

## MD POPPERS

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Ahh... Another popper variant. This was one of the other inspirations that came to me after I talked to Scotty for a while about the River Country Poppers. The other bit of it is that it gave me the chance to use my canned crab meat which I have been meaning to do for a while. Was it good? YES IT WAS!!!

A quick note about the canned crab meat... It was not quite what I expected. I was thinking that I would get something closer to lump meat, but it was more like a crab puree or pate. I guess it was all the leftover stuff. Still not too shabby! Next time I go to the store, I am going to have to do a price comparison between this stuff and the lump crab meat

## INGREDIENTS

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<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Item</u>
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3	6 oz. cans	Canned Crab Meat
1 1/2	Lbs	Jalapeno Peppers
1 - 2	16 oz. Pack	Regular Cut Bacon

The canned crab meat replaces the lumped crab meat in the Andrew Zimmern crab cake recipe, but feel free to use the good stuff, although large lumps may be more difficult to get into the jalapenos

The larger the jalapeno peppers, the better. It is much easier to put stuff in them!

I like Kunzler bacon, with the Hormel Black Label being a close second

## SPECIAL TOOLS

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- Food Saver (or similar vacuum sealer) [i]
- Vacuum seal bags or bag rolls [i]
- Traeger Pellet Grill with Mesquite Pellets[ii]
- Copper Crispers [iii]

## PREPARATION

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- 1) Pull the Traeger out on your deck, fill with your pellets of choice, and set to smoke
- 2) Once you see smoke, close the lid and set to max temperature
- 3) Let it heat for at least 30 minutes, then set it to shutdown cycle

- 4) Rinse the jalapenos and pat dry
- 5) Remove the stems, but be careful not to remove the stem root; if we do this, the filling will leak out!
- 6) Slice the jalapenos in half length-wise
- 7) Scope out the ribs and seeds with the 1/8 TSP metal measuring spoon and set aside. Make sure to NOT remove the stem base so that the filling will not drain out
- 8) Put jalapenos in fridge, uncovered, until needed later
- 9) Put the ribs and seeds in a separate container and put in the fridge. These will not be used for this recipe, but can be used for something else
- 10) Drain the 3 cans of crab meat through metal strainers into 1 quart measuring cups. Cover with saucers
- 11) Prepare crab cake mix as per Baltimore Style Crab Cakes Andrew Zimmern's "Baltimore-Style Crab Cakes" recipe from [www.foodandwine.com](http://www.foodandwine.com) (June 2012) with the following exceptions
  - a. Canned crab meat in place of the lump crab meat
  - b. Up the Tabasco up to 2 TSP
  - c. You can skip the chill for 1 hour in the fridge step if time is running short
- 12) Set the Traeger to smoke with the lid open
- 13) Once you see smoke, close the lid and set to 250 deg. F
- 14) For each pepper half
  - a. Fill with the crab cake mix so that it is mounded a little bit above the top of the pepper half
  - b. Wrap in bacon such that the entire pepper is wrapped with a single layer with overlapping edges. You don't want to be able to see the filling. This may take only a 1/2 piece of bacon for small peppers, but up to 1 entire piece of bacon for large peppers. Start with an entire piece and trim as required. The scraps can either be used to fill gaps in bacon coverage or saved for another project
  - c. Place on Copper Crisper. DON'T CROWD THE PEPPERS!
- 15) If you are not going to make all the poppers, vacuum seal the left overs and put in freezer. Tupperware and wax paper is fine if you are going to make the rest in the next day or so
- 16) Place the poppers in the Traeger
- 17) Cook until the bacon is nice and crispy, about 2 1/2 hours. Start checking around the 2 hour mark to see how they are doing, but remember, "If you're looking, you ain't cooking"
  - a. Also at the 2 hour mark, put the heat back on sauce at VERY low
- 18) Pull the poppers inside and let rest for at least 5 minutes
- 19) Vacuum seal leftover bacon and stick in the fridge
- 20) ENJOY!!!

## NOTES

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- i. The vacuum sealer is GREAT for storing leftover bacon. Keeps it much fresher with no gray development like you might get in a regular old zip top bag
- ii. If you don't have a Traeger or the like, you can use the oven. You will, however, miss out on that great smoke flavor.
- iii. Are these really necessary? Well, no, but I bought a couple a while back and found them very useful for this type of stuff. A half sheet cooling rack in a half sheet pan should work just as well

## PICTURES

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No pictures yet!