



*Sugar cookies sandwich:
toasted marshmallow
cream, topped with
chocolate ganache,
sea salt and nuts.*

S'more than meets the eye

Simple or fancy? You decide!

BY MARLENE SMITH

THE S'MORE (a contraction of "some more") reigns supreme as a signature summertime treat. The s'more taught some of us how to cook, using humble ingredients that have no problem standing on their own (graham crackers, chocolate bars and roasted marshmallows). A camping favorite, s'mores can melt in your mouth, whether you're lying beneath a starry canopy or sitting at your kitchen table.

S'more lore

Nobody seems to know the true origins of the s'more. Maybe it was created by Nicholas Smore in Russia during the mid-1860s; he passed on the recipe to family and friends, and his brother Francis eventually published a cookbook that included the recipe. Some say the Girl Scouts of America popularized this delicacy when a recipe for "Some More" was published in

a 1927 version of *Tramping and Trailing with the Girl Scouts*, and readers learned to toast marshmallows over campfire coals. The s'more made another guest appearance in a 1949 publication called *Intramural and Recreational Sports for Men and Women*, where it was touted as an exercise snack!

No campfire? No problem!

S'more purists might insist on a nice bed of coals, but the kitchen can suffice. Set your oven to 425 F. Line a cookie sheet with foil or a silicone baking mat. Arrange marshmallows on the pan and bake them until golden brown, about 2 or 3 minutes. When you take them out of the oven, the marshmallows will be puffed up with air. As they cool, they deflate, leaving a crispy marshmallow with a gooey center. You can also roast marshmallows in a toaster oven by themselves on a foil-lined tray for no more than 1 minute.

You can use a microwave oven to toast marshmallows (set the microwave on high for 10-15 seconds), but you won't get the same golden outside that comes with toasting marshmallows in a conventional oven.

S'mores your way

For all you do-it-yourself home chefs, adding a single component to the traditional s'more recipe can result in a whole new artistic interpretation. Try sliced peaches or strawberries on top of the standard chocolate bar and marshmallow. Something as simple as a small slice of bacon can give your s'mores a savory twist.

Are you feeling more adventurous? Replace the chocolate bar with chocolate hazelnut spread; it's less messy than a chocolate bar. Or swap in your favorite chocolate candy for the bar. Sundae fudge syrup is a treat, as are peppermint patties.

Instead of marshmallows, consider using white cake frosting or cookie dough. If you use cookie dough (choose an eggless batter for food safety), bring it to room temperature before spreading it on a graham cracker. Sugar and chocolate chip cookie dough are ideal flavors.

If you want to try a non-sweet alternative to marshmallows, Brie cheese pairs nicely with chocolate and jam; simply place the Brie atop a graham cracker and heat under the broiler for 30 seconds. Once the

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cheese is sufficiently melted, remove the cracker and sandwich it with the chocolate, jam (optional) and another graham cracker.

Crescent rolls are a unique twist as a graham cracker replacement. Roll up a crescent roll with a marshmallow and chocolate chips, and bake as instructed. Crackers and pretzels provide a subtle salt finish in place of graham crackers, but be mindful of marshmallow and chocolate oozing through the open holes. Cover the completed pretzel s'more with a coat of melted chocolate and let it cool to keep that campfire goodness safely inside.

Chocolate sandwich cookies also make a great replacement for the graham crackers. Simply sandwich your toasted marshmallow in between two cookies. Smash together. Eat. Repeat as necessary.

See the list to the right for even more ideas. Whether you're adding, substituting or creating a whole new concoction, your creations are guaranteed to leave you wanting, well, s'more. **C**

Marlene Smith is a San Francisco Bay-area freelance writer.

S'more: the quick-change artist

ARE THERE ANY limits to what a s'more can be? None whatsoever. Is there any wiggle room to give the traditional s'more ingredients a wardrobe change? You bet there is! The following lists provide a host of alternatives to consider.—MS



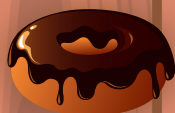
Chocolate bar alternatives

- Chocolate cake frosting.
- Warm hot fudge sundae topping or chocolate syrup.
- Jelly or jam.**
- Chocolate hazelnut spread.
- Peanut butter or peanut butter cups.**
- Twix, KitKat or Milky Way bars.
- White chocolate.
- Peppermint patties.



Marshmallow job sharing

- Brie.*
- Flavored marshmallows (e.g., chocolate, caramel and vanilla, strawberry, gingerbread, etc.)
- Cream cheese.*
- Cookie dough.*
- Vanilla custard.*
- White or vanilla cake frosting.
- Ice cream.**



Graham cracker's distant cousins

- Buttermilk biscuit.
- Chocolate chip, sugar or fudge-striped cookies.
- Chocolate-flavored graham crackers.
- Crescent rolls.*
- Doughnuts.
- Vanilla wafers.
- Chocolate sandwich cookies.
- Pizelle cookies.
- Pretzels.
- Ritz crackers
- Shortbread cake or cookies.*
- Graham cookies.
- Thin chocolate mint cookies.
- Tortillas.
- Woven wheat crackers.
- Fresh or toasted waffles.*



Accessories

- Bacon.
- Fruit: peaches, strawberries, bananas, pineapple.
- Jelly or jam.



* Ingredients better suited for kitchen-made s'mores.

** Ingredients that can be added on top of the original recipe or substituted for original ingredients.