

road test prefeast nibbles

Are your guests feeling peckish? Silence the squawking with these store-bought snacks—*Real Simple's* favorites from more than 150 sampled.

room-temperature snacks

BEST NUT MIX ▶

Sahale Snacks Nut Blend

Soledad Almonds

Save the pickled-over peanuts and cashews for some other Thursday. Thanksgiving calls for this sophisticated, warmly spiced blend of almonds, dried apples, and flaxseed.

TO BUY: \$5 for a 5-ounce bag, at supermarkets.

BEST SPREAD ▶

Va-Va Home Made Lutenica

Allow us to introduce you to this traditional Eastern Mediterranean relish: a sweet-and-spicy combo of red peppers, tomatoes, and carrots that's delicious on toasted baguette slices.

TO BUY: \$7 for a 19.4-ounce jar, at gourmet stores and some supermarkets.

BEST STUFFED OLIVES ▶

Divina Green Olives Stuffed With Feta

Move over, pimientos. Loaded with salty Feta, these meaty oversize Halkidiki olives are perfect for popping in your mouth—or martini glass.

TO BUY: \$7 for a 12-ounce jar, at supermarkets.

◀ BEST CHEESE STRAWS

Stonewall Kitchen Chipotle Cheddar Cheese Straws

Like Grandma's, but with a spicy blast of chipotle, paprika, and cayenne. Addiction factor: scarily high.

TO BUY: \$6.50 for a 5-ounce box, at gourmet stores and some supermarkets.

▲ BEST MARINATED VEGETABLES

Williams-Sonoma Hand-Packed Mushrooms in Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Gourmet mushrooms in a lively thyme-infused marinade catapult this offering, best served with toothpicks, far ahead of its soggy competition. Worth every penny.

TO BUY: \$29 for a 21-ounce jar, at select Williams-Sonoma stores and williams-sonoma.com.





heat-and-serve snacks

BEST MINI QUICHES ▶

Nancy's Petite Quiche

Nancy does well by Lorraine: Think smoky bacon, Swiss cheese, fresh chives, and fluffy eggs, all tucked into a delicate crust.

TO BUY: \$4.50 for 12 pieces, at supermarkets.



◀ BEST CHEESE BITES

Safeway Select Caramelized Onion & Gorgonzola Pastry Puffs

These flaky tartlets pair luscious blue cheese with sweet golden onions. (Virtuous? No. Delicious? Yesss!) They're mess-free, too: They bake in their own oven-safe tray.

TO BUY: \$6 for 12 pieces, Safeway and Vons.



◀ BEST PIGS IN A BLANKET

The Perfect Bite Co. Haute Dogs in a Blanket

Tasters went *wee, wee, wee* all the way back for seconds (and thirds). The bite-size sausages have that quintessential frankfurter snap.

TO BUY: \$12.50 for 10 pieces, at gourmet stores and some supermarkets.

BEST CRAB BITES ▲

Goodwives

Hors D'Oeuvres

Crab Puff Pastry

Pockets of tender pastry filled with a rich mixture of Atlantic crab, cream cheese, and curry. These will be pinched in no time.

TO BUY: \$9 for 10 pieces, at gourmet stores and some supermarkets.



◀ BEST SPINACH PIE

Whole Kitchen Spanakopita

Extra-delicate layers of phyllo and a distinct touch of dill set this Greek classic apart. Kudos for the Feta-packed filling.

TO BUY: \$6.50 for 12 pieces, Whole Foods Markets.