

# SENIOR ADVOCATE

Prime News for Those in Their Prime

## Sante Fe Sunset Dip

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With June being National Dairy Month, I thought I would focus this month's column on one of America's most widely-consumed cheeses. Cream Cheese is an American invention developed in 1972 in New York state by a local dairyman. Because cream cheese is unaged, it has a shorter shelf life and should always be kept refrigerated. If mold forms, the cream cheese should be discarded as it is unsafe to eat.

For a healthful appetizer, try this zesty dip that will surprise guests at your next gathering.

### Sante Fe Sunset Dip

3 oz. sun-dried tomatoes (not packed in oil)  
2 (7 oz.) jars roasted red peppers, drained  
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped  
1 tsp. ground cumin, or to taste  
1 tsp. fresh lemon juice, or to taste  
¼ cup fresh cilantro, chopped  
¼ cup scallion, chopped  
4 oz. reduced-fat cream cheese, softened  
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste  
Dash of Tabasco or hot chili pepper sauce

Soak sun-dried tomatoes in hot water (enough to cover) for about 5 minutes. Drain well, reserving 3 tablespoons of the soaking liquid. In a food processor, purée red peppers, drained sun-dried tomatoes, garlic, cumin, lemon juice, cilantro, and scallion until smooth.

Add the cream cheese and purée again, adding enough of the reserved liquid to thin the dip to the desired consistency. Blend until smooth. Add the black pepper and hot sauce to taste.

Transfer the dip to a covered container and refrigerate up to 24 hours before serving. Bring the dip to room temperature before serving. Serve with assorted raw vegetables or whole-wheat pita bread. Makes 8 servings (2 tbsp. per serving).

For more information, contact the Texas AgriLife Extension Service -Travis County at 512/854-9600.

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