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How do you make prison ramen

Cover of "Prison Ramen." (Courtesy)This article is more than 6 years old.Gustavo "Goose" Alvarez was serving time in the California Institute for Men in Chino, California, when a prison riot led to an unexpected meal and fellowship. The warmth generated by that event inspired him to write a cookbook of recipes that use ramen noodles.As Alvarez tells Here & Now's Peter O'Dowd: "That's everybody's staple in prison. No matter who you are, you're cooking with ramen." The result, written with his childhood friend Clifton Collins Jr., is "Prison Ramen: Recipes and Stories from Behind Bars."Recipes and stories from "Prison Ramen" by Clifton Collins Jr. and Gustavo "Goose" Alvarez, reprinted with the permission of Workman Publishing Company. Copyright © 2015 by Clifton Collins Jr. and Gustavo "Goose" Alvarez.In the current federal prison system, you're not allowed to carry money. All currency is gained by electronic transfers. An inmate's ID card serves as a debit card. An inmate can purchase items at the commissary or send money home by swiping the ID card. It can also be used for buying stuff from prison-sanctioned mail-order catalogs—clothes, shoes, and sundries that are mailed to you in prison. The money in your account is either sent from someone in the free world, or you earn it doing a job in prison. The legitimate jobs pay from ten cents a day to \$150 a month. A lot more money is made by gambling or selling drugs to people in prison.Sometimes an inmate can rack up some serious debt—hundreds or even thousands of dollars—and will have to pay through a "mail-out." This is when the debtor sends the person he owes payment, with help from an outsider, a money order or cashier's check. Some inmates I've known had accounts of more than \$100,000. Now there's a cap on how much money an inmate can have on his books because there was a lot of dirty money washing. An inmate's associate could send him a cashier's check or money order from drug sales or some other illegal act and in turn the inmate could send money elsewhere in the form of a clean federal check. The system was used this way for years. It surprised me how long it took the IRS to finally catch on.Orange PorkiesIngredients:1 pack Ramen (any flavor)1 cup boiling water1 cup cooked white riceAbout 3 tablespoons unsweetened orange flavor Kool-Aid1 bag (about 6 ounces) pork skins or rindsNote: For spicier flavor, try a dash of hot sauce on top of the porkies.Instructions: 1. Crush the Ramen in the wrapper and empty into a large bowl. Save the seasoning packet for another use.2. Add the water, cover, and let sit for 8 minutes.3. Drain off excess water.4. Add the rice and stir well. Set aside.5. Pour the Kool-Aid into a large microwavable bowl and add a tablespoon or two of hot water. Stir until it has a syrupy consistency.6. Toss a handful of pork skins into the syrup and stir. Repeat until all pork skins are coated.7. Cover and microwave the pork skins for about 5 minutes, until they puff.8. Serve the pork skins on top of the Ramen and rice.Co-authors of "Prison Ramen," Gustavo "Goose" Alvarez and Clifton Collins Jr. (Courtesy Gustavo "Goose" Alvarez)I was in federal prison and looking forward to enjoying this tamale with some friends during a Lakers-Rockets game. I was sitting in the dayroom with the TV, the tamale cooking about twenty feet from me, when a friend bolted around the corner, tossed a cell phone toward me, and whispered, "HIDE IT!" He was clearly being followed, so I stepped quickly and, without a second thought, buried the very small phone inside the tamale. The second the phone was buried, three correctional officers came in and searched the entire area—but skipped the tamale. I was glad to have saved his cell phone, and in gratitude, he gave me all the calls I wanted.I used that phone all the time. Being able to call my kids and talk to family and friends whenever I wanted was great—for a while. But I started using the phone every day, sometimes staying on it all night. Before I knew it, I was letting the time do me. I still had a few long years to go, and it was turning my life into a living hell. So I had to let it go. It's hard-won wisdom to know the difference between something that feels good in the short term but hurts in the long term.Ramen TamaleIngredients:2 packs beef flavor Ramen1 bag (about 4 ounces) spicy pork skins or rinds1/2 cup refried beans2 bags (1 to 2 ounces each) corn chips1 1/2 cups boiling water3 tablespoons squeezable cheese, or more to tasteInstructions:1. Crush the Ramen in the wrappers. Open the wrappers. Set aside one of the seasoning packets and save the other for another use.2. Crush the pork skins in the closed bag.3. Open one end of the bag and add the Ramen, refried beans, corn chips, seasoning, and water. Mix well.4. Fold the bag in half to secure the tamale. Wrap a towel around the bag to keep the heat in.5. Let sit for about 30 minutes.6. Remove the tamale from the bag. Squirt the cheese on top.When I first started doing time in the early 1990s, every gun tower had a sign with the same promise: ONE WARNING SHOT. This meant that if you did not get down when the alarm rang, or as soon as the first warning shot let out, the next shot would have your name on it. Many a time, I'd be eating indoors in the chow hall when a fight would start outside on the yard. The alarm would go off, signifying get down. A second later, you'd hear the first warning shot—a Mini-14 rifle aimed out the window of the gun tower toward the sky. The sound was so loud it left your ear drums ringing. It was a real attention-getter.Gang hits in the late '90s were getting crazier by the day—most of the attacks would continue even after the first shot rang out. Performing a hit this way, with total disregard for the warning shots, is called a "torpedo hit." These acts were usually done by youngsters trying to make a name for themselves. Some were successful in the hit, while others might get shot and end up in worse condition than the guy they were sent out to hit. During my time at Corcoran, in order to control the boldness of the inmates, staff made it clear that there would be no more warning shots. So then the writing under every gun tower read: WARNING. NO WARNING SHOTS! You better believe they take this shit seriously. There's an officer straight out of the military, specialized as a sniper, just waiting to show off his marksmanship.Ramen Torta Ingredients: 1 pack chilli flavor Ramen1 cup boiling water1 large hoagie or hero roll (big enough for two people), split open1/4 cup mayonnaise1/4 cup mustard1/4 pound sliced turkey1/4 pound sliced ham1/4 pound sliced chicken breast1 tomato, sliced1 onion, slicedAbout 6 lettuce leaves or a handful of shredded lettuce1/4 pound sliced pepper Jack cheese Instructions: 1. Crush the Ramen in the wrapper and empty into a bowl. Set aside the seasoning packet.2. Add the water, cover, and let sit for about 8 minutes.3. Drain off excess water.4. Open the roll, leaving the sides attached. Spread the mayonnaise and mustard on the inside of the roll.5. Spread half of the Ramen on the roll. Sprinkle half the seasoning over the Ramen.6. Lay the turkey, ham, chicken, tomato, onion, and lettuce on top of the Ramen.7. Add the rest of the Ramen and sprinkle with the remainder of the seasoning.8. Top with the cheese. Close gently and hold it down while cutting it in half. Gustavo "Goose" Alvarez, co-author of "Prison Ramen: Recipes and Stories from Behind Bars." He tweets @Alvarezgus73.This segment aired on November 3, 2015. Cada libro Great on Kindle ofrece un set completo de caracterÁsticas Kindle, a un mejor precio para mantener a tu billetera feliz. Explora tu libro y regresa donde quedaste gracias a Page Flip. Ve increÁbles grÁficos, mapas e imÁgenes que te permiten acercarlas para mirar máJs de cerca. Disfruta lo que hace que la lectura digital sea excelente - comienza a leer de inmediato, lleva tu biblioteca contigo, ajusta la fuente, haz notas y resalta, y máJs. Encuentra detalles adicionales acerca de eventos, personas y lugares en tu libro gracias a X-Ray. Ver la ediciÁn Kindle de este libro ObtÁ©n la aplicaciÁn Kindle gratis: By Lisa G. Sweet Pantry Gal from Buffalo, NY My Brothers creation. He loves these! Its an app for my brother or like a snack. By Marysia Nowak BBC News Image source, Getty ImagesImage caption, Ramen noodles are one of the most popular ingredients in prison cookingInstant noodles, mayonnaise and Kool-Aid may not be likely ingredients in a gourmet meal, but if you are in prison, they may constitute the culinary highlight of your day.If your only food intake comes in the form of a small breakfast tray, a lunch tray and a dinner tray, and is designed, as one inmate put it "to be as inedible as possible", some creativity is needed."In the early '90s, you'd get decent meals, good produce," says Gustavo "Goose" Alvarez, who did two stints in prison, once in the 1990s and once in the 2010s. Between those two stints, state budgets dropped, jail expenses increased, and more communities turned to privatized prisons. Food was one area where administrators looked to cut costs. "Quite frankly, it's disgusting," says Alvarez of the food now. This is where prison cooking comes in, with inmates using any food they can lay their hands on. A common solution: instant ramen noodles. These provide the basis of a "spread": pieces of ramen noodles and spices mixed up a in a rubbish bag or bowl, with any other ingredients available tossed into the mixture. "It's popular in prison because it's an inexpensive, quick meal," says Alvarez, who co-authored a book called Prison Ramen: Recipes and Stories from Behind Bars. "They can pretty much add whatever they want to it and make a good dish."Cooking in a cell is legal, but does require some inventiveness.As a microwave is not available in many places, a bowl of hot water, or even warm water, will do to soak some instant noodles."You put your noodles in this, add hot water, put the lid on, and then take it to your bunk and cover with bedding and pillow to hold in the heat. This method is usually pretty effective, and after 10 minutes or so you have your ramen," writes one ex-convict on WikiHow.A bowl, he says, is usually available from the prison canteen. But a rubbish bag may be used to soak food as well, and even toilet paper has been used in prison cooking.Ingredients such as canned tuna, bread, rice, or cheese-flavoured cornmeal snacks can be purchased at the canteen for those inmates who have money on their accounts.Others may try to save anything from breakfast or lunch, for example a boiled egg, a roll, some mayonnaise packets, or a pickle.Image source, Getty ImagesImage caption, Lunch may not be what they would like but at least these women prisoners in California are enjoying each other's companyAlvarez says that the choicest ingredients do require some rule-breaking, like sneaking plastic bags of an unappealing meal out of the mess hall in order to pick out morsels of meat."You'll sneak back bits of beef stroganoff and wash it off, mix it in with your ramen and create a different dish," he explains. He says that if you get caught, an understanding guard will simply throw your slash away. A more serious infraction occurs if an inmate gets caught with fruits, or a stash of sugar-rich foods - a telltale sign the person is trying to brew some "jailhouse hooch".A spread can have some surprising ingredients, like this recipe containing Kool-Aid (a fruit-flavoured powder with which to make a sugary drink) and pork rinds by Alvarez.1 pack Ramen (any flavour)1 cup boiling water1 cup cooked white riceAbout 3 tablespoons unsweetened orange flavour Kool-Aid 1 bag (about 6 ounces) pork skins or rindsCrush the Ramen in the wrapper and empty into a large bowl. Save the seasoning packet for another use. Add the water, cover, and let sit for 8 minutes.Drain off excess water. Add the rice and stir well. Set aside.Pour the Kool-Aid into a large microwavable bowl and add a tablespoon or two of hot water. Stir until it has a syrupy consistency.Toss a handful of pork skins into the syrup and stir. Repeat until all pork skins are coated.Cover and microwave the pork skins for about 5 minutes, until they puff.Serve the pork skins on top of the Ramen and rice. Note: For spicier flavour, try a dash of hot sauce on top of the porkies.The dishes cooked in prison have sparked an explosion in recipe collections, and are shared on social media.The Convict Cookbook is a collection of recipes from prisoners at the Washington State Penitentiary in Walla Walla, Washington. The Jailhouse Cookbook: The Prisoner's Recipe Bible is an upmarket collection of recipes written by a chef-turned-convict. Image source, Clifton Collins Jr. and Gustavo "Goose" AlvarezFrom The Big House To Your House: Cooking in Prison has 200 "easy to prepare" recipes written by inmates at a woman's prison in Gatesville, Texas, and is also aimed at cooks outside prison with limited resources.Apart from tastier food in larger quantities, cooking in prison provides inmates with a focal point and a social opportunity to be creative.For many, it is also about the memories of cooking in better times. Karla Diaz is a performance artists who has worked with inmates and collected recipes ranging from traditional Mexican soup made with chilli lime-flavoured corn nuts to pork rinds with jelly. "Cooking meals in prison isn't really about the taste," she tells Vice News. "It's a reminder of humanity, community, and the person you were on the outside."Alvarez says he still eats ramen. Just the other day he took a break from writing to whip up some noodles with smoked oysters, chopped onions and coriander. He says the smell still brings him back to his prison days, which he calls a "bittersweet" experience."I was making chicken soup - it took me right back to that ordeal," he says. "I felt how I felt at the time - I was on my own, becoming a man, but in prison. It was an eerie feeling - that little warm soup brought me some comfort. There is still something I can have and feel at home, even though I'm not."Additional reporting by Jessica Lussenhop

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