

# Secret Ingredients" Make Meals Special



Take a look at the "secret ingredients" suggested by some *Taste of Home* readers:

**Turn "ho-hum" foods into dishes that'll have family members asking for more.**

*Sensational Salads.* Reports Cindy F. of Seward, Nebraska, "I add a bit of chicken bouillon granules and horseradish to my dressing for macaroni salad. This is one flavorful dish." To give tuna macaroni salad zip, Pam H. of Cooperstown, New York, pours on a splash of Italian dressing.

"Tuna salad becomes lively with a couple tablespoons of salsa," comments Liana R. of Oceanside, California. "The salsa complements the flavor of the tuna."

To perk up her coleslaw, Nellie S. of Royal City, Washington, includes chopped celery, green pepper, apple, banana, pineapple, and black walnuts.

Best Burgers and Meat Loaf. "We like the flavor of bacon in burgers and meat loaf," explains Charlene F. of Coaldale, Alberta. "To save time, I mix packaged bacon bits into the meat before grilling or baking."

Heavenly Hash. "When making hash from leftover roast and potatoes, I sprinkle on a teaspoon or two of vinegar 5 minutes before the end of cooking," remarks June W. of Leesburg, Florida. "It sparks the flavor."

Super Sandwiches. Cold meat sandwiches get crunch at the South Bend, Indiana, home of Eugenia C. with thinly sliced radishes. "It's a fun alternative to onion slices," she says.

Better Baked Beans. "To any canned baked beans, stir in about 1/4 cup barbecue sauce, 1/4 teaspoon each garlic powder and pepper, and 1/2 teaspoon dried basil," suggests Michelle A. of Knoxville, Ohio. "My husband won't eat them any other way."

From New Berlin, Pennsylvania, Karen K. relates, "My niece recommended adding a dash of cinnamon and ginger

to my favorite baked beans. They get a new zing, and everyone wonders what my secret ingredient is."

*Very Fine Vegetables.* "I cook peas in the juice from a can of pineapple along with margarine and onion powder," reveals Bonnie B. of Sylva, North Carolina. "Before serving, I stir in the pineapple chunks."

Ruth C. of Glendale Heights, Illinois, says, "I shake steamed brussels sprouts in a mixture of 3/4 cup flour, 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese, and pepper to taste. Then I dunk them in beaten egg, then back into the flour mixture. After refrigerating them for about an hour, I fry them in oil until golden. My family doesn't normally care for brussels sprouts, but they enjoy them prepared this way."

Theresa D. writes from Hudson, New Hampshire, "When boiling carrots, I also add a chopped apple or pear and a bit of brown sugar. Kids love these carrots."

"To give corn a boost, I stir in butter, garlic salt, a dash of cayenne pepper, and chopped fresh parsley," shares Dayle B. of Portland, Oregon.

*Terrific Treats.* Julie Ann M. of Germantown, Maryland, found that her young son gobbles up apple slices topped

with a spread made from two parts peanut butter to one part honey.

"When I make a chocolate pie using a pudding mix, I give it extra richness by mixing in a handful of chocolate chips," offers Garnetta P., Colonial Heights, Virginia.

From Pat D. of Fort Fairfield, Maine: "Several tablespoons of strawberry freezer jam make my zucchini bread moist and delicious."