. Sparkling wines almost always work as an apertif with most appetizers.
- 8. For dessert, your wine should be as sweet as, or sweeter than, the dessert being served. Sugar is not a friend of wine, so sweet desserts call for sweet wine.
- 9. When it all seems to be just too much to figure out, you can almost always count on a big, buttery California Chardonnay or a lovely Pinot Noir from Burgundy.
- 10. It never hurts to keep a sweet Moscato, Fino Sherry, or Tawny Port on hand—just in case.

Understanding a Wine Lable



Aromas & Flavours





Springtime in New Mexico can often feel confusing. New Mexicans might experience frigid temperatures in the early morning and be alerted by dust storm warnings in the afternoon. In early April, our state was met with a late spring frost that led to some areas reaching a low of 24 degrees. This dramatic weather shift not only affected everyday citizens, but it also left a mark the agriculture in the area.

Nichols Ranch and Orchards, located at 236 Cottonwood Canyon Rd. in La Luz, New Mexico, is one of the state's oldest and largest apple and cherry orchards. The orchard, stretching 20 acres of land, homes several fruit trees, including 3,000 apple trees. Other seasonal fruits grown on the property include apricots, plums, figs, pears, and stone fruits, like pumpkins. The ranch not only grows and harvests their crops but also allows for guests to pick their own fruit. They also host several annual events.

R.B. Nichols, the ranch operations manager, explained various measures that were taken to save the crops during the frost in April.

"We used sprinklers, wind machines, and heaters called smudge pots and bonfires," Nichols explained.

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shared on their website that sprinklers can be used for frost on crops, as long as they are utilized before temperatures drop below a certain number: "The sprinklers must be left on all the time until the temperatures rise. The watering system must be turned off only when the air temperatures are high enough to not produce any plant damage. The water droplets are deposited on the plants. The water droplets freeze and while this water freezing process occurs, it releases heat that protects the plants."

When asked how the frost has affected the typical produce volume on the ranch, Nichols said they lost most of their apricots. As a result, there will be very little or no apricots this year. He also said they are expecting only half the cherries they had in 2024.

Farmers are subject to what Mother Nature has in store

"We will still have all of our events," Nichols said. "You [can] pick cherries; [it] will just be very limited this year."

Nichols Ranch and Orchards will host their sixth annual Cherry Festival from June 13-15. Tickets can be purchased at the gate or online. Visit nicholsranchandorchards.com for more information on upcoming events.

According to wineamerica.org, New Mexico is one of the earliest states in the country to grow grapes. Wine America states that in 1629, Franciscan priests planted the fruit in what is now known as the Middle Rio Grande Valley AVA

PHOTO BY BRYAN OAKLEY. SMUDGE POTS USED TO SAVE THE CROPS DURING THE FROST IN APRIL

(American Viticultural Area), located between Santa Fe and Albuquerque. Currently, New Mexico is home to almost 60 wine producers and 300 acres of vinevards.

Dawn and Bryan Oakley co-own Mesa Vista Winery Tasting Room, located at 3200 Highway 28, Anthony, New Mexico. Since 2017, Bryan has been producing wine from his vineyard.

"The spring frost caught us off guard," Bryan began. "I have seen where some vineyards in California have large fans to move the air as a means of prevention. I am not aware of any vineyards in the area with this type of equipment. As small as we are, even covering the vines with plastic sheets would be impractical."

As of now, Bryan is estimating about a 25% loss of the crop, but said they will have a better approximation in the coming weeks. He mentioned that like other farmers, they are subject to what Mother Nature has in store.

Richard Heerema has been the Extension Pecan Specialist at New Mexico State University since October 2005. Heerema, an educator and researcher at NMSU, gave his insight into the pecan trees at the university.

"The pecan trees at the NMSU Leyendecker Plant Science Research Center seemed to have had minimal to no damage by the freeze this spring without any special protections," Heerema explained. "It was cold enough to freeze off all of the flowers of some almond trees, so that there will be no crop this year. The pecans were not far enough advanced for any serious damage to be done."

He did note, however, that some producers to the north of Las Cruces did encounter significant damage, while others to the south of the city had more minor damage. Heerema stated that he suspects the impact on the Leyendecker pecan production will be minimal, if any.

"Pecans are quite late in their bud-break compared with other trees," Heerema said. "This [is] beneficial for avoiding late spring freezes. That being said, there is a certain amount of damage to the pecan crop that did occur in localized pockets of the Mesilla Valley, which will have negative impact[s] for those producers. Also, there may be some hidden damage to the trees that I have not yet seen and may not be evident until later."





PHOTOS BY BRYAN OAKLEY. ABOVE: DRIED UP LEAVES THAT WERE KILLED BY THE FROST, THERE ARE ALSO FRESH GREEN LEAVES SHOWING THE PLANT HAS RECOVERED. MISSING IN THESE PHOTOS ARE GRAPES. BELOW: VINES THAT HAD NO FROST DAMAGE. THE NEWLY FORMED GRAPES CAN BE EASILY SEEN.



















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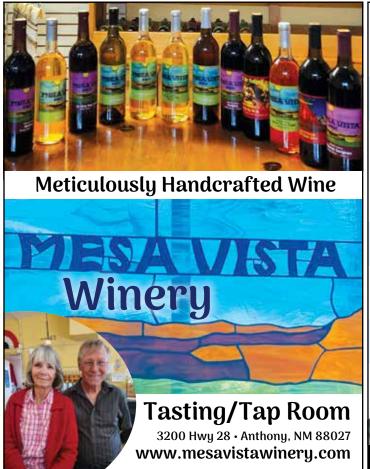








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Action Estate Sales:

Many people

don't know

that estate

sales can be a

turning point

in life.

Compassionate Planners for Later in Life

By Ryan Mouton

ith seven years of experience as estate sale organizers and facilitators in Las Cruces, partners Noelle Kiely and Don Orfield have been running Action Estate Sales, Appraisals and Auctions, LLC. for one year.

They said the business came from needs customers had while they were working for other estate sale companies in the area. "We had been working under another company for some years and saw there was something missing to their approach,"

Kiely said. Although estate sales and liquidation may not always be profitable for their efforts, Orfield and Kiely said they often take the jobs anyway.

"Many people don't know that estate sales can be a turning point in life," Kiely said. When it's time for someone to move to a

smaller space or enter assisted living, many don't have enough in savings to sustain them through retirement and end of life. For them, the not-yet realized value of their physical possessions is everything they'll have - and the money they gain from the estate sale will need to last them many years.

for the client," Kiely noted. "That's why we work off commission and rarely sell anything for under market value." The turnaround time for Action Estate Sales is generally 10 days, from the time the duo enters the home and begins organizing and pricing items, to the tenth day when the estate sale takes place, having been advertised in advance.

> Kiely said she and Orfield are happy to be there when people need it. "Sometimes our customers don't have any family left, or none nearby," she mentioned. "Some have health issues or problems staying lucid. Those people need someone ... and we don't mind helping those people with whatever it is they need, even if it's not specifically an estate sale issue."

Protecting the value of their clients' items does come with challenges. "A lot of what we do concerns specialty items. Coins, jewelry, and firearms are all things that require some extra consideration," Orfield said. Action Estate Sales are licensed, bonded, and insured, and well equipped to handle these sensitive items. "Sometimes

why we take those off-premises to a safe location on the first day," he continued. "We fully comply with federal and state gun laws and return firearms and other items like coins and jewelry to the premises for the day of the sale only." This is just one practice that ensures their customers get the best

value for the items needing to be sold.

Realtor Michael Carvlin often works alongside Kiely and Orfield, listing a home for sale once the estate is sold. He described how so many parts of the estate sale process can affect a client's savings.

looking for jewelry or a firearm, which is

"Don and Noelle are very effective at what they do," Carvlin said. "I once asked if they could liquidate a very cluttered house in three days, because I knew we'd get a better price if we brought it to market sooner. I couldn't believe how many items they priced and organized in that time and because of their hard work, the house hit the market at the perfect time and absolutely got the seller a better price."

If you need to get the best value for your estate or want to support a business that's helping Las Cruces residents spring forward into the next phase of life, find Action Estate Sales on Facebook or on actionestatesales.net for upcoming dates







mayonnaise mixture. Add additional garnish if desired. Serve immediately. (Serves 6)

paper. Cook for 12 to 16 minutes, turning once to ensure bacon is crispy throughout.

To Bake Preheat Oven to 350 degrees. Place wrapped hot dogs on a baking pan lined with parchment

Air Fry: Spray air fry basket with cooking spray. Preheat at 400 degrees for 5 minutes. Place bacon

wrapped hotdogs in basket and cook for 7-8 minutes. Turn each hotdog over gently and cook for 3-4

*This a traditional Mexican bun found in most bakery sections at your local market. You can also use any

Juice of 1 lime (2 tbsp.)

seeded and chopped

Mustard 1/2 cup cotija cheese

1/2 cup La Posta Green Chile Honey

1 cup minced white onion 1 large tomato

Optional Garnish: Minced cilantro, red

onion, lime quarters, sour cream, pickled

Notes

more minutes until bacon is crisp.

type of soft oblong roll.

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