

# Is it about the GAME or the Food?



Story and photos by Tracy Beard

It all began on January 15, 1967, at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum in California. The Green Bay Packers (NFL) beat the Kansas City Chiefs (AFL) 35–10 in the first AFL-NFL World Championship Game, later referred to as “Super Bowl 1.” According to findings in Wikipedia, the Super Bowl has frequently been the most-watched American television broadcast of the year, and it is the second-largest day for U.S. food consumption, after Thanksgiving Day. So what were the preferred snacks eaten during the early years of the Super Bowl, and what will you make for the 54th Super Bowl on February 2, 2020?

Many appetizers have passed the test of time. One of the most popular is chips and Lipton Onion Soup dip. Some people refer to this as “California dip” because that is where the dip originated. Mix one package of Lipton Onion Soup with 16 ounces of sour cream. Chill it for at least an hour to make sure that the dried minced onions become soft. The people at Lipton did not create the recipe, but they promoted it by putting it on their packaging in 1958.

Another all-time favorite is meatballs. One of the earliest recipes calls for frozen meatballs cooked in a mix of grape jelly and chili sauce. Other

long-time favorites are cheese balls and cream cheese topped with salad shrimp and cocktail sauce. Two of the most popular appetizers are chicken wings and pizza. According to [mercyforanimals.org](http://mercyforanimals.org), approximately seven million birds give up the ghost each year for wing fans watching the Super Bowl. Potato chips take a close second in the running for favorite snacks with 11.2 million pounds consumed. An estimated 2.5 million pounds of nuts and 4 million pounds of pretzels are also in the Top Ten munchies list.

Planning the menu for Super Bowl diners has become more complicated in the last few years. In the past, most people tried and ate everything. Hosts often put out a tray of veggies to placate dieters, but it was never much more complicated than that. Today’s diners are much more difficult, with large numbers of people living on a multitude of specialized diets: keto, paleo and vegetarian eating. If you are planning the menu, it is not necessary to create numerous dishes for each diet; however, you should make at least one dish that each person can eat. Below you will find some delicious updated favorites that should make even your most selective guests happy.

### Bourbon – Bacon Meatballs

- 2 lbs. frozen meatballs, fully cooked
- ½ lb. bacon, chopped and cooked (save 2 Tbl. bacon grease)
- 1-½ cups BBQ sauce (your favorite)
- 5 Tbl. Brown Sugar bourbon
- ¼ teaspoon red chili flakes or more if you like it spicy
- 2 tablespoons bacon grease

Mix cooked bacon, BBQ sauce, bourbon, bacon grease and chili flakes in a crock pot. Add meatballs and cook until everything is hot. Stir to make sure bacon bits coat the meatballs and serve with toothpicks.

### Curry-Lime Wings

- 4 lbs. whole chicken wings
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 4 Tbl. butter
- 2 tsp. Thai red curry paste
- Zest and juice of 1 lime
- 1 Tbl. honey
- 1 tsp. soy sauce

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Rinse and clean wings under cold water and pat dry with paper towels. Put wings in a big bowl. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Toss to coat. Place the wings on baking sheets and roast for 25 to 30 minutes until the skin is brown and crispy. Flip wings after 15 minutes.

While the wings cook, place the butter, curry paste, lime juice and zest, honey and soy sauce in a small saucepan. Whisk until melted and combined. Place sauce in a large clean bowl, add cooked wings and toss. Serve with ranch or blue cheese dressing for dipping.

### Buffalo Cauliflower Bites

- 1 cup white flour
- 1-¼ cups water
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 head cauliflower, cut into florets
- ½ cup Frank’s Red Hot Original Cayenne Pepper Sauce
- 3 Tbl. butter, melted

Heat oven to 450 degrees.

Mix flour, water, salt and garlic powder in a bowl until smooth. Add the florets and stir gently until they are evenly coated with batter. Use a slotted spoon to pick up florets and let excess batter drain. Place florets on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake for 20 minutes or until golden.

Mix Frank’s pepper sauce with melted butter and drizzle one-third of sauce over the florets. Bake an additional 10-15 minutes until they are crispy. Serve with extra sauce and blue cheese dressing.

### Baked Potato Bar

- 15 small to medium red potatoes or 30 fingerling potatoes, cleaned
  - 1 cup cheddar cheese, grated
  - 1 cup crème Fraiche or sour cream
  - 1 stick butter
  - 1 cup salsa
  - 1 cup chili
  - 1 cup bacon bits
  - ½ cup chives
  - 2-3 ounces of good caviar
- Heat oven to 400 degrees.

Scrub and wash potatoes. Rub each potato with olive oil, sprinkle with salt, pierce each one with a knife and bake



Bourbon-Bacon Meatballs



Curry-Lime Wings



Buffalo Cauliflower Bites



Fingerlings with Caviar

until tender, anywhere from 45 minutes to an hour. If you used red potatoes, cut them into large disks. If you used fingerling potatoes, leave them whole. Keep potatoes warm and serve with assorted toppings.

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regular “Out & About” contributor to Columbia River Reader.