

## Kitchen Diva by Angela Shelf Medearis Summer Salsa

When tomatoes and peppers are ripe and plentiful, folks will wonder what to do with all that produce. Salsa is one good option.

How hot the salsa is depends on the kind of peppers that are used. Peppers are rated according to their hotness on a scale called the Scoville Organoleptic Test. Milder peppers tend to be larger (4-10 inches) and are "yellow-turning-red." Examples of milder peppers include bell peppers and sweet banana peppers, which rate at 0 Scoville Units, and so are very mild. More in the mid-range would be jalapeno peppers, which are rated at 5,000 Scoville Units and are tapered green or red chilies.

The hottest variety is habanero, with a rating of 300,000 Scoville Units. The habanero resembles an orange lantern. Typically, the hotter peppers are smaller varieties (1-3 inches at maturity) and are colored "green-turning-red." When working with hot peppers, be sure to wear gloves to prevent burns. Just cutting a habanero open, for example, can make a person's eyes water!

Adjust the spiciness of the salsa by selecting the type of pepper added to the mix. For a very mild salsa, use milder peppers. For a very hot salsa, use a greater proportion of hotter peppers to milder ones. Regardless of the product's spiciness, don't just add more peppers to make it hotter. The total amount of peppers should be the amount recommended in the recipe. The proportions are calculated out so that the recipe will be safely preserved.

It's also a good idea to try out the peppers you plan to use in your salsa by trying half of a hot pepper

first, stirring the salsa, letting it sit for a few minutes and tasting for heat. See if the temperature is what you expect and what you prefer. It's easier to adjust the mix of peppers in the salsa to gradually make it a little hotter by adding more peppers than it is to deal with an excessively hot and spicy salsa after it's prepared. If someone finds your salsa a bit too hot for their tastes, you might try serving it with some sour cream or salty chips to help calm that spicy flavor.

This recipe for Spicy Fruit Salsa combines hot peppers and juicy summer fruits. It's perfect for a snack or appetizer and is also delicious as a topping for fish, chicken or pork.



### THE DIVA'S SPICY FRUIT SALSA

Be sure to wear gloves or wash your hands immediately after handling peppers. Do not touch your face, eyes, nose or mouth. To reduce the heat of the peppers and retain the flavor, cut the peppers open and remove the seeds and the ribs, wash your hands

- thoroughly and proceed with the recipe.
- 1 large firm but ripe mango, peeled and cubed
- 1 large firm but ripe peach, peeled and cubed
- 2 large firm but ripe tomatoes, cored, seeded and coarsely chopped, or 16 grape or cherry tomatoes, cut into quarters
- 1 cup diced red onion
- 1 or 2 fresh jalapenos, stemmed and minced
- 3 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 1/2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/3 cup finely chopped cilantro

1. In a large bowl, combine the mango, peaches, tomatoes, onion, jalapenos, lime juice, honey, chili powder and salt. Stir well to combine.

2. Cover and refrigerate for up to 1 hour, to blend the flavors. Just before serving, stir in the cilantro and adjust the seasoning. Serve with baked tortilla or pita chips. Makes about 2 cups.

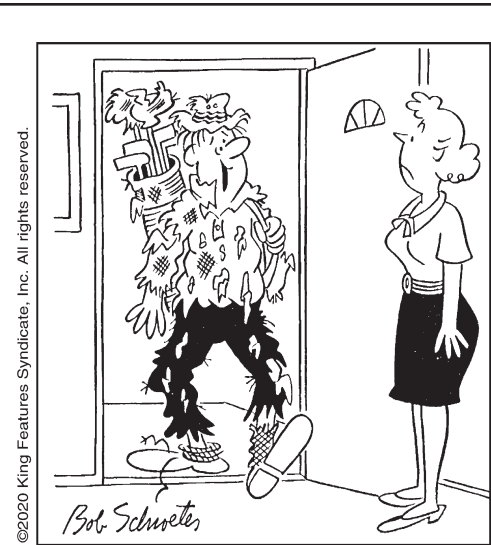
### VARIATIONS

**Saucy Joes:** Brown 1 pound of lean, ground turkey. Season with 3 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce, 1 teaspoon salt, 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper. Combine with 1 cup of salsa. Serve on whole-wheat hamburger buns or in pitas.

**Salsa Fish, Chicken or Pork:** Top individual portions of grilled, pan-fried or broiled fish, chicken or pork with 2 tablespoons of salsa.

**Salsa Pizza Bites:** Spread 1 1/2 tablespoons salsa on 1/2 of an English muffin. Sprinkle with each muffin with 1 1/2 tablespoons of Parmesan cheese or low-fat mozzarella cheese. Place muffins in a toaster oven and cook until the cheese is melted, about 2 to 3 minutes.

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"Had a little trouble with \_\_\_\_\_ on the sixth hole, but aside from that, we had a great game!"

## SCRAMBLERS

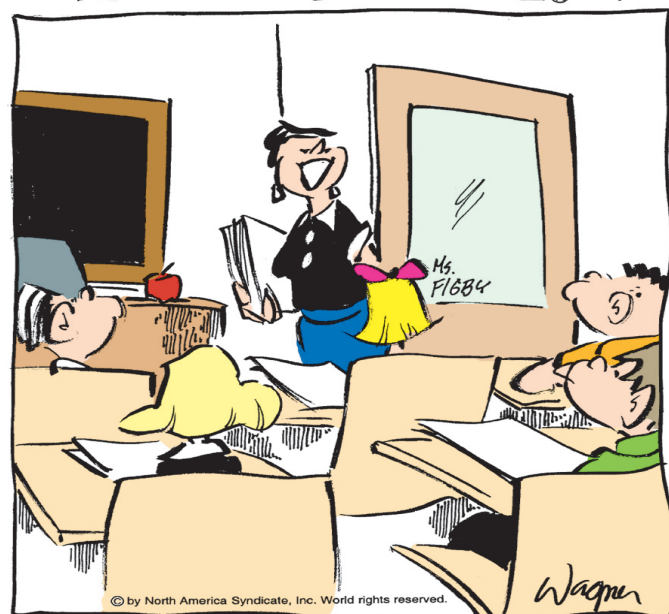
Unscramble the letters within each rectangle to form four ordinary words. Then rearrange the boxed letters to form the mystery word, which will complete the gag!

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### TODAY'S WORD

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## GRIN & BEAR IT



"Good morning! My name is Ms. Figby, and I'll be your worst nightmare this year!"

## Health Department clarifies some mis-information over CDC reports

The Estill County Health Department would like to clarify some information. There has been confusion over recent reports from the CDC. The CDC **did not** change data to say only 6% of the listed deaths were from COVID-19; instead, the data shows that 6% of COVID-19 deaths were in people without pre-existing or underlying health conditions. We have consistently said that people with the highest risk of complications, including death, from COVID-19 are people with underlying health conditions, including heart and lung disease, cancer and diabetes.

**Underlying conditions are common in Kentucky:**

- The leading causes of death in Kentucky are

heart disease, cancer and chronic lower respiratory disease (CDC)

- Kentucky has one of the nation's highest obesity rate, at more than 35% (CDC)

- 1 in 7 Kentuckians (474,500 adults or 13.7%) have diagnosed diabetes; another 158,200 are estimated to have it but don't know it (Kentucky Department for Public Health)

- 1 in 9 Kentuckians (331,335 adults or 11.8%) have diagnosed prediabetes; another 812,000 are estimated to have it but don't know it (KDPH).

- "Underlying conditions" is incredibly broad and generic and can include factors like high blood pressure, high cholesterol, autoimmune

disorders and pregnancy. Many "healthy" people have some underlying health condition.

Though it's the exception, some young and seemingly healthy people die from COVID. However, because chronic conditions are more prevalent in Kentucky, there is more potential for severe illness here from infection with the COVID virus.

Each of these deaths is tragic - families have lost mothers, fathers, grandmothers, grandfathers. These are someone's loved ones. We hope the community continues to slow the spread of COVID-19 by washing your hands often, avoiding close contact with others and wearing a cloth face covering in public.

## Writing project for local 'Women over 60' to begin in September

"Coming of Age," a free year-long writing project for local women over 60, begins in September. The project aims to help older women develop and share creative work.

Project leaders are Libby Falk Jones of Berea (retired faculty, Berea College) and Julianne Unsel of Irvine (retired faculty, Evergreen State University). They will offer writing tips and prompts at monthly meetings to be held in Madison and Estill Counties.

"We believe that older

women have much wisdom and creativity to share with the world," Jones said.

The women will choose subjects to explore and will be able to discuss their writings with each other. The project will end with a book publication of selected writings.

"We look forward to the group's exploring a variety of life experiences as well as our Kentucky heritage," said Unsel.

Kentucky state Covid-19 precautions will be in

place at project meetings. Alternate arrangements will be made for those not wanting to meet in person.

Funded through the Kentucky Foundation for Women's Arts as Activism grants program, the program is free for participants.

For more information and to apply to join the project, contact Libby Jones at jonesl@berea.edu or Jules Unsel at unselj@evergreen.edu. Application deadline is Sept. 10.

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