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BOOST PROFIT MARGINS WITH NATIONAL CHIP WEEK 2009

Chips - an iconic British dish! One third of entire GB crop is made into chips, consumers love to tuck into a tasty portion and they represent the largest potato category in the foodservice sector.

That's why National Chip Week is so important; it presents the perfect opportunity for pubs and restaurants to drive sales of chips and maximise the margins for profit on what is already a low cost, kitchen staple.

Taking place from 9 to 15 February, there are many simple ways that caterers can make the most of National Chip Week, whether its holding a celebratory 'Chip Night' or introducing a special chip menu for the duration of the Week. Even just adding a simple commemorative dish to blackboards can encourage customers to enjoy some tasty chips – boosting sales and profits.

One chip fan and advocate of National Chip Week is chef, Paul Bloxham, who says: "There are so many ways we can all enjoy chips, from home-made traditional chips to oven chips spiced with a kick. Chips are always a favourite choice at my restaurant. Fluffy on the inside, crisp and golden on the outside and with all the goodness of potatoes – it's not surprising that they are so popular on menus."

Kathryn Race, Potato Council marketing director adds: "No menu should be without chips, in fact they account for 85% of the volume share of potatoes in foodservice. And it's not hard to see why; popular with diners of all ages, a perfect accompaniment to any dish – or as a snack on their own – plus they're easy to prepare and cost effective too.

“National Chip Week is a superb platform to benefit from everything that is great about the iconic chip. A nationwide PR Campaign is set to generate over £2.5 million worth of press coverage and customers will be looking to celebrate by tucking into a portion – so it’s worth making a feature of chips on your menu!”

Why not use one of Paul Bloxham’s special chip recipes designed to help encourage caterers and their customers to celebrate National Chip Week? Alternatively, visit www.potatoesforcaterers.co.uk or www.lovechips.co.uk for more inspiration and advice.

PAUL BLOXHAM’S CHIP RECIPES

TV chef, Paul Bloxham, chef patron at the award-winning Tilbury pub in Hertfordshire, is passionate about chips and an advocate of National Chip Week 2009.

Simple Fish and Chips (serves 10)

Ingredients:

2.5Kg floury potatoes such as Maris Piper, King Edward and Desiree
100mls vegetable oil
10 x 200g skin on white fish i.e. cod, plaice or haddock fillets
5 medium eggs, beaten
500gms fresh white breadcrumbs

Method:

1. Pre heat the oven to 200°C/gas mark 6.
2. Peel and cut the potatoes into 1cm slices and then into chips. Place in a large bowl or plastic bag and add the oil, toss well to coat. Transfer to a large non-stick baking tray and bake for 30-35 minutes.
3. Dip the fish in the egg and coat in breadcrumbs; add to the baking tray with the chips for the last 20-25 minutes. Season with vinegar and a sprinkling of salt and twist of black pepper.

TIP: “Try serving your chips with Pollock, bream, snapper or sole to make a tasty and eco alternative.”

Chips with a Kick (serves 10)

Ingredients:

2.5Kg floury potatoes such as Maris Piper, King Edward and Desiree
100mls vegetable oil
4 tbsp Cajun Seasoning

Method:

1. Pre heat the oven to 200°C/gas mark 6.
2. Cut the potatoes with the skins on into 1cm slices and then into chips. Place in a large bowl or plastic bag and add the oil, toss to coat. Sprinkle on the seasoning and toss to evenly coat.
3. Transfer to a non-stick baking tray and bake for 30-35 minutes or until golden and crispy.

TIP: It's so easy to put together your own seasoning from the store cupboard – take 1 tsp each of celery salt, chilli powder, paprika, cumin, salt and pepper and wow chips with a kick.

Stack 'Em Up (serves 10)

Ingredients:

3.5kg floury potatoes such as Maris Piper, King Edward and Desiree
Vegetable Oil for deep frying

Method:

1. Peel and cut the potatoes into twelve chunky chips (approx 7cm x 2.5cm). Soak in cold water for 5-10 minutes.
2. Drain and pat dry with kitchen paper. Heat the oil in a large saucepan or deep fat fryer to 190°C. Fry the chips in 2 batches for 7-8 minutes until just coloured, drain on kitchen paper, cool slightly.
3. Refry gently for 1-2 minutes until golden. Stack in three layers.

-ENDS-

Notes to editors

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