



Dawn Bryant  
Theford, NE

Semi-Finalist



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**met**  
Television  
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PBS station

# Rattlesnake Bryantini

**Recipe Number:** 129

**Prep time:** 30 minutes

**Cook time:** 45 minutes

**INGREDIENTS:** 2 C rattlesnake, cut into 4-6 inch strips  
4 slices low-sodium bacon, diced  
1 small onion, chopped  
2 garlic cloves minced or pressed  
1 C dry white wine  
1 C heavy cream  
1 t. dried thyme  
1 bay leaf  
¼ C fresh parsley, minced

**DIRECTIONS:** Cook bacon, onion and garlic in a skillet over medium-high heat, until onion is tender. Add snake strips and cook until opaque. Add wine, thyme and bay leaf. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer until wine is cooked in. Add cream and cook until thickened. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Garnish with fresh parsley. Serve over steamed basmati rice and alongside steamed summer squash and a mixed greens salad.

**STORY:** *One day while my husband and I (along with our kindergartner daughter and toddler son) were scouting for turkeys at the Bessey National Forest in the beautiful Sandhills of north central Nebraska, we came across a large rattlesnake. Being a photographer, I took a number of photos (with my LONG lens of course) before we drove away (the kids stayed in the truck). Around the next bend, we came to a prairie dog town. We didn't see any prairie dogs, but we did see rattlesnakes – lots of them. We got out to photograph a few more, with the kids watching from the truck, but got too close to one and he rattled at us. That rattled my hubby and he shot the one we almost stepped on. Then he turned to me and asked if I had ever eaten rattlesnake. When I said no, he obligingly shot two more, so I could try this delicacy. Having eaten it before, he told me to "cook it however I wanted," so I came up with this recipe (he would have wanted it deep fried). The snakes he shot were fairly small, so I ended up with only one serving, but this version of the recipe feeds four. I found rattlesnake to be quite tasty (a bit like chicken, as everyone says) and would gladly eat it again. While we were headed home across the forest, we passed a pile of pine and cedar trees that had been cleared out and were waiting to be burned. My daughter yelled out, just as we passed the pile "I see a deer. It's a buck!" Not having seen the deer ourselves, we were skeptical, but I readied my camera and my husband backed up. Sure enough, before we got positioned so I could take a photograph, a large buck came boiling out of the brush and took off. We were so proud of her for spotting that buck that blended into those trees so well! It was a day spent together as a family, enjoying wonderful scenery, seeing interesting wildlife and trying new things. Later, my daughter took one of the snake photographs, as well as the rattles from the snakes, to show and tell at school.*



Coming to NET Television in 2009

Funding provided by Walmart  
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