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Pretzel Bites with Cheddar-Mustard Dip

Serves 8 - 10

If you go to the Munich Oktoberfest, you're bound to enjoy a pretzel or two! Distinguished from crispy, thin versions, these pretzels are more bread than cracker. The classic bread pretzel typically appears as a knot, but our version features small, pillowy bites, suitable for a one-to-two bite experience. We've paired these pretzel bites with a simple four-ingredient dip that complements these salty bites perfectly!

Pretzel Bites

3 cups bread flour, plus more for dusting
1 tablespoon Kosher salt
1 tablespoon sugar
4 tablespoons butter, softened
1 pkg, active dry yeast
1 cup warm water
Oil for coating the bowl
2.5 quarts water (10 cups)
8 tablespoons baking soda.
1 egg, beaten

Cheddar-Mustard Dip

8 oz. sharp cheddar cheese, coarsely grated
1/2 cup beer (or water)
1 tablespoon stoneground mustard
Pinch of cayenne

Pretzel Bite Directions:

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer outfitted with a paddle, stir together the flour, and salt.
2. In a small bowl, place the butter, cut into small chunks, and sugar. Pour in hot water (about 110°F), sprinkle the yeast on top and allow to set until the yeast blooms. Stir gently until the butter has softened or fully melted.
3. Pour the yeast mixture into the flour mixture with the stand mixer running on its lowest setting. Beat until well-combined. Shift to dough hook and knead the dough for about 3-4 minutes on low speed.
4. Transfer the dough to an oiled bowl. Cover and allow to rise until doubled about 1- to-1.5 hours. Punch down and knead into a ball. Return to the oiled bowl, cover with plastic wrap and place in the refrigerator for 1 hour, or up to 24 hours.
5. Preheat the oven to 425°F.

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6. Turn the dough onto a lightly dusted surface and form a ball. Cut the dough ball into four parts with a dough cutter. Roll each quarter-piece into a long rope about 1-inch in diameter. Cut each rope into 1-to-1.5-inch pieces, about 8-10 pieces from each rope. (If desired, roll each piece into a ball if you prefer a more finished look.)

7. Using a large pot, measure 2.5 quarts of water and 8 tablespoons baking soda. Bring to a rolling boil. Boil the dough pieces in batches without overcrowding the pan by plopping 10-12 dough pieces into the boiling water. As they rise to the surface of the water (which they will do quickly – about 30 seconds), remove them with a slotted spoon and spread on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Repeat the process until all batches are complete. Brush the top of each pretzel piece with the egg wash. Immediately sprinkle with coarse salt while still wet.

8. Immediately bake in the hot, pre-heated oven for 10 minutes, watching closely. The pretzel bites will turn nicely brown. Cool on a cooling rack. Enjoy while still warm, or store in an airtight container once cooled for up to 24 hours.

Cheddar-Mustard Dip Directions:

9. In a small saucepan, heat the beer (or water). Add the stoneground mustard and cayenne, and stir to combine. Add the grated cheese; stir gently to melt the cheese while continuing to heat over low heat. Transfer to a heatproof bowl and serve while warm.