

Supermarket Sampler

Hillshire Farm Sausages are full of preservatives but are tasty

BY BONNIE TANDY LEBLANG
AND CAROLYN WYMAN

Bonnie Tandy Leblang is a registered dietitian and professional speaker. She has an interactive site (www.biteofthebest.com) about products she recommends. Follow her on Twitter: BonnieBOTB. Carolyn Wyman is a junk-food fanatic and author of "Better Than Homemade: Amazing Foods That Changed the Way We Eat" (Quirk). Each week they critique three new food items.

HILLSHIRE FARM LINK SAUSAGES

Hot & Spicy Italian Style Smoked, and Miller High Life Beer Brats. \$3.99 per 16-ounce package of six sausages.

Bonnie: A hot dog is basically a sausage — that's ground meat, spices and generally lots of preservatives that make me not too much of a fan. These two new sausages are no different, being chock-full of monosodium glutamate, sodium nitrite and other additives. Like most sausages, these are also high in fat: One of either sausage contains 22 grams of total fat, of which 8 grams are saturated, or almost one-third of the recommended daily limit.

That said, these are surprisingly tasty. I'd suggest trying the brats Midwestern-style to highlight their beer flavor. That is, simmer them gently for 10 minutes in enough beer to cover the brats, along with white onions that have been sliced into rings. Then grill or pan-sear about 2 minutes until evenly browned. Serve them in a roll topped with the onions. Just don't do it too often.

Carolyn: If hot dogs and hamburgers are about as exciting as your backyard grilling menu gets, you might want to consider these two new Hillshire Farm link sa-

sages.

I didn't really taste the beer in the Miller High Life Beer Brats, but I still loved their juiciness and flavor. You'll need to drink beer with the Italian one because when they say Hot & Spicy, they're not kidding. Both varieties have casings that snap when you bite.

As good as both are, I'm even more grateful for how they've wakened me to a whole world of sausage products you can grill and put in a hot dog bun that are more interesting than hot dogs (see Hillshire's link sausage options at www.gomeat.com).

EDY'S SLOW CHURNED SNACK SIZE CUPS

Mint Chocolate Chip, Chocolate, and Vanilla Bean. \$1.25 per 6-ounce cup.

Bonnie: Edy's just introduced snack-size portions of three flavors of its Slow Churned ice cream, a light ice cream with the creaminess of premium, yet with half the fat and a third of the calories. This creaminess is a result of the way the company kneads, stretches and distributes the ice cream's fat molecules as part of a patented Slow Churning process. These non-premium ice creams do contain thickeners and, in the Mint Chocolate Chip, artificial coloring not found in premium ice creams.

I'm still glad that Edy's decided to put this light ice cream in new single-serve cups. I'm only sorry it chose to fill them with 6 ounces of ice cream instead of the more traditional 4-ounce serving — thus cutting down on the fat and calorie savings.

Carolyn: Cardboard Dixie Cup ice cream novelties filled with individual servings of plain-Jane ice cream and eaten with little wooden paddles date back to the early 1920s. Apparently awakened by the popularity of 100-calorie packages of everything, single-serve cups are

now the latest trend with national premium and super-premium ice cream brands.

I'm still waiting for Ben & Jerry's to send me cases of its ultra-indulgent Flipped Out! sundae cups for testing. Until then I'm more than happy with these Edy's cups, which are much more of a treat than the original Dixie, despite their modest 150 Slow Churned calories. They're also cute enough to eat up. I only wish they came in more interesting flavors than the current Vanilla Bean, Chocolate, and Mint Chocolate Chip.

LA TORTILLA FACTORY HAND MADE STYLE CORN TORTILLAS

Yellow Corn, White Corn and Chipotle. \$1.99 to \$2.49 per 11.57-ounce package containing eight soft tortillas.

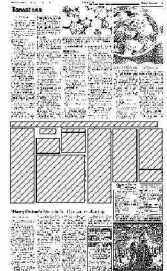
Bonnie: I like all three of these new handmade-style soft corn tortillas from La Tortilla Factory. Each has 90 calories and only 1 gram of fat, along with 1 gram of fiber and 14 grams of whole grains.

I like heating tortillas in a medium-hot, ungreased skillet for about 20 to 30 seconds per side before using. They're perfect for quesadillas, fajitas, soft tacos, enchiladas, burritos, wraps or huevos rancheros (ranch-style eggs). The Chipotle has just a hint of smoky jalapeno pepper and is my favorite.

Carolyn: I would say the Chipotle tortillas have more than a hint of jalapeno, Bonnie. They have so much that they distract from the corn and anything you might put in them.

But I love these other two new corn tortillas. They're different and much more interesting than the soft flour tortillas used in many Mexican restaurants in the U.S.

Use these in homemade tacos, as the bread for a deliciously different wrap, or alone or with butter, as an



accompaniment to a main meal or snack. Yes, they're that good. And when properly stored in their resealable bags, they will keep more than a month in the refrigerator. (Just zap them in the microwave a few seconds before eating.)

