

## **Biker Information Guide**

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*Biker Billy hosts a syndicated television cooking show*

### **"Biker Billy Cooks with Fire"**



#### **Driving to Distraction**

I have noticed a growing trend among car drivers: An increasing percentage of them are glued to their cell phones. Actually, I think I can safely say, based on recent observations, that it is the rare driver who is not holding a phone to his or her ear. And even out of this group, most seem either to have a hands-free set or are rehearsing for American Idol. Or perhaps they are just talking back to the voices in their heads. In any case, they are moving their lips animatedly despite being the only one in the car. Of course, holding an actual cell phone is no guarantee of sanity, or of sane driving. A guy recently whizzed past me on the interstate, cut in front of me, then slowed down to 10 mph under the speed limit. When I pulled out to pass, he cut back in front of me, then changed the phone to his right hand so he could flip me the bird out the driver's window. His phone conversation must have been awful ugly to inspire such rude and dangerous driving. Someone should tell him that there are better ways to signal other drivers. For example, turn signals—they don't even require interrupting his exciting phone call.

For a long time there were only two, easily identifiable segments of the population prone to having phones stuck in their ears: teenage girls and businesspeople. The former suffer from a condition known as Social Networking Disorder (SND)—simply put, they require continuous peer-to-peer contact to be able to continue to function. The latter suffer from what might be called Really Expect that Commission Disorder (REC'D)—the need to spend more and more time working to pay for all the gadgets they need to do more and more work in less and less time. Sufferers of both SND and REC'D are glued to their phones not just when driving—you will see them on the phone while sharing meals at restaurants, standing in line at the post office . . . even when they are gathering in large groups they are almost always cellular-connected individually, probably to people gathered in other large groups across town.

These days, though, it's gone beyond SND and REC'D sufferers. Almost every vehicle on the road has a driver whose ability is impaired by cell-phone use. What has changed in the world that gives these people such a need to talk all the time? Don't they run out of things to say? It is so vexing that I have tried to come up with a list of reasons.

#### ***Top Ten Reasons Why Drivers Talk on Cell Phones***

10. Driver has been killed by terrorists, and the person at the wheel is receiving long-distance instructions from his superior on how to operate it
9. Driver does not speak English and is getting on-the-spot translations for road signs
8. Driver is participating in a distance-learning Driver's-Ed course
7. Checking his or her dating-service voice-mail to see if there is any response to that personals ad
6. Not actually talking to anyone; just pretending to have a life

5. Receiving a "must-take" call from a telemarketer
4. Ordering pizza
3. Really grooving to that music while on-hold at the cable company's customer service line
2. Reporting in to his or her DWI probation officer

### **And the top reason why drivers talk on cell phones:**

1. Checking credit-card balance to see if he or she can afford to buy gas

These are just a few. There must be many more, but I couldn't think of them and write them down and still avoid being run over by a yakking driver at the same time—talk about multi-tasking!

Cell phones are not inherently evil and neither are car drivers (well, not for the most part, that is), but mix them together with traffic and you have a true axis of evil. Driving a vehicle requires active attention to the ever-changing conditions of the road and traffic. So, if you know people who think the cell phone is as important as the steering wheel, tell them that unless they want to be the known as the Taliban of the Turnpike—hang up the phone and drive! Oh, and by the way, also remind them that if they think texting or e-mailing while driving is the ultimate multi-tasking extreme sport, I have two words for them: vehicular homicide. Be careful, folks, because despite all the cell phones out there, no one is likely to call 911 to help you if you have an accident. They'd have to hang up to do it.

### **Joe Allen's Polka Pepper Pasta**

This recipe is the first winner of my viewer recipe contest. Joe, who works building docks and piers in the New York City harbor, got this recipe from an old polish sailor. According to the sailor, this is a very old Polish dish. Joe tells me he enjoys this pasta when he goes camping, and he can easily pack the ingredients in his Harley Electra Glide Ultra Classic. Sounds to me like Joe knows how to travel – a big bike on the open road, camping under the stars, and cooking with fire. Alright, Joe Allen!

½ cup (1 stick) margarine

3 fresh red jalapeno peppers, stemmed and thinly sliced

7 garlic cloves, thinly sliced

2 large sweet onions, quartered and cut into thick slices

1 medium head cabbage, quartered, cored, and cut into thick slices

Salt and ground black pepper

1 pound home-style egg noodles

Fill a large pot with water and bring to a boil to cook the noodles.

Melt the margarine in a very large sauté pan over medium heat. Add the jalapeno peppers, garlic and onions. Add the cabbage until the pan is full. You may not be able to fit all the cabbage in the pan at first, but you can add more as it cooks down. Sauté, stirring often, for 15 to 20 minutes, or until all the cabbage is tender and transparent. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Cook the egg noodles al dente, according to the package directions. Drain well and transfer to a large serving bowl. Add the cabbage and mix well. Serve piping hot.

### **Makes 6 to 8 servings**

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