



Shopper's Guide



Appetizer Appeal

It's always nice to start a dinner party with a pre-meal appetizer. But preparing those trays of bite-size starters can take time. Food companies have made the job easy by providing an array of frozen and refrigerated appetizers, such as chicken wings, mushroom bites, egg rolls, and more. Such store-bought appetizers can be a great time saver—just heat and serve. Plus, these appetizers can go beyond parties to make fun snacks. But how do these packaged starters rate nutritionally?

Unfortunately, many prepared appetizers are high in fat and sodium because they are fried, filled with cheese, or wrapped in pastry. In fact, some contain more than half a day's worth of sodium and saturated fat in a single serving. However, you don't have to give up on these tasty munchies altogether, as long as you make careful choices.

Helpful hints. Before you start nibbling, check out our best tips below.

- ▶ **Watch your servings.** Keep in mind these products are meant to be appetizers or snacks, therefore the portion sizes are small. If you're not careful, you could easily take in two or three (or more) servings at one sitting, which can net you up to 750 calories—depending on the type of appetizer.
- ▶ **Cut the grease.** Try to skip high-fat appetizers, such as deep-fried fare. If you do choose these, place the appetizers on a paper towel-lined plate after removing from the oven. This will help absorb some of the fat.
- ▶ **Go veggie.** While not always the case, often the meatless options are lower in calories, fat, and sodium than those containing meat and chicken. If you prefer those with meat or chicken, check the Nutrition Facts label to find those lowest in calories, fat and sodium.
- ▶ **Balance the choices.** Many of these appetizers can be delicious additions to a party, but too many can be a fat and sodium overload for your guests. Consider alternative easy offerings: fresh vegetables and hummus, edamame, or fresh fruit.

—Heidi McIndoo, MS, RD

Appetizers Nutritional Comparison

✓ = **EN's Picks.** As with all EN comparisons, this is only a sampling of products. Picks contain no more than 7 g fat (11% DV), 2 g saturated fat (10% DV), and 330 mg sodium (14% DV).

MEAT & CHICKEN	Serv Size (g)	Calories	Fat (g)	Sat Fat (g)	Sodium (mg)	Carb (g)	Sugar (g)	Fiber (g)	Protein (g)
365 Beef Taquitos, 3 pc	128	280	16	3.5	240	22	0	5	10
365 Chicken Taquitos, 3 pc	128	330	17	3	250	30	<1	4	15
✓ Annie Chun's Mini Wontons, Chicken & Garlic, 8 pc *	72	120	1	0	300	18	2	1	6
Jose Ole Mini Tacos, Beef & Cheese, 4 ea	85	230	12	4	440	23	<1	3	8
Jose Ole Steak & Cheese Taquitos, 2 ea	85	250	12	3.5	470	26	<1	3	8
✓ Ling Ling Mini Springrolls, Chicken & Vegetable, 2 pc + 1 Tbsp sauce	82	160	7	0	300	21	7	2	4
Ling Ling Potstickers Chicken & Vegetable, 5 pc + 1 Tbsp sauce	161	260	4	0.5	1200	44	8	2	13
TGI Friday's Buffalo Style Chicken Wings, 3 ea	84	160	11	3	440	3	0	0	10
Trader Joes Chicken Pot Pie Bites, 3 ea	85	210	13	7	380	17	2	1	7
Trader Joes Hot & Spicy Chicken Wings, 3 ea	92	200	14	4	480	4	0	1	15
Trader Joes Parmesan Pastry Pups, 4 ea	95	330	22	11	480	23	3	1	10
✓ Trader Joes Southwestern Style Chicken Poppers, 3 ea	81	180	7	2	320	20	2	2	8
Tyson Any'tizers Boneless Chicken Wyngz, Honey BBQ, 3 ea	84	200	8	1.5	450	20	3	0	11
Tyson Any'tizers Chicken Fries, 7 ea	90	230	11	2.5	590	19	0	1	13
✓ Whole Foods Market Tandoori Chicken Samosas, 2 ea	53	140	6	1	290	13	<1	0	7
MEATLESS									
365 Organic Mozzarella Cheese Sticks, 3 ea*	84	330	21	6	510	24	1	0	12
Alexia Mozzarella Stix, 4 ea*	74	240	12	5	460	20	2	2	10
✓ Alexia Mushroom Bites	60	110	4.5	0.5	290	14	<1	2	3
Amy's Snacks Cheese Pizza, 5-6 ea	85	210	9	4.5	440	25	3	2	9
El Monterey Quesadillas, 1 ea	113	230	11	5	490	22	1	1	13
Farm Rich Breaded Mushrooms, 8 ea	85	190	11	1.5	360	20	0	2	4
Farm Rich Crispy Dill Pickles, 7 ea	79	190	9	1.5	650	19	1	1	6
Farm Rich Mozzarella Bites, 4 ea*	90	320	14	6	560	32	2	2	16
Ling Ling Mini Springrolls, Vegetable, 2 pc + 1 T sauce	82	170	9	0.5	410	23	8	2	2
✓ Saffron Road Crispy Samosas with Saag Paneer	78	160	7	1.5	250	21	3	2	4
Saffron Road Dates, Tamarind, & Walnut Rolls	78	250	10	1	160	37	4	3	4
Saffron Road Turkish Figs & Goat Cheese Rolls, 4 ea	78	270	15	7	210	28	7	4	15
Tandoor Chef Samosa, 1 pc + 1/2 tsp chutney	78	170	7	1	680	23	1	2	3
TGI Fridays Cream Cheese Poppers, 3 ea	77	230	12	5	420	19	1	1	4
TGI Fridays Potato Skins, Cheddar & Bacon, 1 ea	81	220	14	5	600	14	<1	1	9
Trader Joes Arancini Bites, 4 ea*	84	240	10	4	360	26	0	1	6
Trader Joes Breaded Mozzarella Cheese Sticks, 2 ea	51	190	12	5	320	12	0	0	9
Trader Joes Mac & Cheese Bites, 3 bites	85	210	12	7	430	15	1	1	10
Trader Joes Pastry Bites with Feta & Caramelized Onion, 3 ea*	60	210	15	10.5	300	12	1	0	3
Trader Joes Spanakopita, 3 ea	85	160	8	3	420	15	0	1	6
Trader Joes Spinach & Cheese Stuffed Mushrooms, 2 ea	72	60	4	2.5	190	3	1	1	5
Trader Joes Spinach & Kale Bites, 4 ea	85	140	7	4	390	12	2	2	6
✓ Whole Foods Market Potato & Pea Samosas, 2 ea	53	150	6	0.5	320	19	<1	<1	4
✓ Whole Foods Market Vegetable Egg Rolls, 1 ea	85	150	3	0	270	26	3	1	4
✓ Whole Foods Market Vegetable Potstickers, 4 pc	113	200	3.5	0.5	330	38	4	3	6

Note: g=gram, mg=milligram, sat fat=saturated fat, carb=carbohydrates, DV=Daily Value, Daily requirement based on 2,000 calorie/day diet. Source: Food Labels *Serving sizes for these have been adjusted to reflect typical serving size of most appetizers in our nutrition comparison.