

SOUPED UP S'MORES

The classic s'more is just graham crackers, bar chocolate and a toasted marshmallow. Here are some recipes so you can Twist the ingredients and make Souped up S'Mores.

You can construct s'mores at your campfire, but it's just as easy to do (carefully!) in your fireplace, backyard barbeque, or even over a candle at home. Prepare your ingredients first, so that they're ready when your marshmallow is hot. Put the marshmallow on a long stick or roasting fork, hold over the fire until it's hot and as brown as you like it.

These are the essential elements to the Perfect S'more:

The Glue – chocolate

The Goo – marshmallows

The Crunch – cookie/graham cracker

Variations for the Glue:

Regular marshmallows, gourmet flavored ones (ours came from Pete's Gourmet. The chocolate ones – divine! Glitter City Sweets have some amazing ones, too.)

The Goo – Dark chocolate, peanut butter cups, white chocolate, Ghirardelli caramel-filled chocolates, mint chocolate, Nutella, I could go on forever. One key, get the thinner bars – not the really thick ones, or your chocolate won't melt.

The Crunch – I love the Cinnamon Graham crackers from Trader Joe's, chocolate cookies, gingersnaps, sugar cookies, peanut butter cookies.

We've added one more category – the Extras! I encourage fruit – sliced strawberries or bananas (makes us think we're being a bit healthy, right?!). Another favorite is nuts. Sliced almonds are awesome, also crushed peanuts and pistachios. Then there are the wildcard items: Colored sprinkles, cinnamon sugar, fresh mint leaves, granola, crushed candy bars, go crazy!

When, it's assembly time, make sure the glue and the goo 'meet,' so the hot marshmallow can work its magic melting the chocolate. Then stack on the other layers.

Some of my favorite combinations:

- Cinnamon grahams with chocolate gourmet marshmallow, white chocolate with mandarin oranges.
- Sugar cookies with peanut butter cup, vanilla marshmallow and bananas.
- Gingersnap cookie, sliced strawberries, dark chocolate, a dash of cinnamon sugar.

BONUS TIPS: GROWN UP S'MORES WITH HAPPY MARSHMALLOWS

For grown-up variety on s'mores, the flavor-filled twist goes like this. Take your marshmallows, put them in a shallow airtight container, and cover them with liqueur – raspberry is a favorite, or you could use vanilla vodka, Kahlua, or Cointreau. Let them sit for at least 30 minutes, but not more than 3 hours (they'll melt!). Take them out of the container with your roasting fork, let the liqueur drip off a bit, and roast away. These "happy" marshmallows only need to be roasted for a few seconds, just enough to get them hot and sticky. And be careful, they can flame up if you get too close to the fire!