

the ELK'S COOKBOOK

DRIED CRANBERRY & CANDIED PECAN CHEESEBALL

By Gabi Strickland Walker. Gabi is the creator and editor of Walker Mtn. Eats Facebook group, where she shares her delicious recipes which are tried-and-true tested on her husband, Gar, her girls, and her family, church family, and friends.



Looking for a crowd-pleasing appetizer to keep on hand during the holidays? This Dried Cranberry and Candied Pecan Cheeseball is sure to be a hit!

The secret is in the mix—a perfect blend of creamy, sweet, salty, and just a hint of onion. Using a ready-made bag of Salad Toppers (with dried cranberries and candied pecans) makes prep quick and easy, while still delivering big flavor.

Serve it with your favorite crackers, pretzels, pita chips, or bagel chips. It's also wonderful spread on a toasted bagel for a festive breakfast treat! 🍴



Recipe: **DRIED CRANBERRY & CANDIED PECAN CHEESEBALL**

From the Kitchen of Gabi Strickland Walker

INGREDIENTS

- 8 oz cream cheese - softened
- 1 C shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- 2 (3.5 oz ea) bags of “salad toppers” dried cranberries and candied pecans
- 2 green onions (white and green parts) - finely diced
- ½ t garlic powder
- ¼ t salt
- ¼ t black pepper

NOTE: For a festive party platter, you can also shape these into small, bite-size balls (about 1” in diameter), using a pretzel stick as the handle. Refrigerate several hours, preferably overnight.

DIRECTIONS

PREP 15-20 MIN • REFRIDGERATE FOR 60 MIN+

- STEP 1** Lightly chop the cranberries and pecans to bite sized pieces. Reserve about 1/3 to use for the topping, put in a baggie and set it aside.
- STEP 2** In a mixing bowl, combine the softened cream cheese, cheddar cheese, remaining dried cranberries/pecans, green onions, garlic powder, salt, and black pepper. Stir thoroughly until the mixture is creamy and all the ingredients are evenly combined. (I used a handheld electric mixer to combine.)
- STEP 3** Cover and refrigerate for at least an hour to firm up and allow the flavors to blend.
- STEP 4** Remove from the bowl and, using your hands, shape into a ball. Place the cheese ball on plastic wrap and wrap it tightly to keep its shape.
- STEP 5** Place the reserved cranberries and pecans on a plate. Remove the cheese ball(s) from the wrap and roll it in the reserved chopped pecans and cranberries. Press gently to make sure the toppings stick evenly across the surface.
- STEP 6** Serve immediately or refrigerate until ready to serve. Place on a serving dish/platter and serve with crackers or veggies.