

Potluck recipes for painful reunions

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For many, life after school is great simply because their time in high school was just varying shades of constant awfulness, and it was awfulness of such great intensity that the responsibilities and pressures that come with adult life all pale in comparison. You think you've exterminated the remains of that life, physically and psychologically. But there comes a time when you find yourself with the people who you felt better forgetting about. You're right if you're thinking of reunions and maybe sad cause you've just had to go to one. Sometimes these "cheerful" events happen outside homes and sometimes inside them, and if it's the latter, there could be a potluck. So what would you bring to one? There are some suggestions below. (P.S. don't worry if they don't sound like real recipes, it's all about the emotional release).

VOLCANO FIRE NOODLE SOUP

To make this fiery red food, you'll need noodles, spices, sauces, water and the ability to breathe deeply to expel pent up rage. First add spices to boiling water and let the noodles soak in the deep red broth so it is tainted and becomes a dark colour. This will add flavour to your noodles, but more importantly, it will remind people that the hissy fits and anger issues of spoilt teenagers ensured that no one came out of school unaltered; sometime between sandboxes and laboratory apparatus, we grew up



to be wonderful sulky teens who took everything personally, and if we weren't the angry ones, we definitely got affected by those who were.

Next add dark black sauce to the mixture. There is no specific brand or ingredient to look for when finding or making this sauce. You'll know it's right if it looks like the black liquid Dumbledore had to drink in part six of the Harry Potter series. To make it crunchy, add cabbages. That way, when you chew the food, you'll think of breaking hearts.

If you want to go the extra mile to show how delighted you are to be meeting these people again, dump a bucket of chillies or pour the entire content of the hottest sauce used in Hot Ones into the bowl.

SHEPHERD'S PIE

For this recipe, you can buy minced beef from the store, but to add a more personal touch, take a meat cleaver and slice up large chunks of beef. There is no guarantee if this will change the flavour of your food, but it might help in

releasing some repressed emotions that have evolved with you to become an ugly red ball of rage. When cooking, remember to add chopped onions to keep the emotional vampires at a distance. Add tomato paste and mix. For the potato on top, crush tater tots because the crushing of this childhood food symbolises the crushing of your childhood desires for acceptance. Put the tray inside the oven and take it out when it's crispy. The ideal



crust will make a bone-crunching sound when you break it with a spoon. It will also cause flakes to spray out all over the house, much like flaky people who make a mess in the homes and lives of other people by leaving their friends alone with people they would rather run away from.

CHOCOLATE SOUFFLÉ

You might feel the need to bring something sweet to these people to mask the inner bitterness you feel towards them. If there aren't too many people (meaning you won't be able to go hide in a

corner and will be forced to socialise), you might want to make each person a chocolate soufflé.

To make this dish, put butter in a pan and wait for it to melt. This ingredient is crucial because butter is like oil and there will be people who'll go out of their way and meddle in your business. Add flour and then cold milk; yes cold, because that's how some people will be towards you years after you've never seen them and this won't hurt you because you might behave the same way. Break a bar of chocolate into little pieces with your bare hands. The chocolate should be semi-sweet because of the people who'll be sweet to you in front of your face but won't talk sweetly about you when you are away. Add vanilla essence and egg yolks. Then mix and pour mixture in a ramekin and place inside the oven. The consistency should be representative of your journey in school so you know that silky smooth is the wrong texture.

If you're in the mood to be fancy, you can try and construct a cage made of sugar. You can pretend that the translucent golden toothpick-web-like structure encasing your soufflé was inspired by kintsukuroi, the Japanese art of repairing broken pottery by filling the cracks with gold and other metals like silver and platinum, but don't lie to yourself, you're fragile, and so is the pretty structure you made.

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