

K's Kitchen: Popcorn for dinner – why not?

By Kathryn Reed

Popcorn by itself is a fairly healthy snack. Air popped has 31 calories per cup.



I eat popcorn by the bowl. Not like a soup bowl, but a bowl a family might share. I also don't just eat popcorn. It must have butter on it. Real butter. Fattening butter. Salted butter.

Then I call my bowl of buttered popcorn a meal.

I don't count my calorie intake on those nights.

And I don't like to share, but I will make a separate bowl if I'm asked to.

Today is National Popcorn Day. Though, clearly I don't need a day to give me permission to indulge.

When I told my mom I was writing about this, she immediately sent me the recipe below and an article from *TV Guide* from Aug. 16, 1975. The article has Paul Newman saying butter must be "spattered" with a knife to get each layer.

While I don't use a knife, I do apply the butter as it's popping into the bowl so it's all covered. And then when I'm getting close to the end of eating the bowl, I take the popcorn and rub it into any butter that may have pooled at the bottom.

There is actually a national Popcorn Board. The website says there is some confusion to the exact Popcorn Day. It's always

been toward the end of January and used to be associated with the Super Bowl. But now that the game is in February (Feb. 3 this year), popcorn aficionados don't seem to know when their day is.

They should do like me – eat it pretty regularly.

According to the board, about 4 billion gallons of popcorn are consumed in the U.S. each year. I'm sure I ingest more than my 13 gallons worth each year.

I have cut back a bit because I know all that butter is not good for me. And I'm not about to give up the butter.

It makes me wonder if it's the butter I want or the popcorn. I say this because I even like the weird yellow stuff squirted onto popcorn at movie theaters. I'm not sure that's butter – but instead some greasy butter flavoring.

It must be a Reed thing to not treat popcorn as a healthy snack. One of my dad's favorite ways to eat popcorn was when it was turned into carmel corn.

With the Super Bowl coming up, this is a good snack to serve. The recipe below is from Janet Robinson, a friend of my sister Jann's.

Carmel Corn

2 C brown sugar

1 C melted butter

$\frac{1}{2}$ C light corn syrup

1 tsp salt

1 tsp soda

1 T vanilla

7 quarts popped popcorn

Bring first four ingredients to a boil for about 5 minutes. Stir occasionally.

Add soda and vanilla.

Put popcorn in one large pan or two 9 x 13 pans. Pour mixture over evenly.

Bake at 200 degrees for one hour; stir every 15 minutes.

Store in tightly covered containers.