Holy trinity of deliciousness

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Uncategorised

Summer is all about groups of friends socialising, watching sport, barbecuing a feast of flavour or just grabbing a beer in a pub garden. I’m a big fan of serious pub snacks, pork crackling and apple sauce, cockles picked from the rocks here in Jersey and doused in vinegar, salty home-made, hand-cooked crisps and pickled onions that bite back! But for today’s recipe, I’m jumping across the pond for a great snacking idea with a holy trinity of my favourite ingredients, cheese, beer, and bacon. This triple whammy flavour bomb has it all, salty, bitter, and umami in a smooth creamy textured dip. This gooey, moreish recipe is great with crisp vegetables like red pepper strips, celery, radishes, and spring onions plus you can add bread sticks, crackers, or pretzels. I’m a big fan of bacon, as a busy head chef I’m pretty sure I survived more than one working Christmas on mugs of strong tea and bacon butties, but it adds a great flavour to so many dishes like the classic coq au vin and quiche Lorraine to loaded potato skins and chowder. In this dish, I use the rendered bacon fat from cooking to add even more flavour. Mature cheddar is packed with flavour and parmesan adds another umami-enhanced level to the overall taste profile. As the inspiration for this recipe is American, I have chosen an American-style pale ale where the hoppy profile is balanced with pleasing levels of bitterness and a sweet malty finish. Southwark breweries' award-winning Havard American Pale Ale has plenty of citrus hops to balance the rich cream cheese and a slightly honeyed, toasty finish. I suggest buying more than one to drink with your dip. Cheese, beer and bacon dip 250ml Southwark Brewing Havard American Pale Ale 165g tub of full-fat cream cheese 100g grated strong mature cheddar cheese 50g grated parmesan 60g smoked bacon 50ml vegetable oil 20g plain flour 2 cloves of garlic, peeled and crushed 1 teaspoon of Dijon mustard 1 teaspoon smoked paprika Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper Heat the oil in a heavy-bottomed frying pan and cook the bacon until crisp, remove from the pan and allow to cool. Add the flour and garlic into the pan and gently cook for a couple of minutes stirring constantly to prevent burning. Stir in the beer, mustard, and half of the smoked paprika. The mustard is a top chef tip that really enhances any cheese dish such as a sauce or souffle. Cook out over a low heat for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally to prevent the sauce from catching. This cooking time stops the finished dip from having a powdery taste. Add the cheddar and parmesan and stir in until they are both melted and remove from the heat. Allow to cool slightly before beating in the cream cheese. Crumble the cooked bacon or chop with a sharp cook’s knife and add to the finished dip. Finally, check the seasoning. It is unlikely that the dip will need salt because of the bacon, parmesan, and cheddar but will benefit from a good grind of black pepper. If you want to make the dip spicy add a finely diced red chilli when you add the beer. Garnish with the remaining paprika and serve.