

Strawberry Pretzel Salad

Yield: Serves 10 to 12 | Prep Time: 50 minutes plus 2-4 hours chilling time | Cook Time: 10 minutes

Once the sugar shortages of World War II were over and refrigerators became less expensive, Jell-O once again entered the public eye with creative new recipes. TV ads in the '60s helped Jell-O reach its peak popularity, selling an average of four boxes per person per year. Snacks that party-goers could “nibble” on, such as pretzels, also reached the peak of their popularity during this time, so it was only natural that the two would be combined in this inventive recipe.

INGREDIENTS 1 (6-ounce) package strawberry Jell-O

2 cups boiling water

2½ cups salted pretzels

½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter

¾ cup sugar (divided use)

1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, at room temperature

1 (8-ounce) tub whipped topping, thawed 1½ pounds fresh strawberries, hulled and sliced

DIRECTIONS Preheat the oven to 350°F. In a medium bowl, combine the Jell-O mix with the boiling water and stir for 2 minutes to completely dissolve. Set aside to cool. Put the pretzels in a plastic zip-top bag and crush them using a rolling pin. In a small saucepan, melt the butter, then add ¼ cup of the sugar and mix. Add the crushed pretzels and stir to combine. Press the pretzel mixture evenly into a 9 × 13-inch glass baking dish. Bake for 10 minutes, then set aside to cool.

In a medium bowl using a hand mixer, beat the cream cheese and the remaining ½ cup sugar until fluffy. Fold in the whipped topping. Spread the mixture over the pretzel layer, making sure to cover the entire surface edge to edge. Cover and chill for 30 minutes. Stir the strawberries into the cooled Jell-O.

Carefully pour the mixture over the cream cheese layer. Cover and refrigerate for 2 to 4 hours, until set. Cut into squares and serve.