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NOVEMBER 2011



road test prefeast nibbles

Are your guests feeling peckish? Silence the squawking with these store-bought snacks—*Real Simple's* favorites from more than 150 sampled.

room-temperature snacks

BEST NUT MIX ▶

Sahale Snacks Nut Blend Soledad Almonds

Save the picked-over peanuts and cashews for some other Thursday. Thanksgiving calls for this sophisticated, warmly spiced blend of almonds, dried apples, and flaxseed.

TO BUY: \$5 for a 5-ounce bag, at supermarkets.



◀ BEST CHEESE STRAWS

Stonewall Kitchen Chipotle Cheddar Cheese Straws

Like Grandma's, but with a spicy blast of chipotle, paprika, and cayenne. Addiction factor: scarily high.

TO BUY: \$6.50 for a 5-ounce box, at gourmet stores and some supermarkets.



▲ BEST MARINATED VEGETABLES

Williams-Sonoma Hand-Packed Mushrooms in Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Gourmet mushrooms in a lively thyme-infused marinade catapult this offering, best served with toothpicks, far ahead of its soggy competition. Worth every penny.

TO BUY: \$29 for a 21-ounce jar, at select Williams-Sonoma stores and williams-sonoma.com.



BEST SPREAD ▶

Va-Va Home Made Lutenica

Allow us to introduce you to this traditional Eastern Mediterranean relish: a sweet-and-spicy combo of red peppers, tomatoes, and carrots that's delicious on toasted baguette slices.

TO BUY: \$7 for a 19.4-ounce jar, at gourmet stores and some supermarkets.

BEST STUFFED OLIVES ▶

Divina Green Olives Stuffed With Feta

Move over, pimientos. Loaded with salty Feta, these meaty oversize Halkidiki olives are perfect for popping in your mouth—or martini glass.

TO BUY: \$7 for a 12-ounce jar, at supermarkets.



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