

# the Culinary FORUM

AMERICA250

## “Celebrating America” Recipe Challenge



GUEST  
SERVICES

Legendary Hospitality Since 1917

# AMERICA



## “Celebrating America” Recipe Challenge

This contest, we’re shifting the focus to America’s state fair foods—bold flavors, nostalgic favorites, and creative twists that celebrate regional pride and culinary innovation. From indulgent classics to modern interpretations, this theme is all about fun, flavor, and guest excitement.

We challenge GSI chefs to bring their best ideas forward and showcase what makes their state fair-inspired creations stand out. Push the boundaries, highlight local influences, and turn crowd favorites into crave-worthy menu features that drive engagement and sales.



# “Celebrating America” Recipe Challenge

In honor of America250, we’re challenging all GSI chefs and managers to think differently, cook boldly, and let creativity take the lead—this time inspired by America’s iconic state fair foods. Turn America250 into a true sales moment. State fair foods aren’t just nostalgic favorites—they’re a proven way to generate excitement, spark conversation, and create crave-worthy menu moments. Think indulgent, playful, and boldly American. Reimagine classic fair flavors with your own culinary point of view to build eye-catching plates and irresistible LTOs that photograph beautifully, drive trial, and boost check averages. Celebrate America250 by tapping into the fun, flavor, and imagination that define state fairs across the country.

## The Challenge

Create a state fair–inspired recipe that celebrates classic American flavors with your own creative twist. Your dish can be:

- An entrée, appetizer, dessert, or beverage
- A seasonal feature or limited-time offer
- A bold indulgent item or a simple, elevated take on a familiar favorite

The goal is to combine creativity, flavor, and visual appeal, while keeping your recipe operationally realistic and guest-friendly.

Selected submissions will be featured in the Guest Services America250 Cookbook, highlighting the talent, innovation, and culinary pride of the GSI team.

## Important Dates

- Recipe Submission Deadline: May 31
- Be sure to post your recipe, photos (if available), and a brief description on the [Culinary Forum News Feed](#).

## Judging & Prizes

- Recipes will be reviewed by GSI’s Leadership Team and Culinary Forum Lead Chefs.
- One winning recipe will be selected based on:
  - Creativity and innovative use of ingredients
  - Flavor appeal and guest experience
  - Practical execution in a state fair environment
- The winner will receive a \$250 cash prize and have their recipe featured prominently across GSI social media

[Upload your recipe here](#), include picture, ingredients, methodology and cost per portion with sale price.

## Need Inspiration?

To help spark ideas, a list of patriotic and color-inspired recipe concepts from leading culinary websites below. Use them as a starting point—but make the dish your own

## State Fair Favorites

### Deep-Fried Cheese Curds

- Regional seasoning or sauce flight

### Corn Dog 2.0

- House made batter, gourmet sausage

### Fried Pork Tenderloin Sandwich

- Midwest classic

### Loaded Funnel Cake Fries

- Savory toppings: bacon jam, queso, scallions

### Deep-Fried Pickles

Chips, spears, or pickle fries

### Giant Soft Pretzel

- Beer cheese or honey mustard

### Turkey Leg

- BBQ, Cajun, or maple-glazed

### Walking Taco Bar

- Regional chili, pulled pork, or smoked jackfruit

### Bratwurst or Sausage on a Stick

- Local or regional flavors

### Deep-Fried Mac & Cheese Bites

### Grilled Corn on the Cob

- Elote-style or compound butter

### Pulled Pork Sundae

- Mashed potatoes, gravy on top

### Savory Hand Pies

- BBQ chicken, cheeseburger

### Cornbread Waffles

- Sweet or savory toppings

### Crispy Chicken & Waffle Cones

- waffle cone filled with fried chicken bites + maple drizzle.

### Deep-Fried Lasagna Bites

- Crunchy outside, cheesy inside.

Recipes can be inspired by red, white, and blue ingredients.

### Your dish can be:

- An entrée, appetizer, dessert, or beverage
- A seasonal feature or LTO
- A bold flavor statement or a simple, elegant presentation
- Old family recipes passed on through the generations
- Looking for something new and exciting
- Foods Made Famous at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair
  - Cracker Jacks
  - Juicy Fruit Gum
  - Brownies
  - Vienna Beef Dog
- Foods Made Famous at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair
  - Ice Cream Cones
  - Cotton Candy
  - Hot Dog Buns
  - Dr. Pepper
  - Peanut Butter
- Portability: Foods that can be eaten while walking, such as those on a stick, became standard.
- Innovation: Fairs encourage unique, "insane" combinations,