

5 Steps & 5 Tips To Make The Best Dessert Charcuterie Board

Rising in popularity are the revived, 15th century-French, meat-and-cheese boards. Charcuterie boards have spiraled into a massive trend on social media. Search for “charcuterie” on Instagram and find nearly one million results dedicated to snack sculptures of mindfully placed sliced cured meat, contrasting cheeses, artfully cut fruits and vegetables, and a scattering of nuts and olives. Everything intricately displayed on wooden boards. On Facebook there are hundreds of public and private groups dedicated to the art form. In this post, we follow this trend from its origins to its most modern form, providing a step-by-step guide and tips to make the perfect dessert-charcuterie board.

Brief History:



The word “charcuterie” (pronounced shahr-ku-tuh-ree) derives from the French words “chair” and “cuit”, translating to “cooked flesh”. Charcuterie first rose to prominence in the 1400s in France “to represent storefronts specializing in the preparation of pig and offal, at a time when shop owners weren’t allowed to sell uncooked pork.

“The owners of these shops, known as charcutiers, grew popular for their thoughtful meat preparation that helped establish stylized plates of “cooked flesh” as a part of French gastronomic culture. Over time, breads, cheeses, fruits, and vegetables joined the boards as accoutrements to the succulent meats, forming the charcuterie board as we know it today.”

Dessert Charcuterie Trend:

While “charcuterie” can equate to European luxury and sophistication, meat-and-cheese plates are no stranger to American social scenes, fueling party-goers and fending off hunger as restaurant appetizers. Today, social media has converted traditional boards into adaptable meal du-jours.



@modern_brie

It's no longer about just cured meats and cheeses: Bagel or pancake-topped breakfast charcuterie boards, colorful candy charcuterie boards, and snack-attack charcuterie boards, will be the casual family artisanal DIY-meal.

Restaurants are taking advantage of the concept as an alternative to buffet displays, catering options, appetizers, and to-go menus. Small bite-sized pieces allow for portion control and share-ability, a concept that consumers are starting to get more comfortable with. Therefore, we're providing some helpful tips on how to build a tasteful and aesthetically pleasing dessert-charcuterie board.

Steps:

The fascination with charcuterie boards has less to do with the specifics of what's on the plate, and more with the visual appeal of the whole. A satisfying DIY experience, you can tailor to fit any theme, and there is always something for everyone. Learn a few easy techniques on how to put together a well-crafted dessert charcuterie board that's perfect for sharing with family and friends!



First, let's start with the basics. Here's what you'll be including in your dessert-charcuterie board:

- 1. The platter** - a.k.a. the foundation of your board
- 2. Selection of desserts** - your main attraction
- 3. Spreads & Sauces** - to make each bite unique
- 4. Fruits & Nuts** - something for everyone

5. Garnishes - for visual appeal and to cleanse your palate

Tips



Chili Chocolate Sauce

Contrasting Flavors

To build a delectable smorgasbord, you'll want to choose contrasting flavors. This allows for every bite to be individualized and unique. For instance, your board should include sweet, without omitting salty, savory or even umami. Balance the board with citrus, chocolate, cheese, nuts, toffee, and fruity flavors, so there's something for all taste buds. Try Chili Chocolate Sauce, salted Toffee Blondie bites, spiced pistachios, blueberry compote, cheesecake bites with grilled pear and caramel sauce, for example. Add a side of candied ginger to cleanse the palate.



Textured

Additionally, it's a good idea to provide a variety of textures on your board, yielding different sensational experiences. Therefore, to please all the senses, add something crunchy, chewy, smooth, creamy, and crispy. Our dessert-charcuterie board includes chewy options, like a fudgy brownie; something with a crunch, like a toffee blondie; and something smooth, like a velvety cheesecake.

Charcuterie boards are most appealing when they're perceived as abundant with texture and color. So we suggest filling gaps with fruit and nuts, and adding height and dimension where you can. Stack items in a big pile, but space out similar flavor profiles and colorful items, as to not crowd the dish, generating balance and contrast.

Balance: Health & Indulgence

Sporting all those rich dessert flavors, you're going to need fresh healthful items to balance out your board. For example, accent your display with fresh-cut herbs like sage or rosemary; a variety of crunchy nuts, like pistachios and walnuts; and sliced fruit like apples, or a bowl of brightly colored berries. The idea is to choose items that can cut through rich flavors, or cleanse the palate in between bites.

Flares of Color & An Empty Pantry:



White Chocolate Mouse & Cranberry-Pomegranate Sauce

We eat with our eyes first. That is to say that you'll want to incorporate an array of colors like red, purple, yellow and green, to contrast the tones of brown in your dessert selection. Have fun and keep your display exciting by using a variety of pigments. In other words, paint with your food!

However, the hidden gem to charcuterie boards, is that they're also a great way for restaurants to utilize their unused LTO-fixings. Take advantage of left-over ingredients in your pantry. Maybe a specialty sauce used on the drink list, remaining seasonal fruit, or other residual elements in your kitchen can help your board reach the next level. You can be creative, by scattering remnant scraps to create shape and structure within your board.

Find Your Zen

Lastly, don't forget to bask in the meditative benefits of putting together a carefully crafted charcuterie board. This artistic practice can be an important form of self-care, but with edible results!

In conclusion, dessert-charcuterie is here for the long haul. "We expect charcuterie demand will keep growing at a steady pace in 2021, as it remains on trend for high quality, flavorful, convenient meal solutions suitable for snacking, sandwiches, and easy at-home entertaining," Bigi said. "The range of charcuterie continues to grow from both domestic and imported suppliers, with plenty of snacking and multi-component items entering the market." Something so fun and exciting in the world of food, that's ideal for snacking, romantic

date nights, and any occasion in between, makes charcuterie the ideal food trend with staying power.

Resources:

https://www.mashed.com/263305/the-real-reason-charcuterie-boards-are-so-popular/?utm_campaign=clip

<https://www.businessinsider.com/charcuterie-millennial-social-media-phenomenon-2020-1>